Effective Advising:
Defining It & Delivering It

Academic Advisor Workshop
Wichita State University

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9 AM

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**Defining Academic Advising:**
Its Mission, Purpose, & Intended Outcomes

* Advising as *Strategic Course Scheduling*

* Advising as *Mentoring*

* Advising as *Teaching*
(See Appendix A., “Advising Syllabus,” p. 5)

→ **Action Strategy:** *Develop an Advising Mission Statement*—a clear and consensual definition of what constitutes effective academic advising that identifies:
(a) its *purpose*,
(b) *roles/responsibilities* of advisors and advisees, and
(c) its *intended outcomes*.

(See: Appendix B. “The Power of Advising,” p. 8; Appendix C. “Potential Program Objectives,” p. 10)

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**Delivering Academic Advising:**
Key Processes & Principles

1. **Personalized:** validate the student as a *unique individual* and advising the student as a *whole person*

→ **Action Strategy:**

* Knowing *who* our students are (their names)

* Knowing *about* our students—their interests, talents, values, and goals

(See Appendix D: “Advisee Information Card”, p. 11)
2. **Proactive**: early intervention and engagement of students in the process of long-term planning.

→ Action Strategy: Encourage and engage *first-year students* in the process of long-range educational planning

(See Appendix E: “Educational/Graduation Planning Form”, p. 12)

3. **Intrusive**: actively *reach out* to students to check on their progress and challenges.

→ Action Strategy: *Initiate* ongoing discussion with students on their *progress and commitment* to their educational plan and what support they need to complete it or modify it.

4. **Integrative**: use advising as a “hub” to connect and direct students to key *student-support services*.

→ Action Strategy: Integrate *academic* advising and *career* counseling.

(See Appendix F: “The Art & Science of Making Student Referrals,” p. 13)
5. **Student-Empowering**: enable students to take a more *active and self-responsible* role in the advising process

→ Action Strategy: Supply students with accurate information in *understandable, user-friendly form* (e.g., flat sheets, flow charts, or road maps).

6. **Advisor-Empowering**: *emancipate* advisors from *clerical* aspects of advising to free-up more time for them to engage in personalized mentoring/teaching, and equip them with effective strategies for doing so—via *professional development*.

(See Appendix G: “Strategic Advising: Ten Suggestions,” p. 14)

→ Action Strategy: Utilize *group advising, advising technology, and peer advisors* to create more time for advisors to interact with advisees on a one-to-one basis.
Appendix A

ADVISING SYLLABUS

Term: ________

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Advisor:
Office Location:
Office Phone:
Office Hours:
E-mail Address:

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

ADVISING MISSION STATEMENT

KEY ADVISING EVENTS & DATES for ___ Term

___ First day of classes (If not in class the first day, you may lose your place in the class to anyone on the waiting list.)

___ Last day to add a new class to your course schedule and last day to drop a class without receiving a Withdrawal (W) on your transcript.

___ Educational Planning Week (Make appointment with me to develop a tentative, long-range educational plan

___ Majors Fair

___ Career Fair

___ Midterm Exams Week

___ Midterm Progress Reports given out by instructors and mailed to students receiving a grade of “C-“or below in any course. If you receive one, make an appointment to see me as soon as possible.

___ Group Advising for students to select courses for the next semester. Only students attending group advising will be given priority registration. Check email and flyers around campus for group-advising locations.

___ Individual Appointments to select courses for next semester. Sign up on sheets outside my office door.

___ Course selection begins in Registrar’s Office
__Last day to Withdraw from a Course. (If you withdraw on or before this date, you will receive a “W” on your transcript instead of a grade. If you want to withdraw from a course, please see me to get approval and signature. Note: To withdraw from a course, you have to officially notify the Registrar’s Office and the instructor, by completing a “Course Withdraw Form”. You can’t withdraw from a course by just not going to class anymore; if you do, you could end up with a grade of “F” because of missed assignments and exams.

__Last Day of Classes

__Final Exams

**OBJECTIVES & INTENDED OUTCOMES OF ADVISING**

1. Facilitate crystallization of students’ educational and vocational goals.
2. Increase student utilization of campus resources.
3. Promote student involvement in co-curricular experiences that integrate them into the campus and develop their leadership skills.
4. Strengthen students’ ability to think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions.
5. Increase student knowledge about university policies, procedures and curricular requirements, and their underlying rationale.
6. Foster deeper appreciation of higher education and the university mission.

**ADVISING PHILOSOPHY & MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS**

My Role as Advisor:
As your academic advisor, I'll try my best to serve as a mentor, providing you with personal guidance, support, and advocacy. My primary goal is to help you make the most out of your college experience and connect it with your future plans (e.g., future college, future major, future career). If you already think you know what you're going to do and going to be, I'll try to help you confirm your choice—to make sure it's a decision that is best for you. If you're undecided about a future major, college, or career, then I'll try to help you identify some good options—choices that would be most compatible with your personal talents, interests, needs and values.

I see advising and teaching as closely related because in the process of helping you reach decisions about your future—your life, you will also be learning a lot about yourself—gaining self-insight, improving your goal-setting, clarifying your values, and developing your critical thinking and decision-making skills. These are transferable skills that you can take with you and use throughout life to improve the quality of your personal and professional life.
Your Role as *Advisee*:

I see your role as helping me help you. In other words, in order for me to be an effective advisor, I need some help and cooperation from you as my advisee. In particular you can help me by:

* Keeping appointments we've made.
* Being prepared for our appointments. Just like class, you need to do your homework. I can't do it all for you; if I did, that would make me a co-dependent, savior, or dictator rather than a mentor and advisor. **The ultimate responsibility for making decisions about your educational goals and plans rests with you.** My responsibility is to assist you in becoming aware of your options, your degree of “fit” with these options, and the implications and consequences of your decisions.
* Being honest and open with me. For instance, if you're unhappy about something I’m doing, or if you're experiencing a personal problem that's interfering with your studies, please don't be afraid to confide in me. I'll strive to be a good listener and will never violate your trust. If it's a problem I can't help you with, I'll try to get you together with someone who may be better or more qualified to do so.

If we remain honest and open with each other, and if we work as a team, we should have a close relationship that will enrich the quality of your college experience and enhance my effectiveness as an advisor. A better advisee makes a better advisor and vice versa. Let’s help each other be the best we can be in our respective roles.
Appendix B

The **Power** of Advising for Promoting Student Learning & Development:

Seven Significant Educational Roles of Academic Advisors

Students’ instructors vary from term to term, but their academic advisor may be the only campus representative with whom students can have **sustained contact** and a **stable relationship** that may endure **throughout** their college experience. Compared to relationships with instructors, advisee-advisor relationships advisors are free of formal evaluation of student performance, allowing advisors to interacting with their advisees as **clients** who are served and developed, rather than as students who are evaluated and graded. Thus, an advisor is someone who can grow to know students individually, learn about their unique interests, aptitudes and values, and take personal interest in their educational experiences, achievements and accomplishments.

Through long-range academic planning, advisors help students develop an educational identity and deepen their college-learning experience. Through strategic course scheduling, advisors can guide students to moderate academic challenges that optimize their capacity for educational growth while minimizing their risk for college attrition.

Advising embraces a variety of highly influential roles that, collectively, address the student as a “whole person” and, in combination, have the potential to exert a synergistic (multiplicative) effect on student learning outcomes. Listed below are seven powerful advising roles that highlight the advisor’s wide range of influence and illustrate the importance of academic advising for promoting students’ holistic development and personal success. Simply stated, good advice is priceless.

1. **Instructor.** An advisor is a **teacher** whose campus knowledge and probing questions can draw out students’ ability to learn deeply and think integrative. Advisors’ instructional role includes the following functions:
   * supplying students with accurate and timely information about the curriculum, co-curriculum, college policies, and administrative procedures;
   * equipping students with specific strategies for academic and personal success;
   * promoting divergent (expansive) thinking that broadens and integrates students’ perspectives with respect to their educational options, goals, and future plans;
   * sharpening students’ cognitive skills for making informed educational choices through the use of critical thinking, effective problem solving, and reflective decision-making skills.

2. **Interpreter (Meaning Maker).** An advisor is a **decoder** or **translator** of higher education “language”, providing students the context they need to **make sense of** and develop an **appreciation for**:
   * the **value** of higher education and the mission of their home campus;
   * the **curriculum**—i.e., promoting students’ understanding the meaning and purpose of general education and its relationship to academic specialization, career exploration, and career preparation; and
   * the **co-curriculum**—i.e., appreciating the importance of out-of-class experiences for
promoting student learning and leadership development).

3. **Mentor.** An advisor is a *learned guide* and *educational consultant* who enables students to:
   * discover the relevance of their current college experience for their future-life plans
   * develop a sense of life purpose and personal direction
   * strike a healthy *balance* between idealism and realism with respect to their educational, professional, and personal choices.

4. **Referral Agent.** An advisor is an interpersonal connection agent who strategically refer and unites students with success-promoting agents and social resources, such as:
   * academic support and student development professionals
   * faculty members and career mentors
   * personal and financial counselors
   * peer leaders and support agents.

5. **Learning Coach.** An advisor works with students on an individual basis to:
   * assess and develop their individual talents, abilities and strengths
   * encourage personal reflection and self-assessment of their performance
   * monitor their progress and provide them with personal feedback about how to improve their performance
   * inspire and motivate them to put forth their best effort, to be resilient, and to achieve peak levels of personal performance.

6. **Educational Counselor.** An advisor is an authority figure whom students can turn to for personal *counsel and guidance* and who serves as:
   * a caring, compassionate confidante with whom students can share academic and personal challenges, and freely explore their personal values and belief systems
   * an active listener who responds to students’ transitional issues and struggles in an empathic, non-judgmental manner
   * a mirror for reflective introspection, self-awareness, and self-discovery of their distinctive interests, talents, and values.
   * a sensitive diagnostician who helps students make realistic self-appraisals of their personal priorities, strengths and limitations.

7. **Advocate.** An advisor is a *mediator* and “go to” person who can “*go to bat*” for students, empowering them to:
   * navigate the maddening maze of bureaucracy and cut through the multiple layers of organizational decision-making and procedural protocol
   * anticipate, troubleshoot, and circumvent arbitrary administrative policies and practices that serve the institution more than they do the student
   * serve as a sounding board and change agent for institutional injustices that demotivate or dehumanize students.
Appendix C

Potential Program Objectives & Learning Outcomes for Academic Advising

Students will:

1. Become enthused about higher education.

2. Become aware of the expectations of higher education and how it differs from secondary education.

3. Understand what it means to be an “engaged” student, both inside and outside the classroom.

4. Appreciate the meaning, purpose, and value of the liberal arts and general education.

5. Capitalize on campus resources designed to promote their learning and development.

6. Connect with and capitalize on peer leaders/mentors who can support their success.


8. Become aware of educational and vocational options and how they align or “fit” with personal attributes.

9. Make an informed first choice about an educational/vocational goal.

10. Connect with peers who share common educational/vocational interests and goals.

11. Self-monitor and critically evaluate their educational progress toward, and personal commitment to, their initially chosen educational/vocational goal.

12. Reflect on their curricular and co-curricular learning experiences, particularly in terms of the transferable, lifelong skills they are acquiring from these experiences.
Appendix D
ADVISEE INFORMATION CARD
Potential Questions for Getting to Know Your Advisees

PERSONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
1. Your name (as you prefer to be called)?
2. Phone number/E-Mail number (optional)?
3. (a) Place of birth? (b) Places lived? (c) Present residence?
4. (a) Why did you decide to go to college? (b) Why did you choose this college? (What brought you here?)
5. What other colleges (if any) have you attended? If yes, how would you compare your experience there with your experience here thus far?
6. What jobs or volunteer experiences have you had?
7. Will you be working or volunteering this term? If so, how many hours per week?
8. Will you have family responsibilities this term?
9. Has anyone in your family (parents, siblings) graduated from college?
10. How confident or comfortable do you feel right now about being here and being successful here?
11. What are you most excited or enthused about now? (if anything)
12. What are you most concerned or worried about now? (if anything)

FUTURE PLANS:
13. Are you planning to continue your education at this college until you obtain your degree? (How sure are you about this?)
14. Intended major? (How sure are you about this choice?) (What led you to this choice?)
15. Intended career? (How sure are you about this choice?) (What led you to this choice?)

PERSONAL ABILITIES/APTITUDES:
16. What are you really good at? What comes easily or naturally to you?
17. What would you say is your greatest gift or talent?
18. What do you really excel at when you apply yourself and put forth your best effort?
19. What would you say are your most well-developed academic skills?
20. What would you say have been your (a) most enjoyable and (b) least enjoyable learning experiences?
21. How do you think you learn best?
22. If you have received any special awards or other forms of recognition, what have they been for?

PERSONAL INTERESTS:
23. What sorts of things capture and hold your interest or attention?
24. What sorts of things do you look forward to, and get excited about?
25. When time seems to “fly by,” what are you usually doing?
26. If you had a day, week, or year to go anywhere you wanted and do anything you liked, where would you go and what would you do?
27. I enjoy learning most when . . .
28. What academic subjects seem to interest you the most?
29. Of the classes you’ve taken, which one were saddest to see end? Why?
30. If you’ve had previous work or volunteer experience, what jobs or tasks did you most enjoy doing (if any)?

PERSONAL VALUES:
31. When you have free time, what do you usually find yourself doing?
32. When you have extra spending money, what do you usually spend it on?
33. What would be one thing that you really stand for or believe in?
34. What would you say are your highest priorities in life?
35. What does living a “good life” mean to you?
36. How would you define success? (What does “being successful” mean to you?)
37. Would you rather be thought of as: (a) smart, (b) wealthy, (c) creative, or (d) caring?
   (Rank from 1 to 4, with 1 being the highest)
38. Is there anything else about yourself that you’d like to share, or that you think I should be aware of,
which might help me get to know you better or enable me to be a more effective advisor to you?

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Appendix E

**EDUCATIONAL/GRADUATION PLANNING FORM**

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<th>SERVICE LEARNING &amp; INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>Potential Obstacles &amp; Available Resources for Addressing Obstacles</th>
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Appendix F

The Art & Science of Making Student Referrals: Suggested Strategies

1. Describe the goals and services of the referred service. (Don’t assume that the student already knows its purpose or benefits.)

2. Personalize the referral: Refer the student to a person (a name)—rather than an office.

3. Reassure the student of the qualifications, capability, and approachability of the person to whom s/he is being referred.

4. Help the student identify what questions to ask and how to approach the resource person.

5. Make sure that the student knows where to go and how to get there. Or, if possible, and better yet: (Û)

6. Offer to phone for an appointment while the student is in your presence. Or, if possible, better yet: (Û)

7. Offer to walk with the student to the referred person’s office.

8. If the student is not willing to act on your referral at the moment, offer to check back with the student at a later point to time.

9. Follow-up the initial referral by asking the student if the contact occurred and how it went—in general (rather than probing for specific or personal details).

10. Acknowledge the student’s willingness to seek support, for taking personal initiative to resolve the issue, and for capitalizing on supportive resources (i.e., for being resourceful person).
Appendix G

Strategic Advising: Top-Ten Suggestions

1. At your first advising session with a student:
   a) Focus on connecting personally with the student before launching into class scheduling and degree requirements. Learn the student’s name and gather information about the student that will enable you to personalize the advising process (e.g., have the student complete a personal information sheet).
   b) Share a little bit about yourself (e.g., your personal and professional background).
   c) Clarify your role as an advisor and the student’s role as advisee (e.g., via an “advising syllabus”)

2. When helping students create a class schedule for the upcoming term, try to:
   a) place students into transferable, skill-building courses (e.g., math, writing, information literacy, and oral communication) as soon as possible in their college experience
   b) be mindful of what the student’s total workload will be for all courses combined—e.g., the cumulative amount of reading and writing across the courses in which the student would be enrolled
   c) be mindful of the student’s employment and familial responsibilities
   d) place the student in at least one small-sized class
   e) allow the student some degree of personal choice in the course selection-and-scheduling process.

3. To signal your commitment to advising and your accessibility to your advisees, post a weekly advisee sign-up sheet on your office door. When you’re out of the office, leave a note about the time you’ll be back and give students the opportunity to leave a message if they happen to come by while you’re gone (e.g., on an erasable white board).

4. Before the student enters your office for an advising session, take a few minutes to review the student’s personal information sheet, course schedule, or notes taken during your last meeting. This will position you to greet the student with direct eye contact and begin the meeting with a personal conversation—as opposed to fumbling
through the student’s folder or trying to retrieve advising information from your computer while the student is sitting in front of you.

5. Keep an ongoing record of topics discussed with the student during individual advising sessions—i.e., “advisor notes”—and use these notes as a conceptual bridge to create continuity between successive advising sessions (e.g., “last time we talked about . . .”)

6. Maintain a personal connection with the student by using open-ended questions that check on how students are doing:
   a) Academically (How are classes? Grades? Work load? What learning habits or strategies are working well for you right now? What changes do you think you may need to make?)
   b) Socially (Have you made interpersonal connections with people on campus?)
   c) Emotionally (How’s your stress level?)
   d) Physically (Are you feeling well?)
   e) Collegiately (Are you comfortable here? Is it what you expected it to be? Have you encountered any challenges or obstacles that you didn’t anticipate?)

7. If a student isn’t doing well in a particular course, ask focused questions to identify whether the cause is related to:
   a) Skill (Do you think your low performance is due to inadequate background preparation in reading, writing, or math skills?)
   b) Will (Do you think you need to put in more time and effort?)
   c) Strategy (Do you think you have the skills to do well, are putting in the time and effort to do well, but still not learning effectively or not demonstrating what you’ve learned on tests and assignments?)

8. Acknowledge students’ educational and personal progress. For instance, send a congratulatory email when a student achieves academic excellence (e.g., makes the Dean’s List), rebounds from academic difficulties (e.g., recovers from academic probation), reaches educational milestones (e.g., completes the first year), or experiences personal milestones (e.g., has a birthday).

9. When registering students for the in the spring for the fall term of the following academic year, check to be sure that they not only have their classes planned, but they have a plan for:
   a) financing their education (e.g., financial aid, work study, and/or employment plans are in place)
   b) housing (e.g., on or off campus).

10. Try to have an encouraging personal conversation with your advisees near the end of the academic year—i.e., before the summer intervening between fall and spring
terms—because most college attrition occurs between the end of spring term and the start of the following fall term (a.k.a. “summer melt”).

\[ \text{GO SHOCKERS!} \]