SECTION II
ADVISING INFORMATION
INTRODUCTION

Developmental Advising is “A systematic process based on a close student-advisor relationship intended to aid students in achieving educational, career, and personal goals through the use of the full range of institutional and community resources.”

(Winston, Miller, Ender & Grites, 1984)

Academic advising is important. We advisors are the students’ primary link to the academic programs at La Verne. We are a vital factor in retention because our teaching/advising relationships engage students and increase their loyalty and commitment to the university.

There are multiple facets of advising at La Verne. We are both technicians and advising clinicians. The ultimate goal of advisors is the successful completion of the academic degree by the student and their maturation, development and growth.

Being a technician is easy. Once you understand the technical requirements for graduation, it is a matter of ensuring the student makes progress toward those requirements each semester. That can be followed on paper. Technically, if a student completes 32 semester hours a year, and all of their general education and major requirements, they can graduate in four years. This is a technical process in working with the student.

Serving as an advising clinician is different. It requires the advisor to come to know their students as individuals. In this reference, the advisor recognizes students’ strengths and weaknesses and guides them toward a path that will not only ensure degree completion, but also maturation. Developmental advisors work with students to understand how they will be successful in completing their 32 semester hours per year. You recognize the nature of the courses they are taking each semester and you recognize the subjects in which they exhibit strength. Since you know their career goals, you guide them toward courses that not only support their degree completion, but also their general educational experience, understanding and intellectual stimulation.

Our office has provided two rubrics that can help you and your advisees to develop academic plans that will keep them on track toward timely graduation. The “4-year plan” and “Path to Graduation” rubrics can both be downloaded from our Downloads area of our webpage. These rubrics can help you and your advisees to develop realistic and viable academic plans. Advance planning can also help your advisees to avoid costly academic mistakes such as being short units or requirements. Our hope is that every new student (freshmen or transfers) will have a completed “4-year plan” on their academic file by the end of their first year at La Verne. The rubric should be used as a “working document” that changes as academic plans change. We hope you will help your advisees to develop a 4-year academic plan.

Our mission statement (online and in this document) is framed through the lenses of developmental advising, which suggests mutual student and advisor responsibilities in advising, including learning outcomes that are tied to effective and success advising experiences. Thus, strongly encourage your advisees to take ownership of their education and advising sessions as ways to empower them to accomplish their educational and occupational goals. An easy way to establish expectations with your advisees is to adopt an advising syllabus (also online and in this document). Please feel free to personalize the syllabus and edit it to reflect your contact information, expectations, and the expectations of your academic department. We only ask that you keep the “Adapted From” citation at the bottom of page 2 which acknowledge Dr. Nutt’s influence in the development of this syllabus.
GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS YOUR ADVISING STYLE?

According to Foushee (2008), making the most of the advising experience depends on the advising style that college students experience from their advisors. For both students and faculty, some advising styles are more effective and fulfilling than others. What kind of advisor do you want to be?

The Hurried Form-Signer. These advisors are frequently too busy to talk with advisees. They are available to sign forms and identify errors in course selection, but have little time for anything else, expecting advising appointments to last less than 10 minutes. This type of advising is typically the easiest in time and energy expenditure, but rarely provides positive advising for students.

The Detached Authority Figure. These advisors are not concerned with building rapport or listening to students’ needs. They function as an all-knowing source of wisdom regarding courses, career options, or requirements for the major. Students can take or leave their advice. This style is more informative than the form-signer approach, but also rarely provides the guidance that students often need or want.

The Substitute Parent. These advisors hover over their advisees and attempt to make decisions for them. They may become overly involved in students’ personal lives and are always available and nurturing. However, students may fail to learn how to actively control their own career trajectories and frequently have difficulty making their own decisions.

The Mentor. These advisors provide accurate information and help students identify all possible options for growth and development at each stage of their academic careers. They are available, actively listen, and allow students to make their own decisions and support those decisions, even if they disagree with them. These advisors guide students and simultaneously provide opportunities for independence and personal growth.

The Trail-Guide. Over the years, my personal philosophy of advising has evolved into what I consider the “trail-guide” approach, a style most closely aligned with the Mentor. The college years are an exciting, formative, and life-altering journey for most students, providing a critical set of experiences and opportunities that build the foundation for their lives and facilitate their pathway to self-actualization. Regardless of students’ individual directions and levels of dedication to achieving their goals, it helps to have at least one person continually present along the way who can guide them on their individual journeys, pointing out pitfalls, providing information about possible pathways, and supporting their professional development.


WHAT IS ADVISING?

Advising is more than:

- just the casual chat with a student over coffee
- discussing the lecture topic for the day with a student after class while walking down the hallway
- going over the test results with a student
- signing a form
- signing a petition to the appeals committee
Advising is taking time to be with the students, to care about students as people, to be their mentor and advocate. Advising is being dedicated as a teacher because to be an advisor is to be a teacher in the fullest sense of the word.

Advising in a developmental context assumes that the advisor is concerned for student’s specific personal and vocational decisions. Advisors are instrumental in helping students to develop their rational processes, behavioral awareness, problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluation skills (Crookston, 1972). It is a process that is intended also to systematically help students to achieve personal, educational, and career goals by using the full range of institutional resources (Winston, Miller, Ender & Grites, 1984).

Developmental advising encourages:
- Active student participation in their own educational and personal development (King, 2005).
- The attainment of challenging, but attainable goals and expectations resulting from advising.
- Help students to map out a path to academic success and graduation.
- Encourages students’ interactions with the campus environment (Aston, 1984).
- Focuses on the whole student (personal well-being and satisfactory academic achievement) (King, 2005).

Developmental advising encourages “Intrusive” advising by
- Proactively monitoring student progress.
- Asking probing questions.
- Communicating with students on a regular basis.

The key is to connect with students before problems arise.

Developmental advising refutes “prescriptive” advising, the traditional advisor-student relationship which assumes that:
- Advisor-student relationship is based on authority.
- Advisor imparts knowledge onto students, solves their problems, and provides directives (with no follow-up or assessment on the quality or accuracy of the advice).
- The student is passive and is discouraged from being an active participant (Crookston, 1972).

Of course, faculty members might initially adopt a more directive advising approach when individual students need a stricter focus and direction. We recognize that some students might thrive in more structured settings as they struggle to negotiate the complexity of college (Heisserer & Parette, 2002). However, as students mature and their needs change so should the advising.

If a faculty member adopts a directive approach at the start of the advising relationship, s/he should modify his/her advising approach to a consultative direction as the student learns and becomes self-sufficient. Effective academic advisors are those who can use college student development and advising theories prudently and, perhaps, conditionally based on the individual needs of students (Creamer, 2000).
“ADVISING AS TEACHING”

“Ideally, the advisor serves as teacher and guide in an interactive partnership aimed at enhancing the student's self-awareness and fulfillment.” (O’Banion, 1994)

There are two types of advising: formal and informal.

**Formal** advising occurs when a faculty member is assigned to a certain number of students for the purpose of providing them with routine guidance. The faculty member interprets and explains policies, degree requirements, processes, and directs “how to get things done.” The faculty member thereby has the responsibility of formally guiding students through their curriculum to the final outcome of graduation.

**Informal** advising is part of the normal task of teaching-discussing course material, tests and informal chats with students. In this setting, discussion may be held with the student regarding their progress in school, as well as, long-term career and personal goals.

Academic advising has a pedagogical value when the faculty member establishes learning outcomes that result from academic advising. For example, students may be asked to articulate the value of a liberal or professional education, how their education reflects La Verne’s values, and how their education has prepared them for life-long learning and career achievement. Faculty members may have a positive influence on students who may need consultation about employment and career prospects and graduate school.

**WHEN DOES ADVISING TAKE PLACE?**

Advising takes place in the faculty office, department office, classroom, corridors of the building, outside under the trees; advising takes place wherever, whenever students and faculty meet.

Good academic advisors are able to adapt to the changing advising needs of their students as they learn, grow, and mature. In the process of self-discovery and socialization with others, the advising needs of college students will change through the natural process of maturation and learning. Academic advisors may follow the same trajectory by adapting to the changing needs of their students from information-dominant forms to consultation-dominant forms (Creamer, 2000). Thus, students’ advising needs will change over time as they learn to be self-sufficient within the La Verne community. As their needs for consultation grow, so will the needs for informal advising.

**WHAT IS NEEDED TO BE AN ADVISOR?**
- An open and friendly attitude.
- A desire to be helpful.
- A sincere interest in students.
- A desire to see students succeed.
- A knowledge and understanding of university policies, procedures, academic and disciplinary.
- A knowledge of degree requirements, general education requirements, policies and procedures.

An advisor should be able to:
- help students develop and define realistic academic and career goals.
- support students in reaching their academic, personal and career goals.
- help students plan academic programs consistent with the students’ abilities and interests.
- help the student to see the connection between academic preparation and the world of work.
- help the student progress to the achievement of stated educational and career goals.
- Make referrals to appropriate offices (ie. Learning Enhancement Center) and follow-up with the student or the referral.

Bruce Barbee, a long time faculty and advisor at UCLA School of Education, identified several personal qualities that his advisees most admired from their advisors: balance between personal/professional; being available; being honest when the advisor does not know an answer; organized; sensitive to students' needs; acts as an equal; engaging; thought provoking; challenging; honest; teacher; supportive; approachable; personable; sincere and genuine; know rules and policies.

What personal qualities do you want your advisees to take away from their experiences with you?

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT?

Both the advisor and the student must assume responsibility to carry out their respective parts of the advising process. Advising is the building of bridges between the student and the advisor, between the academic program and the career goal.

WHEN IS ADVISING NEEDED BY STUDENTS?
- within six weeks of entry to La Verne as a student
- during early registration/registration periods
- prior to any changes in program of study-adding and dropping of classes
- prior to deciding if a minor or a particular option should be undertaken
- following any report of unsatisfactory academic performance (from Faculty Feedback Form)
- when a student is experiencing personal, social or academic adjustment problems (Faculty Feedback Form)
- prior to withdrawal

IS ADVISING PART OF MY ASSIGNMENT AS A FACULTY MEMBER?

All full-time faculty are expected to do academic advising in addition to classroom teaching. Advising, formal and informal, is considered in tenure and promotion.

EXPECTATIONS
Students Expect Us As Advisors To:

1) Offer suggestions
2) Ask questions
3) Be supportive
4) Give directions that will help them realize tangible educational goals

- Students want us to be genuinely interested in helping them.
- They would like well-informed, unhurried answers to their questions.
- Students want to see in their advisors friendly, willing persons who will help them plan in advance for their future.
- Students want us to care about them enough to take the time to listen and respond.

We As Advisors Should Expect Our Students To:

1) Participate in the educational process
2) Be prepared for appointments and ask questions
3) Take responsibility for their own educational experience
4) Understand that they have ultimate control over their academic career
5) Trust us

(An easy way to establish expectations with your advisees is to adopt an advising syllabus (also online and in this document). Please feel free to personalize the syllabus and edit it to reflect your contact information, expectations, and the expectations of your academic department. We only ask that you keep the “Adapted From” citation at the bottom of page 2 which acknowledge Dr. Nutt’s influence in the development of this syllabus).

An Advisor’s Checklist

- Be available to students on a regular basis and be conscientious about posting and adhering to a schedule of office hours for advising conferences. This is especially important during early registration and add/drop filing periods.
- Maintain a folder for each advisee with information such as a summary of courses and completed requirements, interview sheets with dated records of all actions and discussions of significance. Notes may be made in the folder of failure to appear for appointments, any academic difficulties, choice of career preference, decision to change major, or any other appropriate comments. File copies or additional information may be obtained by the Academic Advising office.
- Establish personal relationships and rapport with advisees. Successful advising is more than planning classes, but is about assisting the student in planning for the short-term and long-term futures.
- Set expectations for your advisees so that they are aware of what you expect of them prior to and during meetings and advising sessions. They should be aware of what you will require them to bring to an appointment, and how to schedule an appointment with you.
- Discuss long-range educational and career goals and assist in planning appropriate academic programs.
- Help resolve academic difficulties.
Know about resource persons to refer students for information and advice (Deans’ Offices, Registrar’s Office, Tutorial Services, Career Development, etc.)

Be informed about personal counseling programs available through the Counseling Center in the event referral is necessary.

Be aware of resources and opportunities available to facilitate in-class and extra-curricular learning. Examples include the Independent Study and Directed Study options, study abroad, individualized major programs, credit by examination, campus clubs, organizations and activities.

Send occasional invitations to advisees encouraging them to come in for discussions and performance reviews.

Help students in their decision-making processes relating to course choices, career indecision, personal problems, etc.

Encourage them to be active in campus, regional or national associations related to the major.

Self assess that the advice, information, or referrals are timely, accurate, and followed through to completion.

**ADVISORS POSSESS THE ABILITY TO:**

- Approve a student’s registration
- Support or not support an academic appeal
- Waive prerequisites for courses in the student’s major
- Accept transfer work to meet La Verne major requirements
- Make appropriate major substitutions to enhance or support the student’s academic coursework
- Make a powerful and lasting positive impact on a student’s life.
- Positively shape students’ perceptions about La Verne, its mission, and its commitment to its students.