

Committee on Academic Advising Minutes
12/13/2011
Minutes taken by Jason Sikorski
Meeting called to order at 12:17pm

Those in attendance: J. Sikorski, M. P Bigley, K. Larsen, Y. Kirby, S. Odesina, M. Horan, A. Pozorski, C. Labedz, L. Hall, K. Poppa, J. Owen (new student member)

Announcements/General Business

- SGA student member Jessica Owen attended her first meeting. Members of the group introduced themselves and welcomed her to the group
- Chet passed out a potential schedule for Winter 2011-2012 interviews
 - Chet wanted to tackle “middle column” interviews over the Winter session since many of these individuals work continuously over a 12 month period.
 - Many committee members voiced their willingness to try to help out in completing some of these interviews over the Winter break
- Chet noted that the Blackout Calendar for Spring interviews will be out before our next meeting on February 14th
 - K. Poppe asked that we all be notified when all the interview assignments have been made so the blacked-out portion of our calendars could be freed up for appointments

Any problems with interviews?

- There were no major problems with interviews completed to date. It was noted that some of the interviewees did not wish to be taped. Further, many of the members were unclear about how to post the interviews to the Blackboard Vista site. These issues were addressed and remedied to the satisfaction of all members.
 - To post interviews on Blackboard Vista....
 - Make sure that you are on the Build Command
 - Go to Right column interviews
 - Click add a file
 - Upload the file from your computer
- Y Kirby noted that many of the interviewees have a lot to say about incoming freshman students and just a little bit to say about transfer student advising. She noted that we should target our interviews appropriately. Chet agreed to revise the target email and ask specifically for them to be prepared to talk about their experiences with transfer advising.
 - A discussion then developed about what exactly is our target for this committee. L. Hall noted that we must clarify between transfer issues and transfer advising. K. Poppe indicated his perception that we might not want to go too far down the road toward transfer issues (e.g., the process, the standards for admission), as this is under the purview of the Admissions Office. In addition, according to some members, we should also not be targeting departmental standards.
 - L. Hall noted that admissions criteria, guidelines and rules do impact initial course selection and initial information that transfer students receive

upon admission. He told a story of a student who was told they needed 15 credits in their major and 9 in their minor, while the initial acceptance letter that this student received only noted that they needed 30 credits. As a result of this experience, L. Hall revised the transfer student acceptance letter.

- L. Hall used this story to outline how information we receive from interviews can be used right now, in the moment to make changes to streamline the transfer student advising process for incoming students. In short, L. Hall noted that the process mapping could reap benefits before it is completed.
- Most members agreed that departmental issues are kind of blurry. J. Sikorski mentioned an example of a specific program on campus that has not published rules for accepting minors and only notes that the number of minors accepted is limited. J. Sikorski noted how this makes life very difficult for many advisors. More importantly, J. Sikorski attempted to portray how this experience for students can be very disconcerting and frustrating. In short, J. Sikorski felt that this department should clarify its rules or at least be willing to talk to others about what the rules might be, as it could impact transfer student experiences and retention.
- Y Kirby noted her perception that we should try to note the 2 or 3 most important points/themes in each interview. She noted that we could run out of time in completing these interviews and mapping the experience for transfer students before we reach the month of March. C. Labeledz noted his belief that this experience would take longer than 1 year. J. Sikorski noted his belief that noting overall themes could not hurt and would likely speed things along...even if we don't get things done before March per se.
 - L. Hall again talked about the importance of using this information right away. He noted that we may learn things through the process that can require a change that works to solve the problem right away.
- A. Pozorski described an interview where an individual was very well prepared and came with a lecture prepared. Some of the information answered set questions. Some of the other information did not address set questions from the interview protocol. All were advised to post the extra material under Question #7, which is an open ended question that asks individuals to comment on their experiences...whatever they feel is relevant
- There was a discussion about how to recruit students for interviews in Spring 2012 and how to keep them engaged in the process...Where? When? How?
 - L. Hall described Transfer Tuesdays as a chance to interact with students who are part of the transfer advising process
 - January 13th is the Transfer Student Social...which could enable us to recruit some interviewees
 - J. Sikorski wondered how SGA could be involved to solicit students to offer their opinions
 - Some members noted that there were a number of challenges that included how opinions might vary across schools, based on the timing of the

student's admission to the university, the timing of their registration, and even whether they are declared/undeclared for their major. Data collection possibilities were discussed like survey monkey and full interviews similar to the ones conducted already

- K. Poppe noted that the interview is a rich source of information and opinions compared to a self-report measure. He then wondered whether students prefer face to face interviews or a survey to be completed
 - J. Owen indicated that a short survey, followed by a longer and more intense survey if needed, might represent a good strategy to follow
 - The timing of the process was described as critical.
 - C. Labeledz indicated that students should be questioned during advising and registration. M. Horan noted her concern that the data might be biased toward those who are either really satisfied or really not satisfied with their experiences. S. Odesina indicated his belief that the wording of questions would be very important
- More discussion about what advising really is was undertaken in order to better understand our measurement issues. The fact that what advising really is varies based on the department, the individual advisor and the student's needs/willingness to make requests. In short, there is no real system in place to note when course selection is to be discussed, when career guidance is to take place. This can be confusing for some students
- In general, it was suggested that our questioning of students should include:
 - A focus on their knowledge of the advising process
 - Their experiences at all levels of the process...from admission to registration
 - Their views about advising in general
- M. Bigley agreed to author a first draft version of an interview protocol focusing on the process of advising for transfer students
- J. Sikorski agreed to author a first draft version of a knowledge of general education questionnaire
 - These materials will be posted to the blackboard site in time so that individuals can review them before our meeting in February of 2012

Other Business:

- Questions were raised as to why our committee was not made aware, explicitly speaking, about how Dr. Lovitt will be using the university hour on 2/5 to talk about advising

These minutes are respectfully submitted for consideration by Jason Sikorski