

ADVISING TIPS

The entrance into a college environment is obviously one of the most important experiences which a student and his or her family will face. A successful orientation into college life can serve as a helpful intervention, which will enable a student to feel more secure and confident in exploring personal goals and interests. The role of the faculty advisor cannot be underestimated, for he/she has the opportunity to help the student become “bonded” to the life of the college.

The advisor has an obligation to help the student toward a more unified experience in college – especially in the first year. In helping students to achieve this type of experience, the advisor provides support and encouragement in order to attend to each student’s personal needs and interests. The advisor also helps to interpret the meaning of higher education.

A significant aspect of an advisor’s role is to facilitate the development of each advisee. This is aided not only by a personal knowledge of and contact with advisees, but also by encouraging students to think about personal goals, by offering assistance in decision-making, and by encouraging students to integrate their curricular and co-curricular experiences. Thus, development in personal, social, academic, and career areas is heightened. Such development takes into account a student’s internal development (what a person wishes to become) with one’s social development (the relationship to other people and the world at large). All of this leads to what may become the essential goal of the advisee’s experience: enhanced self-knowledge.

Minimal Expectations for an Effective Advisor

1. A good advisor attempts to provide students with a rationale for higher education and its various requirements.
2. The effective advisor is highly informed! Students need and deserve the benefit of adequate, accurate information concerning the total scope of the academic program, as well as procedures, policies, resources, and college-wide opportunities.
3. The advisor will assist his or her advisees in making important decisions, using formal training and experiences.
4. A good advisor works to know something about his or her advisees – especially the advisee’s needs, interests, goals and expectations for college – as well as other personal information that will affect the students’ performance and decisions.
5. The advisor renders valuable help through support and encouragement and is also aware of his or her presence as a role model.

What Academic Advising is NOT

1. “Academic Advisor” is not always synonymous with “faculty member.”
2. Academic advising is not primarily an administrative function.
3. Academic advising is not a paper relationship or computer print-out.

What Academic Advising IS

1. Advising is a continuous process with an accumulation of personal contacts between advisor and student. These contacts have both directions and purpose.
2. Advising must take into account the total “quality of life” experience which the student is having.
3. Advising is “goal-related.” The goals should be set and owned by the student and should encompass academic, career, and personal development areas.
4. Advising requires the establishment of caring a human relationship – one in which the advisor must take primary responsibility for its initial development.
5. An advisor should be a model for students to emulate, specifically demonstrating behaviors that lead to self-responsibility and self-directiveness.
6. Advising should seek to integrate the services and expertise of both the Academic and Student Affairs areas.
7. Advising is dependent upon the student seeking to become a partner in the advising process, and not merely a recipient of information advice.

Academic Terminology

In introducing the “academic life,” you may wish to briefly explain the following: WHAT IS A/AN....

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Degree | 11. Independent/directed study |
| 2. Semester/Credit hour | 12. Grading scale |
| 3. Course classification | 13. Academic probation/
Suspension |
| 4. Academic load | 14. Dean’s List |
| 5. Prerequisite | 15. Syllabus |
| 6. Major | 16. Quality points |
| 7. Minor | 17. Hours attempted/hours
earned |
| 8. General Education
Requirement | 18. Grade point average (GPA) |
| 9. Elective | 19. Satisfactory academic
progress |
| 10. Class standing (Freshmen,
Sophomore, Junior, Senior) | |

Key Elements of Academic Advising

- 1. Exploration of life goals**
- 2. Exploration of vocational goals**
- 3. Program choice**
- 4. Course choice**
- 5. Scheduling courses**

-----O'Banion

“Teaching includes any experience in the learning community in which teacher and student interact that contributes to individual, group, or community growth and development can be evaluated...The student cannot be merely a passive receptacle for knowledge, but must share equal responsibility with the teacher for the quality of the learning context, process, and development.”

-----Crookston

“The fundamental purpose of academic advising is to help students become effective agents for their own lifelong learning and personal development.”

-----Chickering

Reminders for Effective Advising

1. Care about students as people by showing empathy, understanding, and respect.
2. Establish a warm, genuine, and open relationship.
3. Be a good listener.
4. Establish rapport by remembering personal information about students.
5. Be available, keep office hours and appointments.
6. Provide accurate information.
7. When in doubt, refer to catalog, advisor's handbook, etc.
8. Know how and when to make referrals, and be familiar with referral sources.
9. Do not refer too hastily; on the other hand, do not attempt to handle situations for which you are not qualified or comfortable.
10. Have students contact referral sources in your presence, when possible.
11. Keep in frequent contact with students; take the initiative; don't always wait for them to come to you.
12. Do not make decisions for students; help them make their own decisions.
13. Focus on students' strengths and potentials rather than limitations.
14. Seek out students in informal settings.
15. Monitor students' progress toward educational goals.
16. Determine reasons for poor academic performance and direct students to appropriate support services.
17. Be realistic and honest with students.
18. Use all available information sources.
19. Clearly outline students' responsibilities.
20. Follow through on commitments made to students.
21. Encourage students to consider and develop career alternatives, when appropriate.
22. Keep an anecdotal record of significant conversations for future reference.
23. Evaluate the effectiveness of your advising.
24. Do not be critical of other faculty or staff to students.
25. Be knowledgeable about career opportunities and the job outlook for various majors.
26. Encourage students to talk by asking open-ended questions.
27. Do not betray confidential information.
28. Categorize students' questions; are they seeking action, information, or involvement, and understanding?
29. Be yourself and encourage students to be themselves.

When an Advisor Should Be Concerned

Being aware of signals that indicate the possibility of problems can be helpful to an advisor in making a judgment about whether or where to refer a student.

The following signs may indicate that a student should benefit from a referral.

Unusual Behavior

1. Withdrawal from usual social interaction
2. Marked seclusion and unwillingness to communicate
3. Persistent antisocial behavior such as lying, stealing, or other deviant acts
4. Lack of social skills or deteriorating personal hygiene
5. Inability to sleep or excessive sleeping
6. Loss of appetite or excessive appetite (starving or bingeing behavior)
7. Unexplained crying or outbursts of anger
8. Acutely increased activity (i.e., ceaseless talking or extreme restlessness)
9. Repeated absence from classes
10. Unusual irritability
11. Thought disorder (i.e., the student's conversation does not make sense)
12. Suspiciousness, irrational feeling of persecution

Traumatic Changes in Personal Relationships

1. Death of a family member or a close friend
2. Difficulties in marriage or family relationships
3. Dating and courtship difficulties
4. Sexual abuse (i.e., rape, incest, harassment)
5. Terminal/chronic illness of a family member

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

1. Indications of excessive drinking or drug abuse (i.e., binges, neglects eating or physical appearance, impaired thinking)
2. Severe drug reaction (i.e., bizarre behavior, unexplained “blackouts” of memory)
3. Being a child of an alcoholic or drug dependent parent

Academic Problems

1. Dramatic drop in grade point average
2. Deficient reading speed or comprehension
3. Poor study habits
4. Incapacitating test anxiety
5. Sudden changes in academic performance
6. Lack of class attendance

Career Choice Problems

1. Dissatisfaction with academic major
2. Unrealistic career aspirations
3. Confusion with regard to interests, abilities, or values
4. Chronic indecisiveness or choice conflict
5. Uncertainty of career alternatives

Taken individually any of these signals may be insufficient to warrant intervention.

The National Clearinghouse for Academic Advising – *The Ohio State University Affiliated with the National Academic Advising Association*

The National Clearinghouse for Academic Advising is a repository and distribution center for information about all aspects of academic advising. Any person with a professional interest in academic advising may contribute to or request information from this clearinghouse. It contains information about advising topics, including bibliographies, books, serials, other printed materials and non-print resources. Examples of topics for which information is needed and available are listed below.

Access this information through the NACADA Web Page at <http://www.ksu.edu/nacada> or e-mail: advising@magnus.acs.ohiostate.edu or contact:

Dr. George Steele, Director
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The Ohio State University
207 Enarson Hall, 154 W. 12th Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210
(614) 292-0646

Dr. Melinda McDonald
Assistant Director
(614) 292-8278

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Academic Difficulty, Students in | Physically Disabled |
| Advising Profession, The | Educational Aspirations of College |
| Advising & Counseling Adults | Students |
| General Concerns | Ethical Concerns in Advising |
| Programs & Curricula | Ethical Issues Involving Student |
| Recruiting & Admission | Conduct/Misconduct |
| *Advisor Burnout | Ethics, Teaching of |
| Advisor Training | Evaluation and Assessment: |
| African-American Students | 1975-1987 |
| Athletes, Student | 1988-1990 |
| Attrition, Student | 1991-1993 |
| Award Winning NACADA | Faculty Advising |
| Programs | Freshman Advising |
| Career Advising & Decision | Freshman Course |
| Making | Freshman Orientation |
| Characteristics, Student | Gender Differences & Equity |
| Community Colleges, Advising | Graduate Student Advising |
| Concerns of | *Handbooks: |
| Commuter Students | Advisor Handbooks |
| Computer Assisted Advising | Parent Handbooks |
| Departmental Advising | Student Handbooks |
| Developmental Advising | Hispanic-American Students |
| Delivery of Academic Advising | Honor Students |
| Disabled Student Advising: | International Students |
| Learning Disabled | Honor Students |
| International Students | Retention and Retention of Special |
| Legal Issues | Populations |
| Mentoring | Undergraduate Professional |

*Mission Statements
Multicultural Student Advising
*NACADA Brochure
National Clearinghouse
Bibliography List
National Clearinghouse Brochure
Native-American Students
Parents/Family Influences on
College Students
Peer Advising
*Pre-Service Training Handbooks
Residence Hall Advising and
Resident Assistants

Students, Advising
Sexual Harassment
Student Problems
Transfer Student Advising &
Matriculation
Theories Relating to Academic
Advising
*University College Manual
*University College Survey Course
Women's Issues, History and
Studies
Women's Student & Career Issues

All bibliographies are available on the NACADA Web Page at <http://www.ksu.edu/nacada> or on a 3.5 diskette in WordPerfect 5.1, except those marked with an asterisk (*). Those are available only in paper copy. Costs limit the number of paper copies available to (5) at one time. For NACADA members there is no charge for services.

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