A Practical Approach to Effective Academic Advising

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Why is Effective Advising Necessary?

- Students often under-estimate academic expectations
- Students often over-estimate their performance
- Students aren't always aware of resources and how to get help
- In the face of adversity, many students default to negative behaviors

Good Advising:

- Is an on-going relationship of mutual respect, friendliness, honesty and accountability—all within a caring context
- Fosters meaningful connections
- Provides specific & useful info
- May include confronting unrealistic beliefs & guiding the student towards more realistic thinking

Good Advising:

- Focuses on the present and action for the future
- Celebrates both large and small successes
- Acknowledges students' growth
- Involves a mutual sharing of experiences
- Entails eye contact, smiles, humor

Good Advising is NOT

- A rushed checklist to get the student registered for courses
- "parental" in nature (scolding, condescending, enabling)
- Overly informal in that there's no facilitation or challenge for future growth

General Tips
Advisors should:

- Establish a "safe" environment
- Get to know the student by focusing on what distinguishes him/her from other students
- Listen actively
- Take brief notes
- Keep a separate file for each student

Logging on to SIS

- RIT's homepage
- < Faculty/Staff
- < SIS/Advising System
- < Faculty/Staff Information/advising System
- Enter DCE user name & password
- Confidentiality & Security of Student Records,
 < I agree
- Enter Faculty/Staff ID (SSN)
- Enter 6-digit numeric PIN
- < Advise a Student
- Enter student's ID (SSN) or last name, first name

Screens & Diagnostic Factors

- Profile/Address screen
- Testing Scores
- Holds
- GPA stats
- Academic Advising Report (AAR)
- Academic Action

Look for patterns of successful/unsuccessful performance

- By subject, quarter, year
- By program requirements
- LA courses, LA concentration
- Electives, minors
- Internal/external transfer
- Credit by examination, AP
- GPA, quarterly hours earned over attempted
- Course withdrawals
- D, F, I grades

Ask (diagnostic) Questions about a Course

- "What's the course about?"
- Class & lab attendance
- Structure of the course
- Grading/evaluation
- Student's perception of the prof
- Student's class peers' perception of the course & how they're doing

Ask (diagnostic) Questions about the Student

- Background knowledge
- Skills (strengths & challenges)
- Cognition (big picture, important details, elaboration, application)
- "What are you learning about?"

Ask (diagnostic) Questions about the Student's

- Interest & motivation
- Beliefs & self-beliefs
- Willingness to work hard (discipline)
- Ability to organize, plan, & manage time
- Study time & study environment
- Study strategies & time management

Ask about possible obstacles to success (situational or chronic)

- Career choice
- Academic environment
- Social/Interpersonal issues
- Physical, emotional problems
- Extra-curricular activities

Encourage Student to

- Revisit the syllabus
- See prof
- Access campus resources
- Work with a tutor
- Find a study partner
- Join a study group
- Study in a structured environment
- Set short-term goals

Help Students Set Goals that are:

- Concrete and specific
- Realistic and clearly stated
- Behavior-oriented rather than results-oriented
- Manageable in terms of time
- Flexible in allowing for Murphy's Law
- Measurable in terms of results

Resources

- Academic Support Center
  - Math Lab
  - Writing Lab
  - Lunch 'n Learn workshops
  - Learning Power online
  - Tutor Training (comprehensive list of ALL academic support services on campus)
  - Learning Support Services
  - Academic Assessment
  - Academic Accommodations

Interactive Activity

- Sample student file on SIS
- Observations
- Strengths
- Concerns
- Recommendations