Announcing New Weekly Advising Column: Its Purpose, and How to Access Your Advisor

This week Advising begins a regular column. We thank the Free Press for this opportunity! The column’s overall purpose will address how to use your advising resources to help your experience at USM. The topics will provide practical tips and logistics, offer ways you can explore majors and careers, explain new initiatives and resources, and share areas of interest suggested by you. The column will feature input from faculty advisors, academic advisors, staff, and students. We invite you to ask questions and suggest topics relating to this column. Please send them to the contact information at the end of this article.

Previous articles about advising explained that students who have declared a major will have a faculty advisor within their department and an academic advisor from Advising. In this column, we’ll review how to reach your advisors and why you may want to connect with them. If you are not sure who your advisors are, check your Student Center on Maine Street. Click the hyperlink near the name; it will provide you with the contact e-mails.

Academic advisors are located on all campuses. The locations, phone numbers and hours are listed below:

119 Bailey/ Gorham. (780-4629), (Regular hours, 8-4:30, M-F), (Walk-in hours: 10-4, extended to 6pm on M/T)

119 Payson Smith/ Portland. (780-4040), (Regular hours, 8-4:30, M-F), (Walk-in hours: 10-4, extended to 6pm on T/W)

119 LAC. (753-6536), (Regular hours, 8- 4:30, extended to 6 on M)

The only exception to campus advising is if you are enrolled in an online program. Students enrolled in online degree programs are assigned an online academic advisor and a faculty advisor listed on your Student Center. Your online academic advisor is available by appointment for in-person, phone, and web-assisted meetings.

Faculty advisors are located within their academic department. Check out the people section of your department’s website to discover your faculty advisor’s contact information, if you are in a major. You can also contact the department directly for assistance.

You can make academic advising appointments by calling the numbers listed above or by directly e-mailing your advisor. When you make the appointment it is helpful to state the purpose of your appointment, and to provide your phone number and student ID. Currently Academic Advising is working on a self-booking appointment feature for on-campus advising. Stay tuned, because it will soon be on the web page: www.usm.maine.edu/advising.

Advisors can help you develop an academic plan, discuss your educational and professional goals, explore majors, careers, and opportunities, connect you to support services, and just be someone to talk
with. Ideally, it is best to set up an appointment ahead of time, so the advisor can review your academic history and gather resources that match your appointment’s purpose.

Occasionally, you may prefer to speak with someone the same day. Academic Advising on the Portland and Gorham campuses have established walk-in hours where you can meet with an advisor in person, over the phone, or Skype or Google hangout. Advisors work closely as a team and have access to your academic notes on your Student Center, so all are able to help you, even if the walk-in advisor isn’t your assigned advisor. However if you prefer to see your assigned advisor, we will work hard to accommodate you, if she or he is available. (Please be patient during priority registration or during orientation days.)

One thing we know is you are busy! If you are a new student and have never met your advisor, we recommend meeting in person for your first appointment, but would be happy to meet via phone, Skype, or Google hangout. When you set the appointment, please indicate your preference. Finally if you have to cancel your meeting, please notify us at least 24 hours so another student can use that appointment slot.

In summary, we are excited to meet you and are very invested in your success. If you have questions, or ideas for future articles that you would like addressed, please e-mail us (care of): janisa@maine.edu.

Janis Albright, for the Advising team, janisa@maine.edu

Free Press Article: 10/7/2015, (9am)/ JA