

Academic Advisement Council
December 14, 2006 Meeting
Marvin Pittman Administration Building
President's Conference Room
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Present: A. Heaston (Chair), M. Aviles, V. Burden, C. Caplinger, E. Griffis, M. Hale, D. Kittrell-Mikell, V. Miller, E. Murkison, C. Thompson, L. Vance, B. Williams, and C. Griffith (Recorder)

Guest: V. Richards

1. Thinking Outside the Box: Change of Major

Dr. Amy Heaston distributed a copy of "Our Message" developed at the November meeting and asked council members to 'bottom line' the message that we are trying to send to students regarding academic advisement. Comments included:

- Intrusive
- Active
- Involved

It was noted that the advisors suggested at the November meeting that advising is like teaching. *What it is that we are helping our students to learn?* Responses were:

- Professionalism
- How to be a good student
- How to handle situations; helping students to learn how to help themselves

It was further noted that advisors facilitate students' development and growth. Advisors need to communicate to students what the student's responsibility is—which is the developmental piece.

Keeping this context of advisors as teachers in mind, advisors were asked to consider the change of major process.

How well does the current change of major process align with advisement as a teaching/learning tool? What does it teach students? One response was:

- How to jump through hoops

The current change of major process is not developmental, but can become an opportunity to help students understand what is expected in the new major before the change of major form is completed by utilizing the degree evaluation tool. After a lengthy discussion, the Council members recommended that the change of major form be revised as follows:

- Rename form Change of Major/Declaration of Major
- Add a comment field
- If a student is an athlete (identified by EagleID), the form would automatically populate the athlete checkbox on the form.
- Add a field for degree (e.g., BA, BS)
- Require that a degree evaluation be completed at the time of completing the form and that the student bring the degree evaluation to the new advisement center.
- Move the form to a web-based system with automatic forwarding to the next level of review once current reviewer clicks approval.
- Council members agreed that if a student is an athlete, the form would need to be reviewed and approved by Eileen Griffis before it would be sent to the new advisement center and the Registrar's Office (sent to both simultaneously).

- When approved, a confirmation message would be sent to the student, communicating that within two days the student's advisement folder will be forwarded to the new advisement center and that the student is responsible for contacting the center and making an advisement appointment within 48 hours. The location and hours of the advisement center would be included in the message.
- Generate a report for the Registrar's Office to update WINGS with the new major. *Question: How quickly can this be done? Overnight?*
- Provide space on the form for the student's signature. Once completed, the advisor would print out, have the student sign and date the form, and file the form in the student's advisement folder.
- It may be possible to have the form work in-sync with the online advisement appointment system regarding messages and scheduling advisement appointment.
- For undeclared students declaring a major, a core curriculum audit would also be required.

Council members agreed that the student's advisement file would be delivered (not mailed) within two days to the new advisement center.

Amy requested that advisors carefully read this section of today's meeting minutes to be sure their thoughts are accurately represented and to send her any feedback by January 3rd for her January 4th meeting with Mike Deal.

2. Course Registration Follow-Up

Thank you and Feedback

The Registration Analysis was distributed showing that of the initial 2,790 undergraduate students who were not registered as of last month, the Council converted 1,741 of them into registered students by this month. Amy commended the Council's efforts and indicated that they were also applauded at the Enrollment Management Council and recognized at President's Cabinet. Because of the success of this effort, this will now be standard operating procedure for all advisement centers each semester.

An earlier question was raised about incorrect addresses and Amy noted that the Registrar's Office working with Admissions has now established a system where once each academic year a student will be prompted in WINGS to verify the accuracy of their address and phone number.

3. Midterm Progress Report/Early Alert System

How do we make midterm progress reports more effective?

Eileen made several recommendations:

- Reports should come out in 4th week and include at least one exam grade
- All advisement centers need to send same message at same time
- Faculty member could fill out a letter indicating why a U was given
- Registrar's Office could place a hold on the student's record until they have been advised
- Student would take the faculty letter to their advisor; once advisor is satisfied that the student understands what he or she needs to do to improve, the advisor (with permission from the Registrar's Office) could lift the hold on the student's record

A concern was expressed over placing any kind of hold over the student's record for fear that they would only increase the number of students who do not get registered.

Another suggestion was made to move the withdrawal date back to allow more time for advisement.

Dr. Chris Caplinger reported on the forthcoming recommendations of the First Year Task Force which align with many of Eileen's suggestions. The biggest difference is that the First Year Task Force is recommending that faculty have the ability to record the reason for the U in WINGS as part of the midterm grade reporting form. The Task Force is recommending that its faculty initiatives be optional. The Task Force also reviewed policies limiting the number of withdrawals a student can receive during his or her academic career.

The First Year Task Force will be making several recommendations regarding an early alert system where faculty communicate directly with the student but copies of the communication are also sent to the advisor. This system would also be web-based.

Velma Burden noted that the Registrar's Office is working on an electronic model for web-based communications that would most likely support both the midterm progress reports and early alert system.

Chris reported on the Enrollment Management Council's message regarding withdrawing from courses. He distributed the latest draft of the Council's message and requested that advisors sent him any comments by Friday, December 22nd, so he can take those back to the next meet of the Enrollment Management Council.

Strategies for Mandatory Meetings

The Council noted how difficult it was to mandate meetings when they cannot impose any consequences. A suggestion was made to utilize WebCT/Portal for interactive meetings. Another suggestion was to consider how to follow-up with students who do not attend meetings.

4. Advisement Updates

SOAR

Vince Miller distributed several handouts regarding the upcoming SOAR advisement sessions. He noted that the mini-SOARS will be held on January 8th and 9th. It was agreed that the advisors' meeting was not needed. RANs could be picked up at 12:15 p.m. at the information desk; walk-ins and no-shows for early advisement could be picked up at 10 a.m. in the IT lab. At 10 a.m., information on class availability will also be shared. Vince also handed out information on degree evaluation and Web Xtender which generated a discussion on the font size of the degree evaluation. Amy agreed to convey a message to Scott Taylor in her January meeting with him that something must be done to improve this situation. It was also requested that Scott program the CAPP evaluation so that the ID of the person's computer from where the form was printed does not appear on the printed copy. Finally, Vince shared a copy of the SOAR team members and agreed to provide advisors with emails for the SOAR team members so that they could be thanked for their efforts.

University Advisement Sign-Up System Update

Candace Griffith noted that she consolidated everybody's input on requirements and wish lists for this system and sent them to Scott Taylor on 11/28/06. She will follow-up with Scott on December 19th.

5. Topics for Follow-Up

Amy indicated that at the Council's January meeting, they would begin to examine how advisement should be evaluated (see handout from 10/12/06 meeting). Advisors had also requested that a FAQs for advisement be posted on the University's advisement web site, so in January, the Council will also begin to develop these.

6. For the Good of the Order

It was noted that Velma is holding training in the Human Resources Training Room for degree evaluation on Friday, December 15th at 10:30 a.m. and again on Monday, December 18th. Advisors were urged to send any of their people who are not familiar with this system for training so they would be prepared for SOAR.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2007, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Marvin Pittman Administration Building, President's Conference Room