

Advising



Focusing on the First Year 2015
January 27th

"An excellent advisor does the same for the student's entire curriculum that the excellent teacher does for one course." - Marc Lowenstein

"Advising is what we do WITH students, not what we do TO students." - Unknown

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Academic Advising – A Formal Statement

Overview

Academic advising for undergraduate students at The Ohio State University is provided by the colleges and departments that offer the programs—the degrees, the majors, the minors—that students are pursuing. Students who have not decided on a major are advised in University Exploration, a unit that collaborates with every college and department to advise students with multiple interests. Where a student will go, therefore, to seek academic advice will vary by student and by academic program; the Columbus campus does not have a central academic advising office. (Ohio State’s regional campuses do have central advising offices, and undecided students on any campus can seek advising in University Exploration.) Distribution of responsibilities ensures that a student receives advice from someone who, through proximity to the program, its faculty and administrators, knows and understands it well, rather than “generically,” knows the details, reasons, and nuances of requirements, and the particularities of courses.

To ensure that a decentralized structure does not become a loose assemblage of discrete, isolated parts, the Office of Undergraduate Education, under the direction of Vice Provost and Undergraduate Dean Wayne Carlson, helps to coordinate academic advising across the undergraduate units. To support the colleges, the office provides training and professional development in areas of common concern. It convenes regular meetings of representatives from colleges and departments to disseminate information, discuss and address areas of mutual importance, and promote shared standards and practice. The office also provides some kinds of technical support and consults in considering and resolving complex cases.

The Role of an Advisor

Although responsibilities vary, nearly all undergraduate units employ professional advisors. In some programs—those, for example, in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences; the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences; and the College of Arts and Sciences Honors Program—faculty advising also plays an important role, especially around the areas of the major and career/professional mentoring and guidance. Faculty mentoring, outside formal advising, also occurs through other channels, including the Second-Year Transformational Experience Program.

Even within the domain of professional advising, “academic advisor” is rarely a uniform, undifferentiated role. In many areas, advising responsibilities are joined with other job duties—recruitment, marketing and communication, obtaining and analyzing data, administration, course instruction, and course scheduling, to take a few examples. Student-to-advisor ratios vary accordingly, from relatively low (80:1) to quite high (600+:1, in some cases).

In addition to their expertise in particular academic programs, advisors also have extensive knowledge about college and university rules, procedures, and resources. Complementing such institutional knowledge is their broader experience of higher education: at the time they are hired, nearly all advisors have completed a Masters degree or higher and have work experience in higher education. Advisors can play a significant role in student success and often serve as a point of contact (though certainly not the only significant contact) throughout a student’s academic career, helping students navigate both their academic program and the larger university, and in helping them take full advantage of the academic resources the university affords.

The Advising Relationship

Whatever an advisor’s background, the relationship between advisor and advisee is, ideally, that of student and teacher: an advisor does not tell a student what to do and does not simply dispense information, but helps students to enrich their education, to develop and fulfill their potential. To accomplish that ideal, advising must be a joint endeavor with reciprocal responsibilities, an enterprise in which both advisor and

student actively engage and participate. Students seeking to graduate in four years, for example, must decide on an appropriate major and degree within a time compatible with four-year graduation. Though an advisor can guide students, helping them to explore possible choices suited to the students' goals, students themselves must choose programs that fit their interests and strengths. When consulted, advisors provide intentional, purposeful advising. Students must seek advice regularly; develop and follow academic plans in consultation with their advisors; meet the standards for progress defined by their academic units; and consistently complete appropriate course loads successfully—and consult with their advisor when their progress seems at risk. While pre-plotted plans and “bingo sheets” may serve as rough templates, students vary considerably in their academic interests, goals, and progress, and each student's plan for completing degree requirements should be determined individually.

In the course of performing their jobs, academic advisors often negotiate two, sometimes competing, realms of responsibility. They must know when to challenge students and when to support them, balancing the task of representing the institution with that of assisting students who need help. They are expected to uphold programmatic rules and standards, to guarantee the academic integrity of majors and degrees. They must also respect students, understand the difficulties that students encounter, and advocate for individual students when circumstances seem to warrant an exception to the rules. Knowing which way to incline in a particular case requires training, sympathy, and experience, a knowledge of precedent and institutional values that deepens and enriches over time. Although most advisors are not authorized to make substantive exceptions to curricular requirements or university rules, they are trained to know when to take questions up within the department or college, for a higher level of decision, and they learn, with experience, how much or how little encouragement it is appropriate to offer a student.

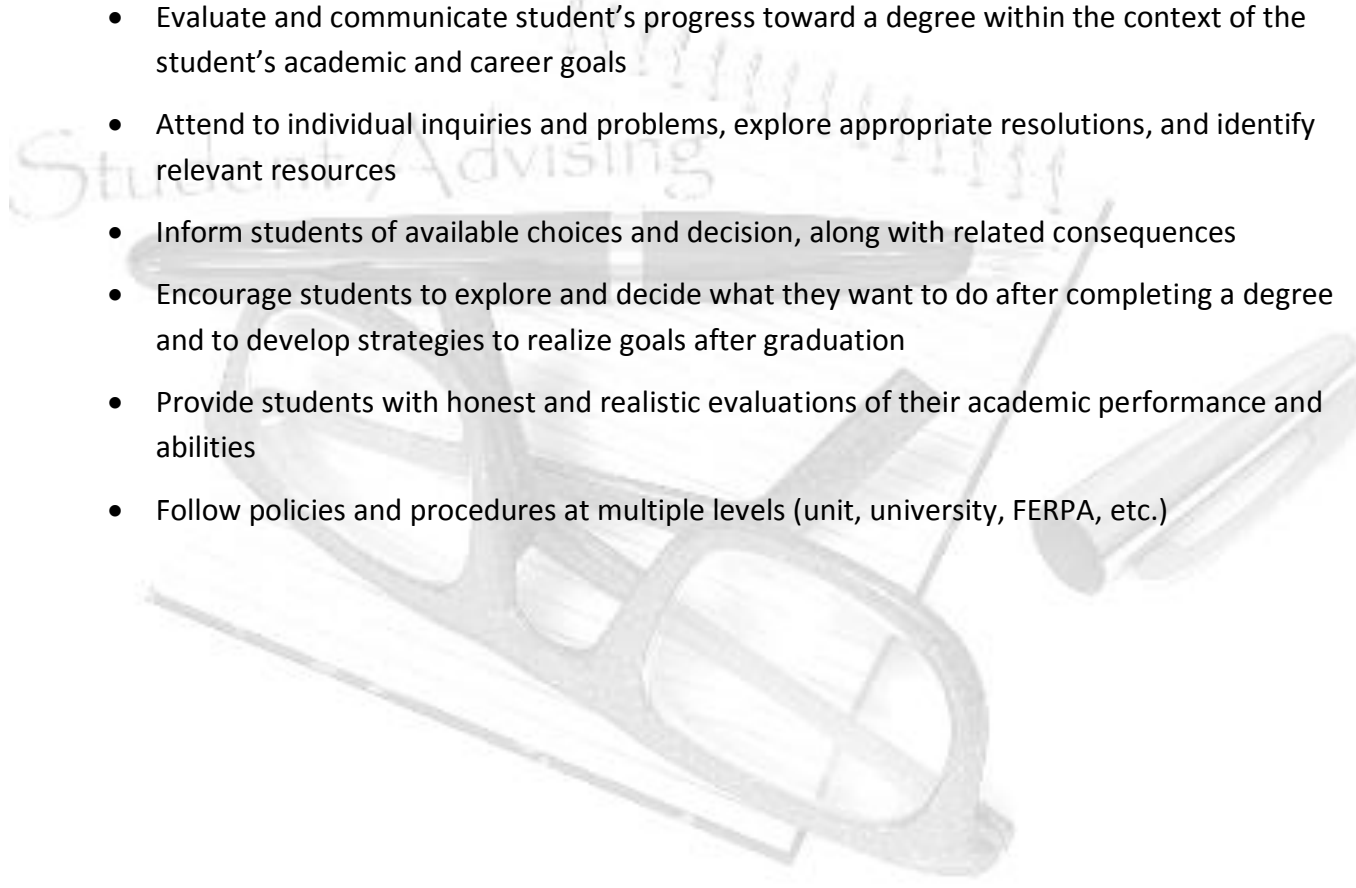
Working with students from diverse backgrounds and populations, academic advisors must project civility and warmth, courtesy and understanding, even in cases that require the delivery of unwelcome news. These are qualities we seek to foster among students, and they are qualities the advisor should aim to communicate to a student as the basis of a productive advising relationship. Patience and even temperament are essential to the process of advising and ought to be part of every advising contact. For many students, their academic advisor represents their principal contact with the university's administration—and the primary means of getting advice and help in dealing with what can seem a bewildering bureaucracy.

“The fundamental purpose of academic advising is to help students become effective agents for their own lifelong learning and personal development. Our relationships with students – the questions we raise, the perspectives we share, the resources we suggest, the short-term decisions and long-range plans we help them think through – all should aim to increase their capacity to take charge of their own existence.” ~ Arthur W. Chickering



Our Essential Tasks and Functions

An advisor should be able to:

- Listen to students and respond respectfully and courteously
 - Respond appropriately and adaptively to each student's needs
 - be reasonably accessible and responsive
 - Understand and appreciate the value of diversity
 - Maintain accurate and timely records
 - Provide accurate information within the advising partnership
 - Understand, communicate, and know how to locate programmatic and curricular information
 - Evaluate and communicate student's progress toward a degree within the context of the student's academic and career goals
 - Attend to individual inquiries and problems, explore appropriate resolutions, and identify relevant resources
 - Inform students of available choices and decision, along with related consequences
 - Encourage students to explore and decide what they want to do after completing a degree and to develop strategies to realize goals after graduation
 - Provide students with honest and realistic evaluations of their academic performance and abilities
 - Follow policies and procedures at multiple levels (unit, university, FERPA, etc.)
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Referring a Student to an Academic Advisor

Given the possibility that many students will have multiple advisors officially assigned to them in their Student Center and/or students may use the term “advisor” loosely to mean “someone” at the university who has helped them in some way, the standard referral of “*see your advisor*” may not convey sufficient or clear information to students. Referrals to an advisor are best made with an eye to the role of an academic advisor and to the structure of advising in the student’s unit.

All referrals for **current students** should be made to the student’s CURRENT college of enrollment, not to one in which they intend to enroll or will be enrolled in a future term (students who want to petition for a change in record – a retroactive drop or withdrawal for example, should be referred to the college in which they were enrolled that term).

When a student is **returning to OSU after a hiatus** and would like to change their college of enrollment, please send them to their intended college who can then talk with them about admission requirements (if any), etc. instead of the one they “were” enrolled in.

AGR	College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
<p>Students in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences have a mentoring relationship with their faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is assigned through the Coordinating Advisor after seeing the College Counselor. In most cases, students consult with the faculty advisor for course planning and selection, encouragement and suggestions for improving “soft skills,” research opportunities, career opportunities and planning, internship opportunities, career development, and letters of recommendation. They meet with the College Office staff for most other matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 100 Agricultural Administration Building or call (614) 292-6891 	
AHR	Knowlton School of Architecture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 100 Knowlton Hall call (614) 247-7244 	
ASC	College of Arts and Sciences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The College of Arts and Sciences has a small central advising office in 100 Denney Hall, but most academic advising is done in the departments. Go to http://ascadvising.osu.edu/programs/majors and click on the student’s intended major, and you will see the contact information for the advising office and/or advisor(s) who can assist. When in doubt, you may call the central (Denney Hall) office at 292-6961 for assistance in making sure the student is routed to the right place. (Please note that Honors students should contact their advisor in 3180 Smith Laboratory, 292-5104.) 	
BUS	Fisher College of Business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 120 Schoenbaum Hall call (614) 292-2715 	
DHY	Division of Dental Hygiene
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 3082 Postle Hall or call (614) 292-2228 	
EHE	College of Education & Human Ecology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, A100 PAES or call (614) 292-6612 	

ENG	College of Engineering
<p>Ask the student if they are officially declared as a pre-major/major or undecided before referring them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Undecided students</u> admitted to the College of Engineering are counseled by advisors in the central college office in 244 Hitchcock Hall. ➤ <u>Pre-majors and students accepted into a major</u> consult with an advisor in the department offering the degree. <p>Contact information for academic advisors in the College of Engineering can be found at https://advising.engineering.osu.edu/contact-us</p>	
ENR	School of Environment & Natural Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to 210 Kottman Hall or call (614) 292-2265 	
HRS	School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to the first floor of Atwell Hall for pre-majors and declared majors. They can also call (614) 292-1706 	
JGS	John Glenn School of Public Affairs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 110 Page Hall or call (614) 292-8696 	
NUR	College of Nursing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to, 240 Newton Hall or call (614) 292-4941 	
PBH	College of Public Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to 100 Cunz Hall or call (614) 292-8350 	
PHR	College of Pharmacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to 150 Parks Hall or call (614) 292-5001 	
SWK	College of Social Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to 306B or 306C or 306B/C Stillman Hall or call (614) 292-6228 	
EXP	University Exploration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students should be directed to 352 Denney Hall or call (614) 292-0646 	