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For those involved in
• graduate student advising
• undergraduate student advising

Techniques and Tools for Improving Advising*

THOMAS J. GRITES, *Director of Academic Advising, Stockton State College, Pomona, New Jersey*

*This is an excerpt from a forthcoming book titled, *Developmental Academic Advising: Addressing Students' Educational, Career, and Personal Needs*, by Roger B. Winston, Jr., Theodore K. Miller, Steven C. Ender, Thomas J. Grites, and Associates. Published by Jossey-Bass Inc., price \$29.95. Orders may be sent to Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 433 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104.

A solid theoretical foundation for developmental academic advising may be introduced throughout the institution and the best educational plans and strategies could be presented, but the overall success of the advising program ultimately rests with individual advisors. A variety of materials and resources are available to assist the advisor and the student in achieving maximum educational success through the academic advising process. These materials and resources are advising "tools" that can be used by the advisor to facilitate, monitor, and review the educational and developmental progress for each student.

This article examines a wide sampling of publications, assessment instruments, institutional resource documents, campus agencies, and human resources that may be useful to academic advisors. The techniques and applications of these materials are also included.

PUBLICATIONS

The success of any advising program may be attributed to the quality of information available to the students and advisors. Clarity, conciseness, relevance, accuracy, and availability are essential characteristics of publications designed to enhance the advising process. Some institutional publications that should be reviewed for their effectiveness are admissions materials, the college catalogue, student handbooks, advisor handbooks and the schedule of classes. Each of these is described here in detail.

The proper use of these publications will result in more accurate, active, and productive advising; especially if advisors are involved in their development, advisors can encourage students to become more active and responsible in the advising process and their education.

Admissions Materials. How can admissions literature help academic advisors? First, this information must represent an accurate picture of what the campus actually provides. This material helps shape the expectations of students, parents, and counselors. If these expectations are not met, the advising process suffers because the advisor becomes the primary individual to whom the dissatisfaction is expressed. Chickering states that "...when the institution does not have the necessary capacity, when it lacks competence on the faculty, when it lacks critical facilities or other resources and has no access to them, then it must be candid about its limitations." The "truth-in-advertising" recruitment effort helps avoid a potentially negative initial advising session.

Second, the student's application can serve as a vehicle for communication. Many demographic characteristics are identifiable through applications; personal statements provide further information about the student's goals, abilities, interests, and expectations. One specific part of the application has a special relationship to advising, and that is the "choice of major." Students are often assigned to their advisors by this single criterion, no matter how inappropriate or uninformed that choice might be. Furthermore, some applications allow no option to be "undecided," which forces the student to make an uninformed choice. Either situation increases the potential for an uncomfortable initial advising session. Advisors' access to applications can assist them in helping students adjust to academic life.

Systematic reviews of admissions publications, including the application, need to be made with a special consideration for their potential impact on the advising process.

Advisor Handbook. the advisor handbook is a publication designed explicitly for use by the advisor, rather than by the student. Unlike the other publications described, which are fairly uniform in their content, advisor handbooks vary greatly. At one extreme are the voluminous documents that virtually duplicate much of the college catalogue and also include:

- 1) curriculum worksheets,
- 2) referral sources,
- 3) advising definitions,
- 4) procedures, and
- 5) methods.

These documents are often distributed in loose-leaf binders so that additions and deletions can be made easily. The other extreme includes handbooks designed to provide only information that is specific to the advising role and not found elsewhere. A happy medium should be achieved so that the specific information is not buried in the duplicate material.

Whatever the format and content, an advisor needs a well-conceived handbook and must become familiar with it and use it effectively. Efficient use of this publication results in fewer phone calls, fewer unnecessary referrals, more resourceful advisors, and more satisfied students.

A. W. Chickering, "College Advising for the 1970s," J. Katz, Ed., (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.)

Schedule of Classes. Another institutional publication necessary for good advising is the schedule of classes for the upcoming term and academic year. Not only does this schedule list courses, times, rooms, and instructors, but it also often includes recent policy or procedure changes, deadline dates, and other announcements that might not have been available when the catalogue or the handbooks were printed. The advisor and the student should carefully review *all* material included in the class schedule rather than only the specific course offerings. When used properly, this book prevents such unpleasant circumstances as erroneous registrations (wrong section, time conflicts, and the like), inappropriate courses (to meet requirements or level of difficulty), and loss of the money required to pay fees for late registration or extra terms.

External Publications. In addition to the publications produced by the institution, advisors may wish to review a variety of external publication sources that can provide ideas for individual advising and for overall programmatic efforts. Some of these include: Crockett's resource documents,¹ which contain numerous practical suggestions and examples of adaptive material; Grites' monograph, which synthesizes the available literature on academic advising and provides recommendations for the future; Winston, Ender, and Miller's² sourcebook, which establishes the concept of developmental academic advising; the *NACADA Journal*, newsletter, and conference proceedings published by the National Academic Advising Association, which provide ongoing reports of concepts, programs, and research in the field of academic advising; and other books in the field.

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Advisors have a variety of assessment instruments available to aid them in advising students for personal and academic development.

SAT/ACT Profiles. Many institutions require scores from the College Entrance Examination Board Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Assessment Program (ACT) as part of the admissions process. These scores, and other factors, are used to predict college success; to determine whether a student should be admitted; and sometimes used to determine levels of placement in mathematics and English courses. In addition to the simple test score reports and analyses, each testing company provides a profile on all students taking the test. This profile includes a wealth of self-reported information about the student that is invaluable in the advising process, especially for the first meeting of the student and the advisor.

The SAT student report (Exhibit 1) includes responses from the Student Descriptive Questionnaire. These responses provide the advisor with information about the student's specific college choices, potential majors and careers, activities, interests, and special assistance needs. A complete description of the Student Descriptive Questionnaire and its use was published by the College Entrance Examination Board (1982).

¹ D.S. Crockett, Ed. *Academic Advising: A Resource Document (1979 Supplement)*. (Iowa City, Iowa: American College Testing Program, 1979.)

T.J. Grites. *Academic Advising: Getting Us Through the Eighties*. (Washington, D.C.: American Association of Higher Education: Educational Resources Information Center Higher Education Research Report No. 7, 1979.)

² R.B. Winston, Jr., S.C. Ender, and T.K. Miller, Eds. *Developmental Approaches to Academic Advising*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982.)

EXHIBIT 1 SAT Student Report +

1 **PERSONAL INFORMATION**

NAME THOMPSON MICHAEL S	SEX M	DATE OF BIRTH 02/17/87	SOCIAL SECURITY NO. 432-01-3448	REPORT DATE 12/18/84
TELEPHONE NO. 900 133-4527	STATE AND COUNTY OF LEGAL RESIDENCE 28091 KS GREELEY	REGISTRATION NUMBER 7054321		
ENGLISH BEST LANGUAGE YES	U.S. CITIZEN YES	VETERAN NO	DATE OF BIRTH NOV 84	

2 **HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION**

SCHOOL NAME JEFFERSON MEMORIAL	ADDRESS GROVETOWN KS 67664
TYPE OF SCHOOL PUBLIC	CLASS SIZE 250-499
2ND BTH	H.S. PROGRAM ACADEMIC

3 **SCORES**

CURRENT SCORES & PERCENTILES		ACHIEVEMENT TESTS	
TEST DATE NOV 84	SCORE 480	ACH 1 48	ACH 2 48
TEST DATE MAY 84	SCORE 480	ACH 1 48	ACH 2 48

4 **COLLEGE PLANS**

COLLEGE CODES & NAMES MMS STUFF COLLEGE	PERCENTILE RANKS FOR ENROLLED FRESHMEN IN THESE COLLEGES
COMPUTER/SYSTEMS UNDECIDED	PHYSICAL SCIENCE COED DORM
BA/BS DAY	DATE OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE SEPT 86

5 **ACTIVITIES, INTERESTS, AWARDS**

ACTIVITIES	INTERESTS	AWARDS
SPORTS	CLUBS	AWARDS
ARTS	CLUBS	AWARDS

THOMPSON MICHAEL S
DATE OF BIRTH
02/17/87
SOC. SEC. NO.
432-01-3448
STUDENT REPORT

+ Permission to reprint granted by the Educational Testing Service, 1984, Princeton, N.J.

EXHIBIT 2

ACT — Assessment College Report †

392-11-1982
JEFFERSON
393 488-7982

WHEAT RIDGE CO 80033

WHEAT RIDGE SR HS 9505 W 32ND AVE WHEAT RIDGE COLORADO 80033

MALE
08/22/85

ACT SCORES

EDUCATION	81/2	5	91	89
BUS ADMINISTRATION	81/2	5	94	92
LIBERAL ARTS	81/2	5	74	81
ENGINEERING	81/2	5	41	32
ALL FRESHMEN	80/1	5	73	80

ACT REPORT (NALET)

ACT SCORES	ACT REPORT (NALET)
EDUCATION	81/2
BUS ADMINISTRATION	81/2
LIBERAL ARTS	81/2
ENGINEERING	81/2
ALL FRESHMEN	80/1

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LIBERAL ARTS	81/2
ENGINEERING	81/2
ALL FRESHMEN	80/1

ACT REPORT (NALET)

ACT SCORES	ACT REPORT (NALET)
EDUCATION	81/2
BUS ADMINISTRATION	8

The ACT Assessment College Report, which is similar to the SAT College Report, (Exhibit 2) provides the advisor with information about extracurricular activities in high school and those anticipated in college, educational and vocational plans, and areas of special interest or needs. The ACT Report also provides information from an Interest Inventory that students complete at the time of their registration for assessment. The Interest Inventory yields three profile scores: a percentile ranking in each of six basic interest areas; coordinates for the Map of College Majors, which plot a location that encompasses a group of potential college majors for that student; and a region designation for the World of Work Map, which identifies a number of "job families" and occupations that seem suited to the student's interests. These additional scores are especially useful to the advisor when discussing both immediate and long-range educational and career plans. A thorough description of the use of the Student Profile Report, including its use in group advising, is found in Crockett.¹

Whether the institution uses SAT or ACT scores for admission, the advisor should be provided with a copy of the appropriate report. It is surprising to find how many institutions retain these reports in the admissions or registrar's office and do not distribute them to advisors. *These reports constitute one of the best developmental advising tools available.*

In the first dimensional approach, the advisor must examine the reports for the factor of compatibility or inconsistency as the basis for initial advising. Are the intended majors, career interests, and requisite abilities (as measured by the actual scores) similar? For example, does the intended engineering major have a relatively high mathematics score for your institution? Or does the aspiring lawyer have relatively high verbal/English scores, irrespective of intended major? If these factors are compatible, then the student's initial educational plan is probably appropriate; if they are not, the advisor should point out the inconsistencies to the student so that they are either clarified or some alternatives can begin to be explored.

Along a second dimension, the advisor should make the same comparisons in the areas of self-rating of skills and assistance (SAT), and of special educational needs, interests and accomplishments (ACT). Are the student's self-ratings consistent with the educational plan and/or test scores? For example, does the business student's self-rating of writing, leadership, and speaking skills rank "above average" on SAT or "HI" on ACT? Or does the student (any major) indicate a need for special assistance in academic skills development or counseling services? When these self-ratings are consistent with the educational plan, the advisor is able to activate the developmental process. When they are not, the advisor must first explore the inconsistencies, clarify them, and initiate the student's development from a different perspective.

The third dimension along which the advisor should compare student responses is that of high school and college extracurricular activities. Does the student indicate a variety of high school activities and few plans for college activities? Does the student indicate too many college activities that might detract from academic endeavors? Or does the student indicate little or no involvement either in high school or college? Whatever the pattern of responses, the advisor should explore in more detail the extracurricular plans of the student. This exploration is a basis for general discussion and provides the advisor with more complete information about the student.

¹ D.S. Crockett, Ed. *Academic Advising: A Resource Document*. (Iowa City, Iowa: American College Testing Program, 1978.)

The SAT and ACT profiles as advising tools contain a wealth of information that students have already provided; they form a basis for discussion upon which to build the developmental advising process. Appropriate distribution, training, and use of the profiles will result in more effective advisors and help students to become aware of their own development.

Other Assessment Instruments. Although SAT and ACT scores are used primarily for admission, they are sometimes used for mathematics and English course level placements. Many institutions have supplemented these with other standardized tests in specific curricular areas, and some have developed their own. Placement tests have been designed for English, mathematics, foreign languages, and certain science courses. Since the advent of open admissions policies and additional educational opportunity programs, a variety of basic skills assessment tests have been developed. In New Jersey, for example, all freshmen entering public institutions (and some private) must take the New Jersey College Basic Skills Placement Test *after* admission but before their initial registration.

In addition to the assessment of specific academic skills, many institutions assess other skills and characteristics of their students. Various instruments are available to assess goal setting, career exploration, and individual learning-style behaviors. When appropriately trained in the use of these instruments, advisors are able to recognize student behaviors; plan an active, intrusive advising approach; and determine student growth as a result. Descriptions of some of these instruments follow.

Setting one's educational goals is not as easy a task for college students as one might assume. Students often have unrealistic, ill-conceived, distorted, and confusing goals during their college experiences. The College Student Goals Inventory (CSGI) developed by Gill and Freuhling, and the Student Developmental Task Inventory, Second Edition, (SDTI-2) developed by Miller, and Prince, are two instruments that advisors can use to assist students in developing their educational goals and objectives.

The CSGI assesses the importance of eight goal areas for students and their perceptions of how the institution is helping them achieve those goals. From the 100 items, the degree of *student need* is determined by the difference between the importance and the achievement of the goals. From these data, various remedial, developmental, and preventive efforts can be established and facilitated by the advisor.²

The SDTI-2 is a direct individual student approach. It uses 140 items to yield scores in three developmental task and nine sub-task areas. The instrument is self-scored, and the advisor assists students in identifying generalized areas that may need development; assist them in creating a developmental plan; and also assist them by reviewing their progress periodically. Both instruments (SDTI-2 and CSGI) contain subscales on educational and career planning. Winston, Miller and Prince have also developed an accompanying self-assessment instrument, the Student Development Profile and Planning Record, which requires much less interpretation and provides space to log one's developmental progress. The SDTI-2 can also be used to assess institutional programs for student development and research, although its primary purpose is for individual student assessment.³

² J.S. Gill and J.A. Freuhling, "Needs Assessment and the Design of Service Delivery Systems," *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 20 No. 4 (1979) pp. 322-328.

³ R.B. Winston, Jr., T.K. Miller, and J.S. Prince, *Assessing Student Development: A Preliminary Manual for the Student Developmental Task Inventory (Second Edition) and the Student Developmental Profile and Planning Record*. (Athens, Ga.: Student Development Associates, 1979.)

Another instrument often used to assess the student's occupational plans more specifically is Holland's *Self-Directed Search: A Guide to Educational and Vocational Planning*. This programmed booklet has activities that help students assess their interests and abilities in six general occupational classifications. Although it is self-scoring and self-interpretive, the author provides recommendations for later student action, including assistance from advisors.⁴

"Learning styles" is a new area of educational research that has implications for the advising process. The conditions under which students seem to learn best have been described according to the interactions involved, the concreteness versus abstractness of the activity, and the external influences surrounding the activity. Knowledge of a student's learning style enables the advisor to assist that student in course selection and in encouraging other activities from which the student can best learn. The reader is referred to Claxton, Adams, and Williams for a concise review of several learning-styles instruments and the description of two programs where they have been used by students and faculty to make adjustments in the learning process.⁵

The use of tests and inventories as tools in the advising process is necessary, because these instruments provide data about the student that might not otherwise be readily available. Having this data in advance provides the advisor with a springboard from which to begin the developmental aspects of academic advising. For example, knowing that a student is deficient in reading skills and/or good study habits has serious implications for the simple advising task of course selection. Without the knowledge of these deficiencies and intervention by the advisor, the student could easily be "programmed for disaster" by registering for several courses that require taking lecture notes and reading the text as preparation for examinations, as is often the case in large survey courses taught in lecture halls. Alternative types of courses, such as art and music performance, speech, foreign language, and perhaps writing and mathematics, must be considered so that the student is not overburdened with the (reading) tasks for which assistance is necessary. Another prime, but often unrealized, example exists where the student's academic abilities appear to be strong, as indicated by AT/ACT scores and high school grades, but the study habits and skills are weak. Similarly, the student might have been exposed to limited modes of instruction in high school, and the nature of the academic environment in college becomes a real shock. Furthermore, unrealistic educational and career goals might emanate from the high school setting. Gordon said these incompatibilities could be the major reasons for the attrition of college freshmen.⁶

The employment of these additional tests and inventories makes the advisor more aware of potential difficulties. When the student is also made aware of them, the advisor can assist in remedying the deficiencies and help to prevent attrition. This additional information also assists the advisor in determining what other campus agencies and resources are available for the student to correct the deficiencies, and in making an appropriate referral.

⁴ H. Holland. *The Self-Directed Search: A Guide to Educational and Vocational Planning*. (Palo Alto, Calif.: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1970.)

⁵ C. Claxton, D. Adams, and D. Williams. "Using Student Learning Styles in Teaching." *American Association of Higher Education Bulletin*, 1982, 34 No. 9, (1982), pp. 1, 7 & 10.

⁶ V.N. Gordon. *The Undecided College Student: An Academic and Career Advising Challenge*. (Springfield, Ill.: Thomas, 1964.)

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

Within the institution there are several types of documents that can assist advisors.

Transcripts. Probably the most frequently used advising tool is the transcript of previous academic work, whether it is from the student's high school, previous college(s), or the present institution. Transcripts reflect the student's past academic performance and serve as an additional predictor of future academic success.

Many smaller institutions provide advisors with the high school transcripts of their new freshmen. Beyond their academic predictive value, these transcripts often include useful comments from counselors about the student's interests, abilities, potentials, and possible difficulties. These comments, along with the student's self-reports, provide the advisor with information that facilitates a more personalized advising relationship. Freshmen are often anxious and tend to be both relieved and impressed when someone in their new and strange environment shows a personal interest in them as individuals. The appropriate use of this information establishes a comfortable, working advising relationship for the future.

Advisors of transfer students must rely on the transcripts from previous institutions in order to determine course equivalencies and to assess future course planning. In many institutions, the transfer course equivalencies are determined prior to the advisor's receipt of the transcripts; this insures consistency in the evaluation and more productive advising in the time available, especially at the beginning of the advising relationship.

Too often, however, the use of previous transcripts terminates with the course-equivalency determinations. Their full use as advising tools requires the advisor to read beyond the list of courses and become more inquisitive to determine reasons for certain academic situations and past decisions. For example, is there a major discrepancy in the student's performance from one term to the next? If so, this could be due to academic ability, change of academic or career plans, personal circumstances, living arrangements, or "freshman-itis." Is there a pattern of course withdrawals? Such a pattern could reflect study skills deficiencies, overcommitments of time, or poor advising. Without examining transcripts for such indicators and attempting to determine their source, the advisor is completing only part of the advising task. A thorough use of transcripts as advising tools results in better developmental advising.

Finally, advisors normally receive institutional transcripts for their students at the end of each term (or the beginning of the next), and they often include the student's current registration and certain demographic information. The advisor should use these transcripts in the same manner as those from other institutions.

One additional feature of some institutional transcripts (or version of the official transcript) is the graduation audit of graduation requirements, which is displayed in detail. This feature is associated with the use of a computer in advising. Computer assistance should be sought wherever possible, because the time saved (by students and advisors) in determining course requirements is better utilized, making advising the true developmental process that it should be.

Beyond these simple records of data about the student, Brown and Citrin have described a more comprehensive student record, "A Student Development Transcript." This document

THE ADVISOR'S RECORD

This advising tool is created solely by the advisor. The advisor's own shorthand, organization, and emphases are recorded and there is no imposition or interpretation implied. The advisor's individuality prevails."

Calendars, Checklists, and Worksheets. Since the advising process often becomes overshadowed by other ongoing campus activities, it is helpful for students to be reminded when advising activities occur. An easy way to give notice of preregistration is by distributing lists of dates and activities that are relevant to the advising process. This is usually done for each term and distributed to all advisors.

Advising calendars contain dates that are important to the advising process. These dates often appear in some of the publications mentioned earlier but are now provided in a different format. The calendars are usually single sheets that can be attached to the advisor's desk, door, wall, or bulletin board. Creative artwork often makes them visually attractive so that students, as well as advisors, become aware of them. The calendar dates apply to:

- registration,
- schedule adjustment,
- applications for graduation,
- financial aid,
- honorary programs, preregistration for the next term, and
- course withdrawals to avoid academic and/or financial penalties.

Brief advising tasks or strategies are often suggested throughout the calendar as a means of preparing advisors for the upcoming critical dates. An example of a calendar is shown in Exhibit 4.

EXHIBIT 4

Sample Advisor Calendar

Sept. 1-3: Orientation, Advising and Registration

Hold group or individual appointments with new advisees to discuss the advising relationship, course requirements, registration efforts, co-curricular activities, campus services, and career options.

Sept. 8-14: Drop/Add Period

Make an extra effort to be available.

Oct. 1-12: Early Academic Monitoring

Verify final schedules of advisees, their addresses, phone numbers, etc.

Discuss any academic difficulties to determine possible need for assistance from Skills Center or course withdrawal to save 50% tuition.

Techniques and Tools for Improving Advising

Determine student's involvement in campus life (clubs, sports, jobs, library use, cultural events, social activities, etc.)

Oct. 8: Last day to withdraw for class(es) with 50% refund.

Oct. 20: Distribution of graduation certifications for December graduates.

Nov. 8-12: Preregistration for Spring Term.

Consider use of "veteran" advisees to assist you.

Midterm check for academic difficulties; make appropriate referrals; advise that Nov. 19 is the last date to withdraw with a "W" grade, if appropriate.

Review academic plans and course selections.

Nov. 12: Graduation certifications due.

Nov. 19: Last date to withdraw from class(es) with a "W" grade.

Dec. 1-15: End of Term "crisis counseling" (as needed)

Consider "I" grades, "F" grades in favor of concentrating on others, or even an official withdrawal from the College, if appropriate.

Assist with study tips on preparation for final exams and papers.

Jan. 1: Last date to apply for financial aid for Spring Term.

Advising checklists serve as reminders about the content of advising sessions rather than emphasizing the specific dates on the calendar. They reinforce what has already been printed to insure that the advisor doesn't overlook some important aspect that could jeopardize the student's future academic plans. When advisors see many students, particularly during the peak advising periods, they cannot possibly remember if they provided all the information to each student. The checklist reduces the possibility of oversight. Some have also been designed to serve as a check on the advisor's personal approach and style of advising.

Some of the advising content that might be suggested on these checklists includes an overview of the advising process, specific course/graduation requirements, academic honesty, grading and retention policies, and an assessment of the completeness of information about the student. Advisor behaviors that should be "checked" include one's availability, knowledge of the academic policies and procedures (which change frequently in some institutions), knowledge of referral sources, and completeness of advising (that is, the total developmental approach). An example of such a checklist is shown in Exhibit 5, and others are included in a book by Crockett."

EXHIBIT 5

Sample Advisor Checklist

Preparation

- ☐ I have posted my office hours and other times that I am available for advising.
- ☐ I have reviewed the catalog, schedule of classes and advisor handbook for academic policy changes.
- ☐ I have reviewed the names of my advisees, and I have updated their files.

Practice (with the student as an active participant)

- ☐ We have reviewed the student's academic plan.
- ☐ We have reviewed the progress toward that plan.
- ☐ We have discussed any potential academic difficulties and their possible remedies.
- ☐ We have reviewed specific graduation requirements.
- ☐ We have discussed future course selections.
- ☐ We have discussed the student's involvement in other campus activities.
- ☐ We have discussed any additional concerns the student may have.
- ☐ We have established a future meeting time and have outlined what tasks need to be accomplished by that time.

Follow-Up

- ☐ I made specific notes about my advisee's situation.
- ☐ I felt I maintained an individualized, caring relationship with my advisee.
- ☐ I clarified certain misunderstandings.
- ☐ I suggested possible alternatives to the student's choices, opinions, or directions.
- ☐ I encouraged the student to assume more responsibility in the advising process.

Advisor calendars and checklists can be combined into one document or distributed separately. In either case, they are inexpensive tools that assist advisors throughout the term. They also serve as subtle reminders that advising is an ongoing process, that it does not start and stop on specific dates. The appropriate use of these simple reminders can improve the overall advising program significantly because they serve to improve the process individually.

Techniques and Tools for Improving Advising

Advising worksheets (or curriculum guides) are used by most advising offices. The sheets are summary versions of the major, minor, general education and elective course requirements, and they are often made available throughout the campus.

Although worksheets simplify course scheduling in the advising process, they may also inadvertently serve as the major obstacle to developmental advising. Having the student's curriculum very clearly outlined on paper, with spaces available to indicate that courses have been completed, has created the misleading impression that academic advising is merely a "check-off" process. When advisors and students share this impression, developmental advising is lost. The worksheets are merely useful tools that expedite the course-scheduling function of advising, and it is incumbent upon the advisor to maximize the advising time made available by creating and maintaining the developmental nature of advising.

CAMPUS SERVICES, AGENCIES, AND PERSONNEL

Rather than advising tools that are used by the individual advisor, the following are resources that advisors might use to supplement advising. Knowledge of these resources and the appropriate use of them, either through referral or consultation, will result in better-informed students and advisors.

Every institution has various offices, programs, and personnel that provide specialized services to students. These resources often have a direct influence on the developmental advising program, and the advisor must be aware of their types of assistance. A number of these resource units are described below.

Learning Resource Center. This is one of the most important referral units available to the advisor. These centers usually provide remedial or tutorial assistance in all areas of study, but they are most frequently used for reading, writing, mathematics, and study skills improvement. Since students often feel embarrassed or stigmatized by receiving such assistance, the influence of another in making such a recommendation is important. When viewed in a positive constructive way (by the advisor and student), the results are frequently positive and constructive. For students on academic probation, the service is critical; for those who experience only periodic difficulties, it is recommended; for those who seem to have no learning skill problems, it is reassuring.

Career Development Center. This is a significant referral unit, for "undecided" freshmen and graduating seniors. These two developmental periods are often the most anxious for college students, at least as they relate to careers and jobs. The freshman feels pressure to decide on a career but does not have enough information to do so wisely; the senior suddenly realizes the meaning of entering the professional world of jobs to apply what was learned but knowing the competitive criteria upon which to be judged. Professionals at the career center are able to assist students along this continuum of anxiety. The center is customarily well equipped with print, non-print, and assisted media that facilitate career decision making. The advisor should be knowledgeable of this important advising resource and should use it properly throughout the advising relationship.

The function of job placement for graduates is often attached to the career development center. The most common placement efforts are to maintain job listings; to arrange on-

campus interviews by major industries, agencies, graduate schools, and business firms; to provide a credentials service; and to teach resume' writing and interview skills. In addition, many centers attempt to collect job placement data on the graduates. Whereas the advisor would probably refer students to the center for most services, the job placement data can be used in the advising office. It is important to know how many graduates of a specific program are employed in entry-level positions, how many have advanced, and in what areas of the country and at what salaries they are employed. Of course, not all the data will be favorable, and such information, though unfavorable, should also be provided. The advisor should have access to such information and should be able to use it effectively with students.

Counseling and Testing Center. Another important referral unit on campus is the counseling and testing center. In most institutions, this center provides educational and vocational counseling (more sophisticated services than academic advisors offer), and individual or group psychological services. The latter should be provided only by the appropriately trained staff of the center; however, some advising situations could warrant the advisor's direct assistance and can be achieved through (telephone) intervention by the counseling staff. Though advisors can be trained to use certain minimal psychological recognition and referral skills, their limitations must be recognized. Academic advisors should not attempt to become therapists.

Many different kinds of services have been administratively placed under the counseling center, such as the functions of learning assistance and career development. Many community colleges perform their primary academic advising services through this center. Some institutions have attempted to integrate these services into a unit called the CAP center, that is, the center for Counseling, Advising, and Placement.

Whatever the administrative arrangement, the advisor must be familiar with the functions and services of the center. Referrals to this resource unit and/or consultation with its personnel can prevent future advising problems and correct those that have occurred.

Registrar's Office. A resource unit frequently used by advisors is the Registrar's Office. Though the information provided by this office is rather specific, such as deadline dates, forms and signatures required, issuing of grades and transcripts, and sometimes the determination of graduation requirements, it is important to the advising process. Such routine information does not lend itself directly to developmental advising, but the advisor can attempt to make it so. When a student has failed to meet a deadline, complete a form, obtain a signature, request a transcript, or fulfill a requirement, the advisor has the opportunity to reinforce the student's responsibility in the total learning process. When such circumstances are related to life or work situations, the apparently meaningless events are transformed into developmental learning activities. The advisor might also use this resource to obtain the most complete, accurate, and current information on students, since all permanent academic transactions are stored here.

Other Resource Offices. Various other resource offices are available to students and advisors on each campus. Most of them have specific functions and are designed to serve a specific clientele of students, but the advisor should be aware of them and use them if necessary. Those offices are financial aid, admissions, center for women, international, minority,

(older) adult, commuter, handicapped, veteran, and undecided students. Often an office of institutional studies will be useful not only to determine certain academic behavior patterns (changing majors, dropping courses and the like) but to obtain information on attrition as well. It is helpful for advisors to know these patterns so that appropriate preventive measures can be attempted.

Other Advisors. A readily available, but often overlooked, resource for improving advising is one's own colleagues. One advisor may have a particular strategy, technique or format that works especially well with certain kinds of students, and such effective means should be shared. This sharing should occur across the campus, that is, across academic disciplines, administrative reporting lines, and specific service areas. At least once each academic term, some planned sharing activity should be scheduled. Once this activity has become established, the meetings should be used for sharing an advisor's technique and its assessment of use by others. The goal is to have each advisor introduce a specific idea; the result is improved advising by all.

One effective means of sharing advisor techniques is through videotaping. This is not always practical, but when accomplished, it is very illustrative. Some commercial advising videotapes are available (from the American College Testing Program), but those produced on campus (with one's own advisors, students, and situations) are usually quite effective because they are candid, rather than staged. Those responsible for advising programs should investigate the possibility of videotaping as a resource for all advisors.

The Student. The best resource for the advisor to assess how to proceed developmentally is the individual student. As the student provides various information, the advisor decides which tools and resources need to be used. The specific advising tool used throughout this process is the interview skill of questioning.

Hyman described the application of this skill in the college classroom as being essential to the thinking process. Many of his tactics and strategies are also applicable to the advising session. For example, rather than simply acknowledging that a student's course selections fulfill certain academic requirements, the advisor should ask *why* the student made those choices or why the student did *not* choose other options that would meet the same requirements. Similarly, the advisor might ask the student to provide a rationale for the choice of a major. Very often the reasons are inappropriate or incompatible for this student, or they have been made in haste and under pressure. The effort here is to challenge students to think about their choices so that the advisor can then proceed to advise developmentally.¹⁴

One obvious implication from this procedure is that a "file" has been established for each student. An advising file contains such items as the SAT/ACT profile, transcripts, test results, questionnaire data, anecdotal records, and curriculum worksheets. Additional items might be academic notices, specific correspondence to/about the student, the student's resume, and various forms used in the advising process. This file should be reviewed periodically and forwarded to a new advisor if a change is made.

¹⁴ R.T. Hyman, *Questioning in the College Classroom*, Idea Paper No. 7, (Manhattan, Kans.: Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development, Kansas State University, 1982.)

re advising tools and resources described here are not used by every advisor with student. The widest range of tools and resources is presented so that an advisor will have an idea of what is available. The selection of the best tools that are appropriate for the individual student must be made by the advisor. The next section describes some of the techniques through which the tools and resources can be used.

TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES

Academic advising has traditionally been viewed as a one-to-one, faculty-student relationship. Reviewing the developmental nature of advising and the possible tools available to accomplish this task, the obvious question is "How can I find the time to do this?" The techniques described here are provided to assist the advisor in creating more advising time; in making the best use of the time available; and in maintaining the developmental nature of advising.

Group Advising. Advising several (five to eight) in one session saves advising time, and more students can be advised in shorter periods of time without sacrificing the quality of advising. Group advising helps to illustrate the commonness of student concerns; to identify and clarify facts, myths, rumors, and misinterpretations; and to encourage the exploration of various courses, majors, and careers. One-to-one advising sometimes breeds isolation for the advisor through the repetition of common information, prevents the sharing of common concerns among students, and can inhibit student development. The group approach, similar to the classroom teacher, facilitates discussion, suggests alternatives, and answers specific questions. This is developmental advising at its peak. The advisor may be more active by meeting with eight students for a total of forty-five minutes than by meeting individually with one for fifteen minutes.

Team Advising. One form of group advising is the team approach where two or three advisors conduct sessions together. Student participation might range from twenty-five to seventy-five minutes per session. This approach offers the same advantages as the group session with one advisor. It has a broader-based expertise regarding policies, requirements, and other information. It exemplifies the use of other advisors as resources that was described in the introduction. Furthermore, authors Grahn, Kahn, and Kroll found that the team approach not only reduced the amount of advising time but did so with no significant overall student knowledge of academic policies and procedures, and no loss in student satisfaction with advising.¹⁵

Information on group advising does not mean that individual advising should be abandoned; it should not. Advisors should, however, consider the group approach as an alternative, especially during the peak advising periods of preregistration, registration, and adjustment.

Peer Advising. Students have always assisted other students with all kinds of matters in higher education. Many institutions have taken advantage of these strong peer relationships to formalize tutorial, orientation, residence hall, counseling, and academic advisors in which students provide specific assistance to other students.

¹⁵ Kahn, and P. Kroll, "Faculty Team Approach to Group Advising," *Journal of College Student Personnel*, No. 3 (1983) pp. 214-218.

Techniques and Tools for Improving Advising

When no formal peer-advising program exists, however, the advisor can create one by simply suggesting that a highly motivated and interested, upper-division student assist the lower-division students in the advising process. This student can help in scheduling appointments, reviewing graduation requirements, completing forms, and insuring that all necessary information is available to the advisor. Between advising sessions, the peer advisor can help verify student schedules, addresses, and student participation in suggested activities. The amount of assistance that an advisor can expect depends upon the student's availability and the compensation provided. Some students are paid; some earn independent study credit; and some volunteer.

Whether formalized or not, the concept of peer advising should be reviewed as a technique for improving the advising program. Peer relationships are strong and should be utilized as a developmental advising effort.

Advising Contracts. Kramer and Gardner described the advising contract as "... a shared definition of what is to be accomplished, the principal duties of each party, and the procedures to be used to monitor, evaluate, or change that relationship."¹⁶ This description can be considered analogous to homework assignments for a course, and it can be applied to a variety of advising situations.

For example, the initial advising session might be used to establish the respective student and advisor responsibilities in the relationship. These responsibilities can be written in the form of a contract that will prevent confusion and faulty assumptions in the future. This is similar to reviewing a syllabus and the grading mechanisms for a course. More specifically, the advisor might "contract" the student to visit the Learning Resource Center at least three times prior to the next advising session in order to improve certain academic skills needed in a current course. Or the advisor might require the student to obtain written approvals for some requested course of action.

The use of advising contracts is advantageous for monitoring the progress toward certain educational objectives, for determining alternatives when contract conditions are not being met, and for an ongoing review of student growth and development. It can be especially useful for students who need considerable structure in their learning environment. This must not be overdone, however, or the developmental process will be nullified. The advisor must decide when to use the advising contract with a specific student.

Self-Advising. One measure of the effectiveness of a developmental advising program is how well students are able to advise themselves. Advisors should encourage self-advising whenever possible. They might, for example, refuse to meet with students until a tentative course plan has already been outlined; they might encourage students to discover the answers to questions about career opportunities, graduate school admissions, or job interview techniques.

At a minimum, students should know how to fulfill the graduation requirements. They should also learn how to determine alternatives for themselves, how to make decisions about those alternatives, and how to accept the responsibility and consequences of those decisions.

¹⁶ H.C. Kramer and R.E. Gardner, *Advising by Faculty*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1983.)

Such outcomes exemplify academic advising as a developmental process that enhances the quality of higher education.

College Catalogue. The single most important publication affecting the advising process is the college catalogue. Often considered "the bible," students and advisors are expected to read and understand the degree requirements and all other academic and institutional policies. Most catalogues emphasize the student's responsibility in meeting the requirements and policies of the institution, yet the advisor is often the interpreter and monitor of these policies.

The college catalogue, then, is one of the bonds of the advising relationship; it is a tool that both student and advisor should study and refer to frequently. This document could also serve as evidence in any litigation concerning academic policies. With such importance placed on this official publication, the need for clarity and accuracy is obvious. Institutions should review their catalogues frequently to insure that they accurately state the intentions and policies of the institution.

Student Handbook. The student handbook is another publication that enhances the advising process. Many handbooks restate in detail the important academic policies in the catalogue, and this restatement is always helpful. After the restatement of policies comes a description of student services and resources providing assistance with all kinds of matters, ranging from career indecision and poor study skills, to resolving roommate, alcohol, and financial problems. Student clubs and organizations are also described in this publication.

When advising students developmentally, the advisor may use the student handbook to identify other campus resources that will assist students to improve their decision making, studying, leadership, coping, and valuing abilities and skills.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This paper has provided a comprehensive set of advising materials and techniques that advisors might use in the developmental advising process. The advisor is the facilitator in this process and must select from these materials those elements that are most appropriate for the individual student and circumstance, in accordance with the overall student development process model.

To set goals, for example, two published instruments have been described; several instruments and strategies for self-assessment have also been enclosed. The various resource offices identified here offer continuous opportunities for the instruction and consultation phases of the process. Institutional publications, personnel, and perhaps a version of the student development transcript, are mechanisms for evaluation of the environment and the student.

In order to be able to select and use these materials effectively, an advisor training program is necessary. The training program enables the advisor to achieve the maximum potential use of the available advising tools and resources, and it must include techniques strategies for introducing them, especially for those advisors who are not familiar with student development literature. Participation in such a program is itself a developmental activity for the advisor. This awareness serves to insure the same kind of results with students who are seeking to attain specific educational and personal goals.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: A Resource for Developmental Advising

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The two important functions of academic advising are to help students succeed in the college environment and to help them become aware of their unique approaches to academic and career decision making. Academic advisors employ various methods and techniques to help students accomplish these tasks. One seldom used method is to employ instruments that enhance students' self-awareness and aid advisors in establishing a rapport with students.

The importance of the interpersonal advising relationship should not be underestimated.¹ Academic advisors who recognize that students are different in how they understand the events in their lives, make judgements, and interact with others, will be more apt to communicate with them on an individualized and productive level. Students' positive evaluations of effective advisors have often centered on interpersonal and social dimensions as well as on technical competence or skill in dealing with academic problems.²

The purpose of this article is to describe an instrument which can be a valuable source of information for students and advisors; it is the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI), a practical tool for helping students understand some of the dynamics of how they communicate and approach the decision making process.³ This article will explore the need for such a tool, give a brief overview of the instrument, and discuss specific outcomes and benefits for students and advisors.

Academic advising may be represented as a combination of information-giving and counseling to help students internalize and process academic information in a personal context.⁴ Most advisors are comfortable with information dissemination since they often view

¹ J. Centra and D. Rock, "College Environments and Student Achievement," *American Educational Research Journal*, 8 (1971) 623-634; E. Pascarella and P. Terenzini, "Student-Faculty Informal Contact and College Persistence: A Further Investigation," *Journal of Educational Research*, 72 (1979) 214-218.

² D. Kegan, "The Quality of Student Life," *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 19 (1978), 55-58; L. Witters and H. Miller, "College Advising: An Analysis of Advisory and Advisee Roles," *Journal of Student Personnel Association for Teacher Education*, 9 (1971), 36-40.

³ I. B. Myers, *The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*. (Palo Alto, California: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1962).

⁴ H. Kramer, and R. Gardner, *Advising by Faculty*. (Washington, D.C.: National Educational Association, 1983); T. Trumbly, "Analysis of the Complexity of Academic Advising Tasks," *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 31 (1984), 234-239.