

Best Practices in Undergraduate Academic Advising

Advisor Responsibilities: Core responsibilities.

Best Practices: How individual advisors should fulfill their core responsibilities.

Advisor Responsibilities

Faculty and staff advisors have the responsibility to

- ✓ provide accurate and timely information about degree and career-related requirements.
- ✓ be available during publicized office hours.
- ✓ respond to students' inquiries within 2 business days.
- ✓ empower each student to make independent and informed decisions.
- ✓ be knowledgeable about policies and procedures.
- ✓ serve as a guide, teacher, facilitator, coach, and counselor.
- ✓ make appropriate referrals.
- ✓ encourage active engagement in the curriculum-based advising process by using the CAPP degree audit.
- ✓ advise from an integrated perspective of general education, major(s), minor(s), experiential learning, study abroad.
- ✓ ensure smooth transition for students declaring and changing majors.
- ✓ keep accurate and up-to-date advising records in Niner Advisor.
- ✓ provide realistic options for students' decision making and encourage reasonable time to degree.
- ✓ be resourceful, utilizing web-based resources, advising tools and professional development opportunities.

Best Practices: Advising In General

Scheduling and Preparation of Advising Appointments

- ✓ Have dedicated advising hours; increase availability during peak advising times.
- ✓ Schedule advising appointments to accommodate a variety of students' schedules in relation to the academic calendar.
- ✓ Update availability for advising appointments on Niner Advisor regularly.
- ✓ Send students reminders about when they need to schedule appointments and encourage them to see *all* their advisors.
- ✓ Meet with current students at least once per semester.
- ✓ Have students upload advising worksheets to Niner Advisor prior to appointment.
- ✓ Require or encourage students to complete/update an academic plan including *when* they intend to take courses and bring it to appointment.
- ✓ Require or encourage students to complete a CAPP degree audit immediately prior to the appointment. This can either be pulled up on a computer during the advising session (to save paper) or students can bring it to the appointment.

Time-to-Degree/Withdrawals/Repeats

- ✓ Address time-to-degree by advising which courses need to be taken immediately and which can be taken later for proper progression.
- ✓ Steer students into courses for which they are prepared (e.g., avoid high D/F/W courses for those who may not be prepared).
- ✓ Inform students about possible pitfalls of changing majors (e.g., time-to-degree; tuition surcharge; financial implications).
- ✓ Discuss consequences of withdrawing (from a single course and/or the University) and repeating a course; help them to understand the consequences (e.g., time-to-degree; tuition surcharge; financial implications; unique consequences per college/department). Send emails regarding these topics as appropriate.
- ✓ Consider placing a hold before students can withdraw from a course (currently being done by Athletic Academic Center).

General

- ✓ Review and reference Advisor Manual (located on Banner Self-Service Advisor Tab and the [Academic Affairs website](#)).
- ✓ Provide major and General Education advising in one advising session so that students do not need to make multiple advising appointments or see different advisors.
- ✓ Discuss unsatisfactory mid-term grade notifications, semester warning alerts, implications of academic probation, and refer to academic support resources (refer to Advisor Manual).
- ✓ Discuss undergraduate research opportunities, study abroad, internships, and other forms of experiential learning.
- ✓ Encourage engagement in the University and local community (e.g., clubs, student government, recreation, community service).
- ✓ Demonstrate that you *care* about the students' academic success and be *patient*.
- ✓ Communicate regularly with students through emails about appointments and appointment preparation (this can be automated through Niner Advisor).
- ✓ Ensure that students have access to updated curriculum worksheets and information on departmental websites.
- ✓ Utilize departmental worksheets for major and General Education requirements.
- ✓ Participate in advising workshops for faculty, provided by the department/college as well as the University.
- ✓ Seek an advisor mentor, a more experienced faculty/staff mentor, in your department that you can go to with advising questions or concerns.
- ✓ Utilize developmental advising practices (refer to Advisor Manual).
- ✓ Evaluate your advising and make improvements by seeking students' input through appointment evaluations.

Best Practices: Advising New Students (Freshmen and Transfers)

- ✓ Adhere to the previous section “Best Practices: Advising in General.”
- ✓ Review TR/AP/IB credit to ensure students have not repeated credit for equivalent coursework they are transferring in either as a freshman or transfer.
- ✓ Clarify degree requirements as outlined in the Academic Plan of Study for the degree.
- ✓ Educate students about course scheduling (e.g. process, timeline, sequencing).
- ✓ Discuss course load (number of courses; type of courses), sequencing, and implications. Note: students on probation should not necessarily take fewer courses.
- ✓ Discuss “Major fit” in relation to skills, interests and abilities.
- ✓ Discuss decision-making process in relation to major and career exploration, and make appropriate referrals to facilitate students’ decision-making process.
- ✓ Discuss students’ responsibilities in advising such as utilizing CAPP & reading emails.

Best Practices: Advising Upper-Class Students

- ✓ Adhere to the previous section “Best Practices: Advising in General.”
- ✓ Review entire transcript to ensure students have not repeated credit for equivalent coursework. This includes courses repeated at UNC Charlotte and TR/AP/IB credit (together with transient study).
- ✓ Continue to discuss “Major fit” in relation to skills, interests and abilities.
- ✓ Continue to make appropriate referrals in relation to career exploration and career development.
- ✓ Assess students’ progression toward degree.
- ✓ Have students leave advising appointment with a plan to enroll in the exact courses needed to graduate.
- ✓ Encourage students to consider Summer School as a method for staying on track.
- ✓ Discuss plan for finishing before reaching 140 attempted hours (tuition surcharge).
- ✓ Conduct graduation clearance checks *prior* to the end of the drop/add period.

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