

**Academic Advisement Council**  
**October 12, 2006 Meeting**  
**Marvin Pittman Administration Building**  
**President's Conference Room**  
**1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Present:** A. Heaston (Chair), M. Aviles, M. Boyd, V. Burden, C. Caplinger, E. Griffis, M. Hale, V. Jones, V. Miller, C. Thompson, B. Williams, and C. Griffith (Recorder)

**Guest:** S. Taylor

### **1. University Advisement Sign-Up System (M. Hale/S. Taylor)**

Marilyn Hale summarized the current advisement sign-up system which requires students to come to the advisement center and manually sign-up for an appointment. Marilyn is working with Scott Taylor to automate the process. If other college advisement centers are interested in such a system, their requirements also need to be considered. Three desired CLASS outputs (for a new system) were noted:

1. inform the student of the dates and times their faculty advisor will be present in the center;
2. be web-based; and
3. initiate email reminders of the scheduled appointment.

Scott Taylor reported that an online system could either be purchased or built in-house. The first developmental step is for each college advisement center to outline their needs (define the "rules" under which the system should operate). In addition to the requirements, colleges should also specify what options would be desirable, clearly labeling these options as "wishes." In developing their requirements and wishes for an online system, college advisement centers need to consider what reports will be run from the system.

**Advisor  
Task Item:**

Each advisement center will forward their rules and wish list to Candace Griffith by the close of business on November 8<sup>th</sup> (email to [candaceg@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:candaceg@georgiasouthern.edu)).

Once Scott has had a chance to review the consolidated rules and wish list, he will identify the commonalities and outliers. These will be brought back to the

Council for further discussion. He will also identify software options available for purchase and discuss the pros and cons of building our own system.

The change of major process is also a paper process that includes having students transport sensitive advisement files to their new advisement center. Amy Heaston reported that Mike Deal is willing to put this process on the web; it would be each advisement center's responsibility to then follow-up the changes by having the student's file hand-delivered to the new advisement center at the end of the same day or by the beginning of the next day. The goal for an online process is to notify both the Registrar's Office and the new advisement center of the change of major. The advisement center would be responsible for alerting the appropriate faculty advisor. Scott noted that a report could be generated which would alert the center to all change of majors processed during the day. This report could be used to identify the student files which need to be delivered and to where. Scott agreed to speak with Mike Deal about the process.

It was suggested that it would be worthwhile to examine the change of major process itself to see if the process needed revision, especially at the time of SOAR. For instance, if a student completes their application noting a chemistry major, that major is permanently recorded as the first major regardless of whether the student actually ever enrolls in the major. This reporting structure penalizes the department unfairly in the retention statistics. Scott volunteered to work with Mike Deal to see if the first major could not be pulled after SOAR registration.

## **2. After the Freshman Bubble Pops**

How do you work with sophomores?

COE reported that a special advisement session is held with sophomore students to review the teacher education requirements; otherwise, no other advisement centers noted any special initiatives that target this group of students.

How are sophomores different?

Sophomores either become more academically focused in their second year or they become more disillusioned with the University. The sophomore year is a critical time in the life of a college student and is also a time when attrition becomes a greater risk factor. A question was raised on the impact of loss of HOPE on sophomore retention. According to data produced by the Office of Strategic Research and Analysis, loss of HOPE does not appear to have a significant impact on retention. Indeed, of the Fall 2000 sophomore HOPE-eligible cohort, only 1.8% (n=12) lost HOPE and did not return. Note: that the reason for the attrition cannot

be directly attributed to loss of HOPE. The report summarizes the situation as follows:

1. a larger number of students remain eligible for HOPE and choose not to return, than those who lose eligibility and choose not to return; and
2. of those who remained eligible for HOPE, a greater number achieved a 3.0 grade point average or higher than those who achieved a 2.00 to 2.99 grade range.

What is the role of advisors in regards to the sophomore population?  
How can advisors contribute to RPG (retention, progression, and graduation) efforts?

Several suggestions were shared, including the following:

- hold evening informational sessions for majors with less than 60 credits in the major on possible career choices
- make a point of contacting students by phone rather than email, utilizing work study or graduate students
- engage majors in the profession
- try small group advisement utilizing graduate students to help pre-majors

It was also suggested that special efforts are needed for students on probation or in academic trouble. This topic will be earmarked for discussion at a future meeting.

The discussion considered an early alert system—not just for freshmen but for all populations at all times during the academic semester. A student could be progressing fine until halfway between midterms and finals. An early alert system would flag the potential problem immediately so that appropriate intervention could be made. There are several situations where academic difficulty is caused by behavior rather than comprehension. For instance, attendance is a problem for all groups; other behavioral problems include not turning in assignments, sleeping in class, text messaging during class.

Mike Deal raised the issue of mid-term progress reports at the Enrollment Management Council. Several offices send communications to students regarding the consequences of an unsatisfactory performance, and it was recommended that common language be drafted and shared among all of these offices so that students are receiving a consistent and appropriate message.

How do the academic advisement centers respond to the mid-term progress reports?

#### *College of Business Administration (COBA) Advisement Center*

For each student who received at least one "U," the advisement center placed an alert printed on bright pink paper in the front of the student's file. This paper served to alert the advisor that at the student's next one-one-one meeting, the advisor needed to raise specific issues related to the student's academic performance and the implications of unsatisfactory academic performance.

#### *College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) Advisement Center*

The advisement center sent an email to each student who received at least one "U," requesting the student to schedule an appointment with their advisor. Out of hundreds of emails sent, the center received one response. For students who received four or more "U"s, a personal email was sent requesting the student to schedule an appointment with their advisor. No responses were received back from this email contact.

#### *College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) Student Services Center*

At the next advisement session, intrusive advisement questions were asked of students who received one or more "U" to get students to think more reflectively about their goals and the implications of poor academic performance on their future plans.

#### *College of Information Technology (CIT) Student Services Center*

The Student Services Center plans to institute a new procedure where students who received one or more "U" will receive emails directly from the dean's office. A letter will also be sent to the student's permanent address (addressed to the student and stamped important and confidential), informing the student that they need to meet with their advisor regarding their academic performance.

#### *College of Science and Technology (COST) Advisement Center*

For students who receive one or more "U," advising appointments will be made mandatory. It was recommended that holds be placed on the student's ability to register until they had met with their advisor.

#### *College of Education (COE) Student Success Center*

The Student Success Center contacted each student by phone (allowed two attempts for phone contact) who received one or more "U"s. These students were asked to attend an information session held in the early evening. Present at this session were the dean, associate deans, department chairs, and academic advisors. Students were informed of the implications of poor academic performance and asked not to drop the class without first speaking with their

instructor. The center requested special permission from the Registrar's Office to extend the withdrawal deadline for these students an extra 24 hours to allow them time to meet with their instructors. The center later followed-up with each student who attended this session. For those students who did not attend the session, advising appointments are being scheduled to discuss the situation with them, although the withdrawal deadline has now passed.

### First Year Experience (FYE)

FYE advises undeclared majors. Students with "U"s were contacted by phone and scheduled for an appointment with their academic advisor. The appointments are just now beginning so it is too early to see what impact this effort has on these students.

The need for earlier alerts (before mid-term progress reports) was raised as well as the issue of the minimal amount of time between the issuance of the progress reports and the withdrawal deadline. It was also noted that the Eagle Incentive Program (EIP) students may require special attention.

Advisor  
Task  
Item:

For the next meeting, advisors were asked to think about what the common message should be to students regarding unsatisfactory performance at the mid-term progress period and to identify strategies for effectively mandating meetings with the advisor. Advisors might also consider how do we move this alert earlier? What information should be conveyed in the alert? Why is the student getting a "U" (behavioral issue versus comprehension issue)?

## 4. Early Advisement

A handout was shared on the commonalities of early advisement compiled from information from the associate deans and/or advisement center coordinators. Is this a procedure that academic advisors are comfortable with for establishing a minimum early advisement standard? Everyone agreed that it was. It was noted that units are free to supplement these efforts.

Advisor  
Task Item:

Units were asked to identify one person from each advisement center who would be responsible for coordinating submissions of Golden Tickets to Vince Miller before SOAR. **All Golden Tickets should be submitted to Vince by noon the day before the SOAR session.**

## 5. Degree Evaluation

This topic will be placed on the agenda for November's meeting.

## 6. Advisement Updates

The data on when Spring 2006 students registered for Fall 2006 classes was distributed for consideration.

**Advisor  
Task Item:**

For the next meeting, advisors were asked to think about the answer to the following question: How can we use this information to get students to register?

On transfer credit, agreement has now been reached and communicated to all appropriate offices that the University does award one PE credit for a varsity sport that received PE credit at another college. Advisors need to be aware of this fact when advising transfer students.

Finally, the new grade point average change policy was distributed for information. This policy becomes effective Fall 2007.

## 7. Topics for Follow-Up

Two handouts were distributed. In addition, responses to a survey on how other University System institutions evaluate academic advising and how our peer and aspirational peer institutions evaluate academic advising were distributed.

**Advisor  
Task Item:**

Advisors were asked to consider the questions posed on message and evaluating academic advisement. The Council will discuss both issues at November's meeting.

## 8. For the Good of the Order

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** November 9, 2006, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Marvin Pittman Administration Building, President's Conference Room (Note new location!)