

ADVISING RESPONSIBILITIES

Quality academic advising involves more than just assisting students with course scheduling. It involves providing an appropriate level of challenge and support leading to academic, professional and personal growth. This challenge and support should be developmentally appropriate for the student's level, and expectations for each member of the advising partnership should be set early and discussed as needed to maintain a productive working relationship. Ultimate responsibility for fulfilling graduation requirements rests with the student.

The faculty role model defines academic advising and mentoring as “consulting with students on a group or individual basis for the purpose of providing guidance and advice concerning academic, professional, and personal growth.”

The faculty role model also outlines basic expectations for advisors. These are listed below in bold, followed by examples or suggested tasks related to each expectation. Advisors are expected to:

- **Assist students in their consideration and clarification of educational goals.** To do this, advisors should encourage responsible behavior and leadership development. Challenge each advisee to reach her potential by setting intelligent educational, personal, and career/professional goals for herself.
- **Assist students in developing a plan of study consistent with their goals and objectives.** Present alternatives and help students in working out problems and making decisions, both academic and personal in nature.
- **Provide accurate information to students.** In preparation for advising meetings, review advisee folders for information, as well as utilize WebAdvisor to access placement scores, student records, and grade reports. Be familiar with campus publications such as the *College Catalogue*, *Early Registration and Advising Handbook* and the *Student Handbook and Activities Calendar* and teach students how to use these resources to find information. Contact the Office of Academic Advising, Office of the Registrar or other administrative offices for answers to questions as necessary.
- **Be knowledgeable about programs, resources, policies and procedures.** Participate in training sessions, read training materials and generally keep up-to-date with changes in the curriculum. Explain Meredith College policies of and encourage advisees to think through their choices on their own. Have an understanding of legal issues such as FERPA (The Buckley Amendment) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), and maintain confidentiality of student records.
- **Be appropriately available to students.** Participate in events such as Early Registration, Orientation, Transfer Visitation Day and registration and drop/add activities as applicable for the types of students and disciplines that you advise. Set and communicate office hours for drop-in advising needs. “Appropriate availability” can also extend to your level of openness with advisees; establish a professional rapport with each advisee and maintain a good relationship throughout the time that the advising relationship exists.
- **Provide timely attention to academic advising matters.** Communicate time-sensitive information to advisees about issues such as availability for pre-registration advising conferences, declaring a major, performing a graduation check, and filing for graduation.

- **Assist students in evaluation and re-evaluation of progress toward established goals and educational plans**, which may include encouraging advisees to assess and accept both their assets and limitations.
- **Make referrals to resources within and outside of the college as appropriate.** Help the student evaluate her study habits and refer her to resources for assistance when appropriate. Encourage the student to seek experiences outside the classroom to enrich her academic life.

The following are procedures for academic advising assignments:

- (1) *An appropriate number of people from each department (depending on the number of majors) will be designated by the department head as advisors to students who have declared a major in that department.*
- (2) *The rest of the teaching faculty will be assigned advisees every year from freshmen and transfers who have not declared a major. In some cases, freshmen who know their major will be assigned to people in the department of their intended major. Students will remain with their initial advisor until they declare a major. This occurs no earlier than December of the freshman year and no later than the end of the sophomore year.*
- (3) *When a student declares her major, she gets the head of that department to sign her declaration of major form and files the form with the Office of the Registrar. The Registrar's Office informs the freshman/sophomore advisor of the student's decision and requests that all records pertaining to that student be forwarded to the major advisor. (amended 8/80)*
- (4) *A reasonable effort will be made to balance the number of advisees per faculty member. For instance, major advisors who have few advisees may be asked to advise freshmen as well.*
- (5) *Advisors will be responsible to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Registrar, and Director of Academic Advising for advising in academic matters and to the Dean of Students in personal matters.*

Suggested change for (2) to be approved by Dr. Reichard:

The rest of the teaching faculty will be assigned advisees every year from incoming freshmen and transfer students.

- Freshmen are assigned to a specially trained cadre of freshman advisors who are under the purview of the Director of Academic Advising. Each freshman advisor has a caseload of 9-10 advisees, who are assigned to the advisor during the Early Registration process. If an intended major is indicated, and there is an available advisor from the discipline, a match will be made. This is not guaranteed, however, and so freshman advisors are trained to be generalists, with basic knowledge of the introductory courses for all disciplines and programs. Students will remain with their initial advisors until they declare a major, which should occur no earlier than December of the freshman year and no later than the end of the sophomore year.*
- Transfer students are assigned to a transfer advisor who is typically the department head for the intended major or his/her designee. Once initial credit evaluations have been made, the transfer advisor may assign the student to an advisor who matches the specific interests of the student, and at that point, the official declaration of major is made.*