



# HOW TO ADVISE

## MODULE 5

Promoting  
Advising for  
Student  
Success  
PORTal

## 5A. HOW TO ADVISE: THE ADVISING APPOINTMENT



The following is a checklist of suggested advising topics to help you have effective advising appointments. This checklist lends itself best to a series of appointments over an extended period of time.

### Set Climate

- Introduce yourself, make the student feel welcome.
- Ask the student about him/herself (employment, goals, etc.).
- Have a positive and caring attitude.
- Use active listening skills.
- Help students make connections and move beyond their comfort zone.
- Discuss expectations and responsibilities.
  - ▶ Advisors are guides and mentors.
  - ▶ Make clear your expectations for length of the meeting.
  - ▶ Let the student know how to prepare for future appointments.
  - ▶ Students are ultimately responsible for meeting their degree requirements and for the consequences of their decisions.
  - ▶ Saying, “nobody told me” doesn’t solve any issue.
  - ▶ Resources beyond the advisor are available.
  - ▶ The USM catalog is their agreement with the university.
- Set appropriate boundaries in your role as advisor. Refer when appropriate or necessary.
- Avoid personal judgments or “I” statements. Focus on helping your advisee find a solution or express her/his point of view.

### Shorter Term

- How are her/his current semester courses going?
  - ▶ Have you received any Academic Alert notices about the student?
  - ▶ Is the student aware of resources to help them succeed?
  - ▶ Are current courses prerequisites for next semester’s courses?
- Does the student want to continue with/or change her/his major?
- Encourage student to create and/or review their graduation plan.
- Considerations for next semester’s schedule:
  - ▶ Check the degree audit for remaining requirements in the core curriculum, major, minor and contact the Dean’s Office if changes or substitutions need to be made.
  - ▶ Do any courses need to be repeated? (GPA or grade requirement)
  - ▶ Offer information about frequency of courses offered.
  - ▶ It is helpful to balance major, minor, and Core curriculum courses.
  - ▶ Personal obligations (work schedule, family needs).



## Longer Term

- Minor, internship, co-op, or volunteer activity.
- Do future plans include graduate school?
- Career goals.
- To be eligible for a baccalaureate degree, students must satisfy all Core, major, minor (if applicable) requirements, have a minimum of 120 credits, a minimum 2.00 GPA and apply for graduation. Please note that some major/program gpa/grade requirements may vary.
- Residency requirements – the University has both a general and a senior residency requirement, see your Dean's office for more detail.

## Referrals

- Does the student need to be referred to someone else or another office?  
*See Where to Find It and Where to Refer for additional information.*



## THE ADVISING APPOINTMENT VIDEO

[TO VIEW VIDEO CLICK HERE](#)

The linked video is an example of how a first appointment could proceed. Please keep in mind that due to time constraints this brief video does not include the very important aspect of getting to know the student. As we know it is important to spend time asking questions that begin to establish the relationship focused on developing the advising partnership.

# 5B. WHEN TO ADVISE: TIMELINE OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

*Note: School/College guidelines for advising responsibilities may vary. The timeline is intended to provide both*

- ▶ *an overview of events that impact students during a cycle of the academic year*
- ▶ *a suggested framework for advisor contacts with advisees and related activities*

**September:** Introductions; Connections

**October:** Academic Planning; Resource and Referral

**November:** Scheduling

**December:** Planning and Support; Outreach

**January:** Connecting and Reconnecting

**February:** Resource and Referral

**March:** Academic Planning; Scheduling; Outreach

**April:** Scheduling

**May:** Planning and Support

**June-July-August:** Meeting New Admits, Academic Action appeals/meetings





## September:

- ▶ Student's may add/drop courses from the time that registration opens up through the end of the first week of the semester. Check the Registrar's web page for important dates and information.
- ▶ Contact and support, or refer, as appropriate, continuing advisees who may be at risk, on probation, or otherwise are experiencing academic difficulty. The Academic Alert process can be helpful for newly-admitted students who experience difficulty.
- ▶ Consider encouraging departmental community by scheduling student-faculty group gatherings during the semester.
- ▶ Winter Session Registration begins.



## October:

- ▶ Continue to connect one-on-one with advisees (either initial or follow up meetings). Work with advisees to prepare and give approval for their advance registration for the Spring semester.
- ▶ Academic alert extends throughout the semester. In addition to indicating possible academic risk for students in the classes you teach, you may receive similar notices about students whom you advise. Intervention strategies may help avert some problems, so consider scheduling appointments with your at-risk advisees (probation, returning from suspension) for referral to resources.
- ▶ Winter Session Registration continues.

**Last Date to Withdraw. Check to confirm the official last date to withdraw without academic penalty.**



## November:

- ▶ Depending on the number of your advisees, advance registration appointments may continue into November. Matriculated students register for spring courses beginning about the middle of this month.
- ▶ Winter Session Registration continues.



## December:

- ▶ Consider sponsoring a departmental effort to contact continuing majors who have not yet registered.
- ▶ In late December, terms grades are posted; Winter Session begins.
- ▶ Non-matriculated students register during Open Registration period.





## January:

- ▶ Typically, during the first week of the month, grades have been posted and GPA's are updated. Then the Deans' offices take appropriate academic action based on University and departmental requirements. Some of your advisees may achieve Dean's List status; some may receive notice of academic action (probation, suspension, dismissal). Your Dean's office may inform you of any advising responsibilities you may have in connection with your Dean's actions.
- ▶ About a week before Spring semester begins, Orientation is held for incoming students, both transfer and first-year. As appropriate within your department, you may be participating in Orientation and/or reviewing folders of new majors.
- ▶ Non-matriculated students register during Open Registration period.
- ▶ Spring semester begins, and Add/Drop period is the first two weeks of classes.
- ▶ As appropriate per departmental policy, consider meeting early in the semester with advisees who are on Academic Probation to guide them through the academic recovery process.
- ▶ Consider encouraging departmental community by scheduling student-faculty group gatherings during the semester.



## February:

- ▶ Academic alert extends throughout the semester. In addition to indicating possible academic risk for students in the classes you teach, you may receive similar notices about your own advisees. Early intervention strategies may help avert some problems, so consider scheduling appointments with your at-risk students and advisees for referral to resources.



## March:

- ▶ Begin to work with current advisees to prepare and give approval for advance registration for fall semester and summer session.

**Last Date to Withdraw. Check to confirm the official last date to withdraw without academic penalty.**



## April:

- ▶ Fall and Summer Session registration begins.
- ▶ Continue to hold advance registration appointments as matriculated students register for fall courses.
- ▶ Non-matriculated students register during Open Registration period.





## May:

- Typically, by the end of this month, grades have been posted and GPA's are updated. Then the Deans' offices take appropriate academic action based on University and departmental requirements. Some of your advisees may achieve Dean's List status; some may receive notice of academic action (probation, suspension, dismissal). Your Dean's office may inform you of any advising responsibilities you may have in connection with your Dean's actions.
- Non-matriculated students register during Open Registration period.



## June-July-August:

- Continue to meet with advisees as appropriate. Consider sponsoring a departmental effort to contact continuing majors who have not yet registered.
- Participation in Orientation takes place in July and August. This is the time to review folders of incoming advisees. Faculty usually meet new students during the School/College and Departmental Advising sessions on orientation days.
- Non-matriculated students register during Open Registration period.

# 5C. TERMS TO KNOW

**Add/Drop:** Students may add classes through the first week of the semester through MaineStreet or with an instructor's signature. Students may drop classes through the first two weeks of the semester; no instructor signature is needed. Exact date for end of drop period is available on the Registrar's Office calendar each semester. Faculty can verify class enrollment any time via MaineStreet.

**Academic Actions:** Academic Actions are determined at the end of the fall and spring semesters based on University and School/College policies. Students with grade point averages below good standing may be subject to an action of probation, suspension, or dismissal.

**Academic Advisor:** Each student is assigned a faculty academic advisor if a declared major or a professional academic advisor if undeclared or in the first year of certain majors.

**CLEP (College Level Examination Program):** Some students choose to earn credit for some courses by taking an exam instead of the course. The University grants credit for prior learning to students who receive satisfactory scores for CLEP exams approved for some CORE and departmental requirements.

**Class Number:** A designator that identifies the class/course section.

**Colleges:** USM is comprised of several academic units, the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; College of Management and Human Service; College of Science, Technology and Health; and Lewiston-Auburn College. The administrative officer in charge of such a unit is a dean.

**Commencement:** Students who have successfully completed a minimum of 111 credits by the end of the spring semester (assuming successful completion of spring course work) are eligible to march in the May commencement ceremony. Students do not officially graduate until they have successfully completed all degree requirements. Students need to [apply](#) for their degree.

**Core Curriculum:** A program of required courses designed to ensure that USM students receive a broad-based liberal arts education.

**Dean's List:** Honors students whose semester GPA is 3.4 or higher and who are enrolled in 12 or more college-level credit hours during that semester.



**E-mail:** USM has an e-mail policy effective Fall 2006. E-mail is not a secure form of communication. Faculty and staff should NOT respond to students via e-mail who make contact using a non-USM e-mail unless the requested information is not personal or private and the answer could be located in the catalog (e.g., the last date for withdrawal). It is advisable that faculty and staff also use their USM e-mail when communicating with USM students. Go to the full [policy](#) for more details..

**ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages):** Courses designed for students whose second or other language is English.

**FAFSA:** Free Application for Student Aid, filed annually by students to determine financial aid awards.

**Full-time Student:** One enrolled in 12 or more credit hours.

**GPA (Grade Point Average):** Every semester, students' semester GPA's are calculated and their cumulative GPA's are updated.

**Graduation:** USM offers graduation dates in May, August and December. Students need to [apply](#) for their degree.

**Incomplete:** The "I" grade is a temporary grade assigned by the instructor to students who, for some sort of extraordinary reasons, have not yet finished the work required for a course at the semester's end. The instructor determines the length of additional time allowed a student to finish work for the course. Incomplete grades must be resolved by the end of the next semester. If the grade is not resolved, an "I" becomes "I\*" and is computed as an "F" in the student's GPA. Extensions of the I grade are not permitted.

**INC:** This grade is a *permanent incomplete*. Such a grade is assigned only under extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the student's instructor and the dean of the school or college offering the course. Documentation may be required. Contact your Dean's office for more information.

**Internship:** An opportunity for students to earn credits while utilizing their classroom learning in the world of work and gaining valuable on-the-job experience.

**"L" grade:** Assigned to students who stop attending class without formally withdrawing. It is computed in the GPA as an "F."

**MaineStreet:** A secure internet-based program with varying levels of access based on user's position in the academic community. Students and academic advisors use this system to access student records. Academic advisors are also able to retrieve and validate a student's PIN, view a list of their advisees and create a batch or individual e-mails.

**MG:** Missing Grade, MG, is a placeholder assigned by the Registrar Office while waiting for the instructor to determine a valid grade.

**Part-time student:** One enrolled in under 12 hours.

**Pass/Fail option:** Students may choose to take up to 18 hours of elective courses with this option. The hours count toward the degree, but the passing grade, whether P or LP (D-, D, D+), is not computed in the GPA. An "F" grade is. A maximum of 6 pass/fail hours is permitted in any one semester, and no course satisfying requirements for Core, major, minor, or Honors programs may be taken pass/fail.

**PIN:** A number created through the Registrar's Office and coded to an individual student that permits the student to register for classes before open registration. These numbers are tied to a student's total completed hours and change from semester to semester.

**Probation:** Students whose GPA falls below the level required for "good" standing but is above the level for suspension are placed on probation for the next semester. GPA considered "good" standing varies with degree hours accrued. See Catalog for specifics.

**Readiness:** This term refers to the minimum skill level required for enrollment in college-level math courses. Entering students can demonstrate readiness in a variety of ways; please see the Catalog for details.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Office of Support for Students with Disabilities (780-4706) informs instructors regarding any students in their classes who are entitled to support and provides information about the required accommodations.

**Suspension:** Students whose GPA falls below the probationary level or who have had two successive semesters of probation may be suspended at the discretion of the dean.

**URSUS (University Resources Serving Users Statewide):** This computer-based catalog lists books, journals, periodicals and non-print media available from libraries in the University of Maine System as well as other public and private libraries throughout the state.

**Tutoring:** The Learning Commons in Gorham, Portland, and Lewiston-Auburn provide tutoring in writing, math, ESOL, technology and other disciplines. Many academic departments provide also tutoring in their own disciplines.

**Withdrawals:** Withdrawal after the end of the add/drop period through 60% of a course. Students may withdraw from a course by the end of the "W" (60%) period without permission or signature of the instructor. The actual date deadline for each course is available on the students' MaineStreet schedule. Summer Session deadlines are available on the Summer Session website. If a student has not officially withdrawn by 60% of the course, a letter grade normally F, will be assigned. The W notation may be obtained for a late "W" after completion of 60% of the course under unusual circumstances if so determined by the instructor and the dean. A threat of failure is not considered to be an unusual circumstance.

