

The relationship between academic advising and student success

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Ideally, academic advising is seen as an integral part of the faculty responsibility for the development of well-educated students in the discipline and for their career and/or graduate school readiness. Practically, academic advising is also fundamental to supporting timely progression toward graduation. Effective academic advising requires full participation, cooperation, and communication between a prepared and motivated student, a well-trained professional advisor, and a seasoned faculty member in the discipline.

Roles and responsibilities related to advising and student success

MTSU proposes a shared model of academic advising, in which students receive quality mentoring and advisement in the major by a faculty member in the discipline while working with a professional advisor who assists and intervenes in issues related to enrollment, progression and student success. Faculty advisors will be assigned to students as appropriate to the departmental or college student success plan; in all cases, faculty are expected to actively participate in advising and mentoring students in the development of professional interest areas, career plans, and goals for graduate education. Professional advisors help each student to anticipate enrollment barriers and stress points as they progress through the program of study, and assist the student in developing coping plans to help successfully meet the anticipated challenges. Deans and department chairs develop comprehensive student success plans and monitor and evaluate progress in meeting university retention, progression and graduation goals.

Faculty:

The traditional roles and responsibilities of faculty focus on ensuring that each student masters the necessary course material and is academically prepared for subsequent courses. Additionally, faculty are expected to advise and mentor students regarding success in the discipline and career and/or graduate school preparation. To this end, faculty will:

- Provide timely feedback to students regarding their course performance.
- Turn in mid-term grades, academic progress reports, and attendance reporting as required.
- Identify struggling students in their courses and assist them in connecting to academic support programs.
- Provide effective academic advising related to the discipline and areas of professional interest.
- Schedule and be present for regular office hours, during which their main function is to be available to meet with students for one-on-one class help, advising and mentoring.
- Coordinate with professional College Advisors and with the Career Development Center to provide mentoring for students regarding internships, careers, and graduate studies.
- Assist in speaking with incoming students at CUSTOMS and Transfer Orientation, as needed.
- When appropriate serve as faculty advisor to student clubs or organizations.

Professional Advisors:

Professional advisors will have primary responsibility and accountability for the retention and successful graduation of students on their assigned caseload. The goal is to insure that students can readily

identify and easily access one consistent advisor throughout their tenure in their major. Professional advisors are charged with meeting regularly with their assigned students, communicating with students regarding potential issues that might negatively impact success, and intervening with students who get off track from their degree plan. To that end, professional advisors will:

- Meet with students to assist with course selection, course registration, dropping and adding of courses, and other administrative tasks related to enrollment.
- Refer students to faculty for advisement related to the discipline and areas of professional interest.
- Use CMS and other software to regularly monitor each assigned student to track progress and intervene, as appropriate. Maintain effective electronic records regarding contacts with each student, advice given/referrals made, and overall student progress.
- Regularly monitor the match between the student's stated career objective and the academic plan.
- Monitor course and tutoring attendance.
- Follow up with students regarding academic progress reports filed by faculty and/or poor midterm grades.
- Make personal contact with students not attending, not enrolled, or who are otherwise not on track for timely graduation.
- Refer students to appropriate campus resources for both academic and non-academic concerns.
- Be available to assist students throughout the year, including periods between semesters and throughout the summer.
- Provide feedback to department chairs, Deans, and other university administrators regarding roadblocks and barriers that students encounter.

Department chairs:

Department chairs are responsible for: the creation, planning and execution of the department's Student Success Plan in alignment with the college's plan; consultation with advisors to ensure the quality of degree programs are maintained; and monitoring of faculty tasks. To these ends, chairs will:

- Ensure that courses are scheduled with sufficient capacity and on an appropriate rotation to ensure timely progression and graduation.
- Ensure that appropriate academic supports, including tutoring and supplemental instruction, are in place for those courses in which students traditionally struggle.
- Ensure effective faculty participation in the Student Success plan. Provide support, training and resources to assist faculty in their role as academic advisor and career/graduate school mentor within their discipline. Assign faculty advisors to students in the department, as appropriate to the departmental student success plan.
- Provide support and monitoring for faculty completion of mid-term grades, office hours, and any needed scheduling for orientation/CUSTOMS advising.
- For those departments with department-specific professional advisors, the department chair will ensure the appropriate training and supervision of the departmental advisor.
- Consult with professional advisors as needed (and sign substitution forms) for substitutions requested for transfer courses, study abroad, etc.
- Make decisions with faculty regarding late adds and drops from classes.

Deans:

The dean is responsible for the planning and execution of the college's Student Success Plan. To this end, the dean will:

- Monitor data related to student retention and success within the college.
- Create accountability for each academic department related to student success plans and activities.
- Ensure training, supervision and accountability of college and departmental Professional Advisors.
- Manage all aspects of advising functions within the College, and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the overall advising system.

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