

Academic Advisement Council
Minutes from the September 14, 2009 Meeting
President's Conference Room
Marvin Pittman Administration Building
1 to 4 p.m.

Present: A. Heaston (Chair), V. Burden, E. Campbell, O. Edenfield, M. Hale, M. Hume, M. Lombardi, E. Murkison, J. O'Brien, V. Richards, N. Shumaker, C. Thompson, L. Vance, B. Williams, and C. Griffith (Recorder)

Guests: C. Caplinger

Map Works Update (C. Caplinger)

Chris Caplinger updated advisors on the Map Works survey. So far, 314 students have responded, representing a 31% response rate. Chris is hoping for a much higher response rate and asked coordinators to encourage students to participate. Non-responding students can be targeted for an email by selecting all non-respondents in Map Works. Staff in the First Year Experience office can re-send the survey link to students upon request. The survey will close on September 24th, unless the response rate is not where Chris would like it to be. In that event, he may opt to extend the survey.

The software is especially helpful in identifying potentially at-risk students. Advisors can begin reviewing their student respondents by sorting for red-indicated students. For students who do not respond, it may be helpful to review admissions data to identify those students who may be at-risk.

One suggestion for using the data is for advisors to run the five-page report for each student and place it in the student's advisement file for discussion when the student comes in for his or her advisement appointment. Coordinators may need to meet with faculty advisors to alert them as to these data and their intended use. At some point, reports will be provided directly to the students; Heath Browning will let advisors know when these are sent. Chris also indicated that the data will be analyzed to determine if there is any impact upon retention. He did caution, however, that the data represent a snap-shot in time, and therefore are subject to change. Advisors should use the information as potential indicators of problems. Finally, Chris thanked advisors for their comments regarding Map Works and asked that coordinators keep sending those to him.

Advisement

- 2009-2010 Academic Advisement Goals
 - Refine institutional advisement assessment plan to report common advisement data for all units (e.g., to the University System Office and Board of Regents).
 - Continue to refine/improve SOAR.
 - Refine first-year communication strategy to cover the entire first year, utilizing multiple technologies for conveying the messages.
 - Consider other ways to utilize technology (e.g., My.GeorgiaSouthern push) to optimize and automate advisement practices (e.g., change of major).
 - Brainstorm/share ideas on daily advisement practices to increase efficiencies.
 - Investigate the feasibility and cost of purchasing an institutional site license for Appointment Plus.
 - Consider implementation of a professional development certificate program for advisors that can be completed through on-campus events, including NACADA webcasts, brown bag luncheons, etc.

- Review/update and expand on (by August 1st of each year) online advisement manuals to include material for three different audiences:
 - General information regarding the advisement center (for all audiences)
 - Information directed toward students
 - Information directed toward professional or faculty advisors

Note: Coordinators were asked to complete updates for online advisement manuals for 2009-2010 by November 1st.

Attachments to minutes related to goals: Proposed Change of Major Process (electronic) and Requirements and Wish Lists for an Online Academic Advisement Sign-Up System—both dated back to 2006.

A discussion ensued (related to using technologies to improve practice) regarding placing the CLASS registration form on Business Objects, but users were concerned that they might lose customized features. Instead, Marilyn Hale will send out CLASS's form to all coordinators along with a list of tables from which the data are pulled. Users requiring access to specific tables can direct those requests to Wallace Brown in the Registrar's Office. Lisa Vance noted that COST will be offering training on Crystal Reports, and all interested are welcome to attend. Lisa will email the date of the session.

Finally, coordinators were asked to review the above listing of 2009-2010 goals and let Amy know if any needed to be changed.

- Advisement of International Students

Amy Heaston noted that the separate SOAR for international students overall was well received, but some questions arose which Nancy Shumaker was asked to address.

- Transcript Analysis and Early Advisement of Transfer Students
 - Course Transferability and Student Expectations

Nancy noted that the institution is receiving more direct transfers from international institutions. These students are required to submit their transcripts to one of two professional evaluation services and forward course descriptions to the University. For many of these institutions, course descriptions or even syllabi do not exist. Often, students must ask their professors to write the course descriptions which can take some time. Problems arise when the course descriptions are delayed, delaying the evaluation of accepted credit toward the degree program, or when credits are accepted but not applied toward the degree program. These challenges necessitate that the University communicate more clearly with students regarding the number of accepted transfer credits and the credits which will apply toward the degree program. Admissions will begin alerting students to the possibility that not all of their accepted credits may count toward the degree program in the acceptance letter. It was also suggested that Hobson's Connect be utilized. (Erin Campbell will ask Sarah Smith to raise this issue at the next college recruitment meeting.)

Upon further discussion, it was also agreed that the Registrar's Office would copy associate deans on all communications regarding course descriptions sent to department chairs to facilitate evaluations and help manage student expectations.

Nancy indicated that questions regarding first-semester international students should be addressed to Admissions. After the first semester, questions regarding international students are addressed to the Registrar's Office. International Studies is always willing to help as well.

A question arose whether the international acceptance report could be placed on Business Objects. Erin will investigate and report back.

- TOEFL Process and Registration for Appropriate English Courses
Nancy reported that international students take the English Language Placement Exam (ELPE) which is evaluated by several university faculty and staff to determine in which English class the student is placed. The intention is that International Studies will pre-register these students for the necessary English class. Unfortunately, that did not occur at this year's SOAR, so Joan Stalcup will identify any students who were not placed in the fall and pre-register them for the appropriate course in spring.

- Status of Post-Baccs

- Non-degree seeking—Center for International Studies
- Degree seeking—Unit; Transcript evaluation needs to be completed

Nancy indicated that there should not be any non-degree post-baccs unless they are exchange students. There has been some confusion because advisors were told that post-baccs were not required to undergo transcript evaluation which advisors need in order to place the student in the appropriate courses. Bobbie Williams will send Nancy the names of students in this category, and Nancy will investigate further.

- Enrollment

- As of 9/14/09: 19,002 enrolled
 - Undergraduates = 16,235 (85%)
 - Graduates = 2,583 (14%)
 - Post-baccs = 184 (1%)

Enrollment will be finalized October 14th. After that date, retention rates will also be determined. Retention rates are projected to be higher than last year.

- Interventions

- Early Alert/Midterm Grades
Advisors were asked to begin running their Early Alert/Midterm Grade reports in Business Objects. Matt Lombardi has also requested progress information on student athletes through GradesFirst. Finally, Janet O'Brien distributed the Academic Success Center's calendar of workshops and tutoring. There was lengthy discussion of the tutoring sessions for the hybrid algebra class—especially the increased attendance. It was noted that efforts should be made to track attendance back to each student's grade on the first exam.

- Transfer Advisement Ad-Hoc Committee

Amy noted that DegreeWorks will not be an option for the University in the foreseeable future given the cost. In the interim, an ad-hoc committee will be formed to follow-up on some earlier suggestions related to transfer advisement.

- Virginia Richards (chair), Velma Burden, Marilyn Hale, Bobbie Williams
- Task:
 - To investigate how to better utilize current systems in place to assist with transfer advisement (i.e., Degree Evaluation);
 - To develop electronic folder system; and
 - To develop "Expectations for SOAR" material for website.

Virginia will email Amy a timeline for reporting back to the full Academic Advisement Council sometime this fall.

Assessment and Evaluation

- Brown Bag Evaluations
Amy asked if there were any comments on the new brown bag evaluation form used at the August 24th brown bag. There were none.
- Next Meeting: Discussion of annual evaluation
At the October Academic Advisement Council, members will discuss in greater detail how their annual evaluations can be used to help inform improvements. Members were asked to bring their annual reports to the meeting.

For the Good of the Order

- Congratulations to Ellen Murkison, Georgia state representative to NACADA Region IV Steering Committee
Ellen indicated that her role will be to take issues forward that impact the state as well as work with the conference chair for the Region IV conference. Her term is for two years.
- Professional Development (<http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/advisement/advisorresources.html>)
 - NACADA webcast—*The Role of Academic Advising in Student Retention*: Thursday, September 17th, 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. with discussion following, COE 2150 (Hosts: COBA & CIT)
 - Brown bag—*GradesFirst* (M. Lombardi) & *Addiction Recovery Center* (K. Harper): Tuesday, September 22nd, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., RU 2080
- Other
 - Erin reported that the January SOAR will be held on Friday, January 8, 2010. There will be a three-day international student orientation Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that same week with international students attending the January 8th SOAR.
 - Matt reminded advisors to send him hard copies of the advisement sheets for student athletes and asked that advisors also copy Marc Hume on email communications sent to the department.
 - Chris Thompson announced a teacher education program requirement that will be enforced. All undergraduates will now need to provide a writing sample which will be addressed in the pre-professional block.
 - Ellen reminded advisors of the major fair next week and thanked all those who have agreed to participate. Thirty-two departments will be represented. Amy asked Ellen to forward her the names of the departmental representatives so that an acknowledgement could be sent from the Provost's Office. A list of student attendees will also be shared with the coordinators which might indicate any students who are thinking of changing their major. Coordinators who would like to donate a goodie bag for one of the hourly raffles are welcome to do so.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 5, 2009, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., President's Conference Room, Marvin Pittman Administration Building