



ACADEMIC ADVISING PROGRAM REVIEW 2009

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Section 1. Overview of the Program

A. Purpose of the Program:

1. **Mission Statement:** Created by the Advising Ad-Hoc Committee in 2001

“To provide high quality advising to all students, fostering an environment in which individuals involved are dedicated to mutual respect, flexibility, and the empowerment of student success.”

2. **Defining Advising at WWCC:**

WWCC is committed to advising and understands its importance to student retention and success. Advising provides a human connection between the student and institution. It is a relationship. Advising is more than building schedules or completing degree checks. It is an ongoing conversation that encourages students to ask the “unasked” questions and to look at the partnership as providing support, knowledgeable advice, and referral while attending WWCC. Ideally, this is a connection that lasts for years.

A good academic advisor will:

- Learn about the advisee’s background and academic and career goals to help identify possible barriers that might prevent the student from achieving those goals.
- Serve as the connection point and resource for student questions, concerns and uncertainty.
- Remain knowledgeable about services that support students and refer advisees as appropriate.
- Work with the advisee to help them understand the tools available to help them make decisions (catalog, course schedule, online services for transfer decisions, etc.).
- Empower advisees to take charge of their academic experiences, including schedule development and monitoring their own progress.
- Monitor advisee progress each semester as student progresses towards graduation.

3. Summary of Services

The Coordinator of Academic Advising is responsible for:

- Working with faculty advisors to assure that advising runs smoothly.
- Coordinating advisor assignments, producing Advising Handbook and newsletters, conveying current information to faculty; training of new advisors, serving as a reference for faculty and conducting workshops.
- Coordinating Registration Programs for new full- time (and part – time if they chose to attend) students.
- Overseeing COMPASS testing (placement testing) both on campus and at outreach offices. The COMPASS scores are used for placement in Math, English, Government (Pols 1000, Hist 1211, 1221, 1251) and beginning fall 2009 Biol 1010 and Chem 1020.
- Checking and enforcing Pre-requisite course requirements.
- Advising students in academic trouble including those who are on Probation and Alert status.
- Conducting official degree evaluations for graduating students.
- Training of faculty and students in the use of Mustang Web Advisor.
- Maintaining web pages.
- Working on articulation agreements with regional institutions.
- Various marketing projects.
- Serving on various campus committees.

4. WWCC Guiding Principles as Reflected in Academic Advising:

1. Learning is Our Purpose

- a. Students are empowered to solve problems associated with their individual academic goals.
- b. “Advising as Teaching” is discussed and encouraged in the New Advisor Training and in-service activities.

2. Students are Our Focus

- a. Academic Advising is part of every degree-seeking student’s experience and is offered to all students, including part-time, asynchronous, and outreach.
- b. Academic Advising coordinates the Pre-registration Programs (formerly New Student Orientation) and assists with Kick-Off Day. Also the Compass placement testing is coordinated through the Advising Coordinator. These services are designed to support the students in their academic goals and provide familiarity with WWCC.
- c. We assist students with transferring to regional institutions by continuously working on articulation agreements and transfers issues.
- d. Advising Coordinator has evening hours 1 night a week, and does advising via phone and e-mail to assist students with their various schedules, on campus and in outreach sites.
- e. Using the available technology in Mustang Cruiser and Mustang Web Advisor enable both the students and advisors to be informed.
- f. Information regarding Compass and transfer issues is posted on the Webpage
- g. Compass web version is available at all the outreach sites, no longer requiring students to come to campus to test.
- h. Adhere to the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) guidelines for best practices.

3. Employees are Our Most Important Resource

- a. Opportunities for staff development are encouraged and supported
- b. We train the faculty and outreach staffs on best practices for advisors, through New Faculty Training, training on WebAdvisor, Elluminate, newsletters, in-service activities and workshops.

- c. The Advising Handbook and Advising Action Plan are posted on the intranet for continuous accessibility for faculty and staff, to assist them in being better advisors.
- d. On-going support for advising issues and questions is provided.

4. Ethical Standards Guide Our Actions

- a. Advising functions follow the standards provided by the professional organization NACADA (National Academic Advising Association.)
- b. Advising follows all WWCC policies and procedures, including FERPA (Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act)

A. Primary Goals for Academic Advising:	Guiding Principle addressed	CAS Standard addressed	Assessment of Goal
1. Ensure understanding of what advising is for both students and faculty.	Students are our focus	Learning outcomes	Graduate Exit Survey CSSE Sense survey
2. Encourage a positive start for new students by having a pre-registration program that empowers future success	Students are our focus	Conditions for student success are in place	Evaluations from program Retention rates
3. Ensure Academic Advisors have advising information resources in multiple formats	Employees' are important resource	Keeping Advisors informed and up to date	Advisor Survey
4. Encourage future success of student in academic trouble— Alert/Probation/Suspension	Students are our focus	Advising practices that affect student success	Decrease in percentage of students who get in Academic trouble

Section II

Part A. Customers and Clients:

Advising is required for all full-time students and recommended for all part-time degree seeking students. We serve all students in administering placement (COMPASS) tests and checking pre-requisites for Math, English, Government, Biology and Chemistry courses. The advising office works with faculty, training them in best practices for academic advisors.

Academic Advising is teaching, we help our students learn the process that empowers them to obtain the educational goal they have set for themselves. We help them learn how to access necessary information, complete processes in a timely fashion, make wise educational choices and follow through on their goals. These objectives are outlined in the CAS standards, which are national best practice guidelines.

Part B. Facilities and Equipment:

Facilities include an office in the Registration and Records area for the Coordinator, and use of the second floor computer lab for COMPASS testing.

Equipment consists of 2 computers (1 desktop and 1 laptop), a color printer and 20 calculators for testing purposes.

The facilities are in a great location and currently meet the students' needs. Equipment has been upgraded according to the guidelines set by IT.

Part C. Printed Materials and Website:

Printed Materials:

- Brochure for Registration Programs- in Spring of 2009 they were printed in 4 color at the print shop
- Part-time Student Newsletter-sent via e-mail once each semester
- Advising Newsletter- printed in color and distributed to on-campus and outreach advisors at least twice a year.
- Information regarding advising is in the catalog and class schedule- updated yearly

Currently these are sufficient for our needs but we continually discuss if further information is needed.

Website

- Advising Web page contains current information but needs to have photos and other visual improvements to add visual appeal.
- Transfer information-links can always be improved
- Calendar for Compass Testing is current
- Sign up for Registration Program-well maintained

Part D. Regulation Compliance:

WWCC Policies and Procedures:

Policy 5240C regarding Academic Standing has to be followed in dealing with the Students who are placed on Alert, Probation and Suspension. The program we have in place follows the policy.

Policy 5250A regarding applying for graduation must be followed by students and advisors. Our practices do follow the policy.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act- (FERPA):

In accordance with FERPA students have access to their educational records and require a signed release form to be able to convey information to third parties (including parents). Advisors are trained on FERPA guidelines, and information is available in the catalog and class schedule . Information on FERPA is presented during the parent session of Registration Programs.

CAS Standards-Best Practices Guidelines:

While not required an initial report on our compliance with these guidelines has been completed.

Part E. Staff Development

Coordinator of Academic Advising has participated in the following activities during the last three years

- National NODA (National Orientation Directors Association)
- National NACADA (National Academic Advisors Association)
- Regional NACADA
- Annual Student Affairs Retreat
- Wyoming Student Affairs Conference
- COMPASS training/workshop
- College wide in-service
- CO/WY Advising Conference
- Transition Workshop at Colorado State University
- Education Transfer workshop at Utah State University

- Civitas

Part F. Recommendations from the Previous Program Review:

Recommendations:

1. Begin communication campaign via e-mail, Internet and intranet to educate students and faculty on various topics about advising
2. Continue periodic meetings with outreach staff to address advising issues, questions may be asked and training provided
3. Continue to provide informational workshops to faculty, staff and students about the use of WebAdvisor
4. Enhance the Academic Advising program to address some of the concerns that still exist regarding quality of advising, availability of advisors and support to part-time evening students.
5. Implement advising quality survey
6. Develop Advising web page to feature information specifically for part-time and lifelong- learners returning to college. Review links for efficiency and effectiveness.
7. Assess operations and develop services for Distance Learners
8. Review technological trends in the advising area and make recommendations for future direction in the department
9. Advising files will become electronic through the use of WebAdvisor and other software packages. This will decrease paper and labor costs.

Actions Taken:

1. E-mail reminders and information multiple times a semester to faculty; lists of advisees' e-mail address are sent once a semester to advisors so they can easily contact students; Advising action Plan and Advising Handbook are accessible on the intranet. Part-time students are e-mailed a newsletter at least once a semester.
2. Presentations have been given at the Outreach in-services regarding advising, Advisor news have been sent via e-mail to the outreach staffs.
3. Information about WebAdvisor is given during the Registration Programs to all new incoming students; advisor training and in the Advisor News, information regarding WebAdvisor was included in the part-time student newsletter.
4. The advising coordinator added office hours one evening a week to help part-time students.
5. The advising newsletter was started.
6. The Building Student Connections team is working on other issues that apply here to part time students.

7. Advising questions are on the graduate exit survey; the CCSSE, the Sense Survey, and an in house survey of faculty was conducted in April 2008.
8. The web page has been improved but due to redesign issues doesn't not have a section entirely for part-time students
9. Working on an online orientation for distance students (vendor issues have been an issue in it not being completed). We have added information on Mustang Cruiser, Blackboard and e-mailed newsletters to improve communication with outreach students. Business has a distance faculty member and the advising coordinator do numerous advising appointments using e-mail and phones.
10. Have added components to WebAdvisor. We have been able to offer an online version of COMPASS at all the outreach sites.
11. The Advising Office only makes paper advising files if requested.

Part A. Assessment Reporting for Academic Advising:

1. Ensure understanding of what advising is for both students and faculty.

- In the 2008 Graduate Exit Survey 80.4% of students said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with advising. Have the level of satisfaction increase to 90%
- The Faculty Advising survey (conducted April 2008) shows that 78.4% of respondents said that their role in advising and registration is clearly defined. In the next survey have 85% say their role is clearly defined.
- The 2008 Sense survey questions 18 and 20a1-3 relating to use and satisfaction of Advising has WWCC ranked higher than the 2008 cohort on advising issues. See an increase of 5% in Sense survey.
- On question 22 in the Sense Survey and interesting note is that 44.5 % students say they used friend, family or other students as their main source of advising.
- CSSE 2007 results show that full-time students often or sometimes use advising have higher than our cohorts in satisfaction and about the same in frequency; however part-time students have 74% that rarely/never or did not know about advising. The part-time students also have a lower than our cohort institutions when it comes to satisfaction and importance of advising. We have 50 % of part time students say they have satisfaction and know about advising. We would like to increase the part time student satisfaction and knowing about advising to 75%.

2. **Encourage a positive start for new students by having a pre-registration program that empowers future success.**
 - New program was implemented in Summer of 2008
 - Fall to spring retention of students attending summer 2008 registration programs. For first time, full time freshmen who attended the SU09 Registration Programs, 96% remained enrolled through the FA08 semester. The FA08 to SP09 retention rate was 76%.
 - Improve retention rate from FA to SP to 85%.

3. **Ensure Academic Advisors have advising information resources in multiple formats**
 - Advising Handbook re-created in August 2005, updated in fall 2008. The Handbook is now also accessible on the intranet.
 - Advising Newsletters is sent at least once a semester. Delivered to campus advisors sent as a pdf to outreach advisors.
 - E-mail reminders sent to advisors

4. **Encourage future success of student in academic trouble—Alert/Probation/Suspension.**
 - One hundred and thirty-six students who were on alert, probation or suspension from Spring 2003-Spring 2007 graduated from WWCC.
 - Anywhere from 1/3 to 1/2 of students on alert return to WWCC the next semester.
 - Changes have been made in the letter sent to academic alert students after it was determined that there are two levels of alert, ones who perform poorly in 1 or 2 classes and ones who earn a majority of bad grades (some just quit attending without withdrawing).
 - Have the percent of students who return to good academic standing improve by 10%.

Part B: Strengths, Limitations and Opportunities of Academic Advising

1. Strengths

- Overall high satisfaction based on Graduate Exit Survey, data from CSSE and SENSE surveys.
- Faculty/Staff are advising and mentoring their students
- Improved advising materials: handbook, newsletters, website
- New Advisor training workshops
- Summer Registration Programs have improved connection with new incoming students

- Advising services are available in all outreach centers as well as the main campus
2. Limitations
- Limited quality control of advisors-using faculty and staff that do not have advising as their primary focus can lead to varying levels of expertise and commitment.
 - Advisors that need advisor training, do not always attend regular training sessions.
 - Part-time and online students do not always make advising connection.
 - Continuous training of advisors is not always attended by the advisors that might need it the most.
3. Opportunities to Improve
- Make continuous advisor training an enjoyable and relevant experience
 - Improve communication with part-time, and online students
 - Keep advisors informed of best practices in advising
 - Identify more ways to assist alert, probation, suspension students
 - Help advisors and students understand connections between advising and goal setting and goal completion.
 - Website is functional but not artistically pleasing

Part C: Action Plan of Academic Advising

<i>First Year 2009-2010</i>			
Task or Action	Purpose	Measure of Success	Who is Responsible?
Enhance advising for part-time and online students. Also designate a faculty member in each division to be contact person for online students.	Increase advising use and satisfaction in part-time and online students	Improvement in CSSE Numbers for part-time to 75% satisfaction	Becky Student Success Team

Create Advising syllabus	Continuity in advising	Have full and part time CSSE Scores regarding knowledge about advising improve by 5%	Becky
Webpage enhancement	Easier information retrieval for students/faculty	10% increase in number of hits on site	Becky and Tammy Walker
Tasks Dependent on Funding (Provide estimated cost)	Data to Justify Need, and Consequence of Not Funding		Who is responsible?

<i>Second Year: 2010-2011</i>			
Task or Action	Purpose	Measure of Success	Who is Responsible?
Enhance continuing advisor training	Keep advisors current and enthused	Improve satisfaction on faculty survey to 85% and improve attendance at training by 10%	Becky
Improve success of alert, probation students	Students accomplishing their goal	Improve graduation rate by 2% and GPA's will show an improvement	Becky and Student Success Team
Tasks Dependent on Funding (Provide estimated cost)	Data to Justify Need, and Consequence of Not Funding		Who is responsible?

Third Year: 2011-2012			
Task or Action	Purpose	Measure of Success	Who is Responsible?
Identify need for intervention in first month of attendance	Improve retention	Higher retention numbers. Improve by 5%	Student Success Team Laurie W.
Tasks Dependent on Funding (Provide estimated cost)	Data to Justify Need, and Consequence of Not Funding		Who is responsible?

CAS STANDARDS REPORT

Appendix A

PART ONE - MISSION

Mission Statement: This came from the Advising Ad-Hoc Committee in 2001

“To provide high quality advising to all students, fostering an environment in which individuals involved are dedicated to mutual respect, flexibility, and the empowerment of student success.”

CAS standards say our primary purpose should be to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals.

Our missions statement combined with our basic definition (see next item) accomplish this goal.

Defining Advising at WWCC: Academic Advising at WWCC has the basic philosophy/definition

WWCC is committed to advising and its importance to student retention and success. Advising provides a human connection between the student and institution. It is a relationship. Advising is more than building schedules or completing degree checks. It is an ongoing conversation that encourages students to ask the “unasked” questions and to look at the partnership as providing support, knowledgeable advice, and referral while attending WWCC. Ideally, this is a connection that lasts for years.

A good academic advisor will:

- Learn about the advisee’s background and academic and career goals to help identify possible barriers that might prevent the student from achieving those goals
- Serve as the connection point and resource for student questions, concerns and uncertainty.
- Remain knowledgeable about services that support students and refer advisees as appropriate
- Work with the advisee to understand available tools to help make decisions (catalog, course schedule, online services for transfer decisions, etc.)
- Empower advisees to take charge of their academic experiences, including schedule development and monitoring their own progress
- Monitor advisee progress each semester as student progresses towards graduation.

PART TWO - PROGRAM

Learning outcomes: This includes things like Intellectual Growth, Effective communication, Enhanced Self-Esteem, Realistic Self-Appraisal, Clarified Values, Career Choices, Leadership Development, Healthy Behavior, Meaningful Interpersonal Relationships, Independence, Collaboration, Social Responsibility, Satisfying and Productive Lifestyles, Appreciating Diversity, Spiritual Awareness, Personal and Educational Goals.

WWCC addresses most of these areas in our “**Goals for Student Success**”, but to further insure we as advisors address these items creating an **Advising Syllabi** could help us ensure we are doing what we can.

ACTION ITEM 1: See attached examples of Advising Syllabi, have B-Team view NACADA webinar “Academic Advising Syllabus: Advising as Teaching in Action” about developing Advising Syllabi and then have them assist in developing an Advising Syllabus for WWCC. (I received a cd of the webinar for being on the regional board).

WWCC primarily follows a developmental theory approach to advising, by using faculty we try and enable students to grow and mature as students and people. We do however realize that certain students need a little more intrusive intervention from time to time and have implemented early alert, not attending letters, calls at mid-terms, learning contracts for alert and probation students to assist these students.

ACTION ITEM 2: Look at our early alert—not attending letters process do we want to make changes. (Such as have the faculty rate engagement of the students as we saw demonstrated at the Wyoming Student Affairs Conference). Need to discuss and determine possible changes.

WWCC needs to identify negative advising conditions affecting student success. A few that come to mind-- part-time and outreach, online students sometimes slip through the cracks.

ACTION ITEM 3: Need to enhance advising for part-time and online students. Suggest making some modifications to information available on Blackboard—possibility of setting up as an organization if not possible - then improving information available, post monthly reminders, FAQ’s,etc.

Also designate a faculty member in each division to be contact person for online students.

Discuss with B-team for ideas and input from them

CAS standards recommend that caseloads are based on time needed to appropriately advise the group you are working with; WWCC has very few advisors that have more students than they could properly advise ranging from 1- 75 students. A few faculty in popular majors are at the higher end (about 45) but since those majors are ones with a

number of required courses (business and nursing) the students are usually not as time intensive as an undecided student.

Keeping Advisors informed is vital to the student and advisor being able to successful accomplish their tasks. Through in-service training and other workshops, the advising handbook, the advising newsletters, Western In motion, and various e-mails this is being accomplished but there is always room for more communication.

ACTION ITEM 4: Create a section on the intranet for advisor information such as placing the advising handbook there so we have that information available to advisors in another format. Upon completion of action item 1 place this information on the intranet also.

Training of new advisors has evolved to an approximately 5 hour program, it is divided into two group sessions and a 1 hour individualized follow up at the end. Everything from a little theory, to why advising is important, forms they need to know, computer (webadvisor) programs, working with students, referrals and lots of other information is exchanged in the sessions. Faculty/Staff advisors are also given an Advisor Handbook. We try and do continuous training through workshops and in-service meetings.

PART THREE – LEADERSHIP

At WWCC the Academic Advising is lead by the Vice President for Student Success Services, Associate Vice President for Student Success Services and a Coordinator for Academic Advising.

PART FOUR - ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

There has been a concentrated effort to make decisions based on research and accurate information. We must continue to review or policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure they are empowering us not hindering us. We must also continue to disseminate the roles and responsibilities of the advisor and the student in the advising process—so far we have done this in the catalog, student handbook, advisor handbook, faculty contract.

ACTION ITEM 5: Explain role of advising to students at Kick off orientation.

PART FIVE - HUMAN RESOURCES

Since WWCC uses the Faculty and staff for academic advising and has only one professional advisor this is not as relevant as it could be at other institutions. This does address training which has been discussed previously. Also we are to have enough staff to meet student needs in a timely fashion (which we usually do), they are supposed to care about students (which they do) and be willing to be advisors (which most are) and participate in workshops and/or training (which most do).

PART SIX - FINANCIAL RESOURCES

WWCC funds academic advising through student fees which usually if sufficient for the needs of the office. We are able to provide quality materials for training and informational purposes. We are able to do training and ensure we have a good program.

PART SEVEN - FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, EQUIPMENT

WWCC has placed the advising office in Registration and Records which does a great job of making it accessible and convenient for students. We have up to date computers and use the WebAdvisor system to help us in our mission to advise. There is technology that could be enhanced to make the advising process even better.

ACTION ITEM 6: Look into adding the module on Blackboard that would enable us to set up advising as an organization.

PART EIGHT - LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of the advisor training legal issues are discussed and FERPA training workshops are conducted often to ensure we are in compliance.

PART NINE - EQUITY AND ACCESS

We have facilities that are accessible. We have trained our ADA professional as an advisor so we can address needs that we may not think of. We have added evening hours and e-mail advising to try and accommodate other students. This is also where we need to address the online students.

ACTION ITEM 7: See NACADA standards for distance learners.

PART TEN - CAMPUS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

WWCC encourages all faculty and staff to create and maintain great relationships in the community.

PART ELEVEN - DIVERSITY

Advisor training does include discussion on working with students who are different from you. There is always room for more information and training when it comes to diversity.

ACTION ITEM 8: Do advising workshop on working with and addressing issues of diversity.

PART TWELVE - ETHICS

This is part of almost all discussions we have, in training, in workshops and just on our campus.

PART THIRTEEN - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Survey of faculty was conducted; graduation survey and other student surveys have been used to determine quality of advising on our campus.

ACTION ITEM 9: Use information from advisor survey to see if areas need to be addressed. Determine if there is a way to survey/ focus group students to determine why they have the level of dissatisfaction with advising that appears in other surveys.

