



Advising at USM

MODULE 3

Promoting
Advising for
Student
Success
PORTal

As a critical part of fulfilling its mission, USM is committed to providing students with quality academic advising for several reasons:

1. Advising is a partnership of teaching and learning
2. Advising is a recursive process
3. Advising is a changing relationship
4. Advising is creating community
5. "The Teaching-Advising Connection"

"Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience."

Richard Light
(Harvard University)
Making the Most of College
2001



3A.WHAT IS ADVISING AT USM

1. Advising is a partnership of teaching and learning >> Successful academic advising creates a working partnership within which both student and advisor can learn and grow.

Both students and advisors:

- learn more about themselves,
- increase and deepen their knowledge of their institution,
- have an opportunity to see themselves, their courses, their discipline, and their institution from each other's perspective,
- establish meaningful partnerships with others who have or are developing expertise in the same field of study, and

- clarify and work toward achievement of academic and professional goals.

2. Advising is a recursive process >>

Both advisor and advisee experience a continuous developmental process. Over time, each advisor develops his or her own advising style and finds the most effective ways to guide students as they fulfill their educational goals. Both first-time and experienced advisors should find it possible to refine their advising skills via the modules in this program that:

- introduce basic advising philosophy and processes;
- present basic University academic policies and procedures;

- describe resources and services available for students; and
- organize advising tasks in a yearly academic timeline that suggests ways to prepare for and anticipate the critical events that may affect a student's academic life.

3. Advising is a changing relationship >>

In classroom instruction, one goal is that students make progress toward becoming autonomous, self-directed, lifelong learners and scholars. In parallel, academic advising seeks to provide students with the information they need to move competently through processes and procedures required by their department and their institution.



Advising is a changing relationship

reflecting the changing needs of the students

As their familiarity with academic culture grows and they become more self-directed, the advising relationship changes, reflecting the changing needs of the students. First-year advisees will generally need and benefit from more frequent, concerned contact than is required by upper-level students.

In fact, initial meetings with first-semester students often involve allaying their anxiety at the changes confronting them during the transition from dependent high school learners to independent, post-secondary scholars. At this early stage, advisors can use their growing awareness of the individual advisee's academic performance and educational goals to prompt that student toward growth in autonomy, inside and outside the classroom, by emphasizing benefits gained from academic self-assessment.

In contrast, the advising relationship with third- and fourth-year students becomes more focused on mentoring. Ideally, these students have developed intellectual interest in a discipline, have a specific career goal already in mind, and have generated their own plan to carry them from this moment to graduation and beyond.

The reference section of this program has additional readings in this area.

4. Advising is creating community >>

During the time an advising relationship

develops, a web of community relationships also grows for both advisor and advisee.

- Advisor referral of students to the range of available support services can help students connect with University personnel who staff resource offices like University Health and Counseling Services, Student Billing, and Financial Aid.
- Professional development opportunities shared by faculty and professional advisors create community as those involved share their experiences and expertise.
- Awareness of the shared goals of these groups and a sense of common purpose in their work with students can strengthen professional relationships across the campus.
- Growing acquaintance of both groups with administrative and professional staff in other campus units builds more bridges and strengthens awareness that the work of every group is student-centered.
- Advisors who refer students to the Board of Student Organizations open the door to about a hundred student groups among which students may choose depending on individual interests.
- For the student, in addition to the social benefits and personal enrichment such groups offer, membership in them tends to strengthen connections to the larger campus community.



The Teaching-Advising Connection

A Comparison of the Knowledge, Skills, and Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Advisors presents a clear comparison of the integral connections between the teaching and advising functions of any advisor's work.

This is excerpted from the complete article "The Teaching-Advising Connection" written by Drew Appleby and published in *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*.

<http://www.psu.edu/dus/mentor/>



NOTE: The Effective Teachers and Advisors Table continues onto pages three and four.

A Comparison of the Knowledge, Skills, and Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Advisors

Effective Teachers	Master their subject matter	Plan, organize, and prepare materials for classroom presentation	Engage students actively in the learning process	Provide regular feedback, reinforcement, and encouragement to students
Effective Advisors	Possess accurate information about the policies, procedures, resources, and programs of their departments and institutions	Are well prepared for advising sessions	Enable advisees to actively participate in the advising process by challenging them with new, more demanding learning tasks involving alternative ideas or choices and encouraging them to ask questions to clarify these ideas and explore these choices	Provide timely feedback, reinforce learning that has taken place, and applaud student successes



3B. ELEMENTS OF ADVISING

There are three intertwined elements to advising: **Informational, Conceptual, and Relational**

Informational: What Advisors Should **KNOW**

- › Academic and co-curricular programs
- › Institutional policies and procedures
- › Student demographic information
- › Institutional and major requirements
- › Referral resources
- › Student information systems
- › Support tools/Advisor resources:
 - › Catalog/Course Schedule
 - › Advising handbook
 - › Computer degree audits
 - › Academic planning worksheets
 - › Advising conference records/documentation/ advising notes

Conceptual: What Advisors Should **UNDERSTAND**

- › Institutional mission and advising mission
- › School/Department/Program's definition of advising
- › Role of advising and student development
- › Developmental versus prescriptive advising
- › Relationship of advising to persistence (retention & attrition)
- › Legal and ethical issues
- › Connections: advising and support services
- › Expectations of advising (faculty and student)
- › Roles/responsibilities: advisors and advisees
- › Career issues in advising

Relational: What Advisors Should **DO**

- › Interview skills
- › Verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- › Rapport building
- › Referral skills
- › Advocacy and intervention skills
- › Skills in challenging/confronting
- › Decision-making process/goal setting, goal monitoring, and problem solving skills
- › Multicultural advising skills
- › Validation strategies

A Comparison of the Knowledge, Skills, and Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Advisors (cont. 2 of 3)

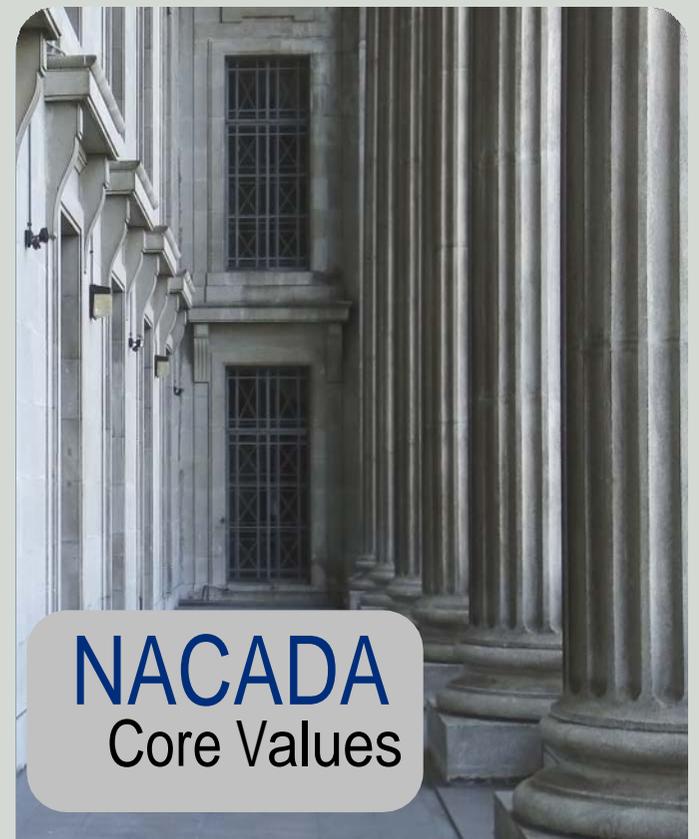
Effective Teachers	Effective Advisors
Create an environment conducive to learning	Create a good learning climate within advising sessions
Stimulate student interest in their subject by teaching it enthusiastically	Project enthusiasm for their area of academic expertise and their advisory duties
Help students learn independently	Encourage advisees to become self-directed learners
Teach students how to evaluate information	Help advisees evaluate and re-evaluate their progress toward personal, educational, and career goals
Act as co-learners during the learning process	Set performance goals for themselves and their advisees
Serve as a resource to students	Provide materials to advisees and refer them to others when referral is an appropriate response
Relate course content to students' experiences	Assist students in the consideration of their life goals by helping them relate their experiences, interests, skills, and values to career paths and the nature and purpose of higher education
Provide problem-solving tasks to students	Provide tasks to be completed before the next advising meeting that will require the advisee to use information-gathering, decision-making, and problem-solving skills
Personalize the learning process	Help students gain self-understanding and self-acceptance
Deliver information clearly and understandably	Communicate in a clear and unambiguous manner with advisees
Exhibit good questioning skills	Serve as catalysts by asking questions and initiating discussions
Exhibit good listening skills	Listen carefully and constructively to advisees' messages
Exhibit positive regard, concern, and respect for students	Provide a caring and personal relationship by exhibiting a positive attitude toward students, their goals, and their ability to learn

This information comes directly from National Academic ADvising Association (NACADA) faculty, Victoria McGillian and Tim Champarde, and printed information disseminated by them at a workshop at the NACADA Academic Advising Summer Institute, Summer 2004



A Comparison of the Knowledge, Skills, and Characteristics of Effective Teachers and Advisors (cont. 3 of 3)

Effective Teachers	Effective Advisors
Exhibit positive regard, concern, and respect for students	Provide a caring and personal relationship by exhibiting a positive attitude toward students, their goals, and their ability to learn
Are approachable outside the classroom	Provide accessible and responsive advising services
Present themselves to students in an open and genuine manner	Provide a climate of trust in which advisees feel free to ask questions, express concerns, revise ideas, make decisions, and share personal experiences and knowledge
Serve as role models who can help students understand the mission, values, and expectations of the institution	Model the tenets of the university, and demonstrate enthusiasm and knowledge about the goals and purposes of higher education
"Promote effective learning climates that are supportive of diversity" (Puente, 1993, p. 82)	Respect diverse points of view by demonstrating sensitivity to differences in culture and gender
Use outcomes assessment to "make data-based suggestions for improving teaching and learning" (Halpern, 1993, p. 44)	Make changes or add to advising knowledge and skills by assessing the advising process
"Stimulate learning at higher cognitive levels" (Mathie, 1993, p. 185)	Help students move beyond rote memorization or recall (Grites, 1994), help advisees test the validity of their ideas (Hagen, 1994), and "challenge students to confront their attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions" (Laff, 1994, p. 47)
Help students "choose careers that best suit their aptitudes and interests" (Brewer, 1993, p. 171)	Help students explore career goals and choose programs, courses, and co-curricular activities that support these goals
Utilize interactive computer software that promotes active learning (Mathie, 1993)	Utilize institutional technology (e.g., degree audit reports) to augment advising, recommend interactive software (e.g., SIGI PLUS) that can help advisees clarify goals and identify career options (Rooney, 1994), and communicate with advisees via e-mail



NACADA
Core Values

The Statement of Core Values provides a framework to guide professional practice and reminds advisors of their responsibilities to students, colleagues, institutions, society, and themselves.

Those charged with advising responsibilities are expected to reflect the values of the advising profession in their daily interactions at their institutions.

- ▶ Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise.
- ▶ Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process.
- ▶ Advisors are responsible to their institutions.
- ▶ Advisors are responsible to higher education.
- ▶ Advisors are responsible to their educational community.
- ▶ Advisors are responsible for their professional practices and for themselves personally.

<https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-declaration.aspx>

