

# ACADEMIC ADVISING

## CAS STANDARDS and GUIDELINES

### Part 1. MISSION

The academic advising program (AAP) must incorporate student learning and student development in its mission. The AAP must develop, record, disseminate, implement and regularly review its mission and goals. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document.

The primary purpose of the AAP is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals.

The institution must have a clearly written statement of philosophy pertaining to academic advising which must include program goals and expectations of advisors and advisees. The program must operate as an integral part of the institution's overall mission.

The ultimate responsibility for making decisions about educational plans and life goals rests with the individual student. The academic advisor should assist by helping to identify and assess alternatives and the consequences of decisions.

Institutional goals for academic advising should include . . .

- development of suitable educational plans
- clarification of career and life goals
- selection of appropriate courses and other educational experiences
- interpretation of institutional requirements
- enhancement of student awareness about educational resources available (e.g., internship, study abroad, honors, and learning assistance programs)
- evaluation of student progress toward established goals
- development of decision-making skills
- reinforcement of student self-direction
- referral to and use of institutional and community support services
- collection and distribution of data regarding student needs, preferences, and performance for use in making institutional decisions and policy

### Part 2. PROGRAM

The formal education of students is purposeful, holistic, and consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum. The academic advising program (AAP) must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes.

Reasonable and desirable outcomes include: intellectual growth, effective communication, realistic self-appraisal, enhanced self-esteem, clarified values, career choices, leadership development, healthy behaviors, meaningful interpersonal relations, independence, collaboration, social responsibility, satisfying and productive lifestyles, appreciation of diversity, spiritual awareness, and achievement of personal and educational goals.

The AAP must assist students in overcoming educational and personal problems and skill deficiencies. The program must provide evidence of its impact on the achievement of student learning and development outcomes.

Programs and services may use the examples that follow or identify other more germane indicators.

#### Student Learning & Development Outcome Domains

##### Intellectual Growth

Examples of Achievement Indicators

Produces personal and educational goal statements; Employs critical thinking in problem solving; Uses complex information from a variety of sources including personal experience and observation to form a decision or opinion; Obtains a degree; Applies previously understood information and concepts to a new situation or setting; Expresses appreciation for literature, the fine arts, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences

##### Effective Communication

Examples of Achievement Indicators

Writes and speaks coherently and effectively; Writes and speaks after reflection; Able to influence others through writing, speaking or artistic expression; Effectively articulates abstract ideas; Uses appropriate syntax; Makes presentations or gives performances

##### Enhanced Self-Esteem

Examples of Achievement Indicators

Shows self-respect and respect for others; Initiates actions toward achievement of goals; Takes reasonable risks; Demonstrates assertive behavior; Functions without need for constant reassurance from others

##### Realistic Self-Appraisal

Examples of Achievement Indicators

Articulates personal skills and abilities; Makes decisions and acts in congruence with personal values; Acknowledges personal strengths and weaknesses; Articulates rationale for personal behavior; Seeks feedback from others; Learns from past experiences

## Clarified Values

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Articulates personal values; Acts in congruence with personal values; Makes decisions that reflect personal values; Demonstrates willingness to scrutinize personal beliefs and values; Identifies personal, work and lifestyle values and explains how they influence decision-making

## Career Choices

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Articulate career choices based on assessment of interests, values, skills and abilities; Documents knowledge, skills and accomplishments resulting from formal education, work experience, community service and volunteer experiences; Makes the connections between classroom and out-of-classroom learning; Can construct a resume with clear job objectives and evidence of related knowledge, skills and accomplishments; Articulates the characteristics of a preferred work environment; Comprehends the world of work; Takes steps to initiate a job search or seek advanced education

## Leadership Development

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Articulates leadership philosophy or style; Serves in a leadership position in a student organization; Comprehends the dynamics of a group; Exhibits democratic principles as a leader; Exhibits ability to visualize a group purpose and desired outcomes

## Healthy Behavior

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Chooses behaviors and environments that promote health and reduce risk; Articulate the relationship between health and wellness and accomplishing life long goals; Exhibits behaviors that advance a healthy community

## Meaningful Interpersonal Relationships

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Develops and maintains satisfying interpersonal relationships; Establishes mutually rewarding relationships with friends and colleagues; Listens to and considers others' points of view; Treats others with respect

## Independence

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Exhibits self-reliant behaviors; Functions autonomously; Exhibits ability to function interdependently; Accepts supervision as needed; Manages time effectively

## Collaboration

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Works cooperatively with others; Seeks the involvement of others; Seeks feedback from others; Contributes to achievement of a group goal; Exhibits effective listening skills

## Social Responsibility

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Understands and participates in relevant governance systems; Understands, abides by, and participates in the development, maintenance, and/or orderly change of community, social, and legal standards or norms; Appropriately challenges the unfair, unjust, or uncivil behavior of other individuals or groups; Participates in service/volunteer activities

## Satisfying and Productive Lifestyles

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Achieves balance between education, work and leisure time; Articulates and meets goals for work, leisure and education; Overcomes obstacles that hamper goal achievement; Functions on the basis of personal identity, ethical, spiritual and moral values; Articulates long-term goals and objectives

## Appreciating Diversity

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Understands one's own identity and culture. Seeks involvement with people different from oneself; Seeks involvement in diverse interests; Articulate the advantages and challenges of a diverse society; Challenges appropriately abusive use of stereotypes by others; Understands the impact of diversity on one's own society

## Spiritual Awareness

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Develops and articulates personal belief system; Understands roles of spirituality in personal and group values and behaviors

## Personal and Educational Goals

### Examples of Achievement Indicators

Sets, articulates, and pursues individual goals; Articulate personal and educational goals and objectives; Uses personal and educational goals to guide decisions; Understands the effect of one's personal and education goals on others

The AAP must be (a) intentional, (b) coherent, (c) based on theories and knowledge of teaching, learning and human development, (d) reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population, and (e) responsive to the special needs of individuals.

The AAP must identify environmental conditions that may negatively influence student academic achievement and propose interventions that may neutralize such conditions.

The academic advisor must review and use available data about students' academic and educational needs, performance, aspirations, and problems.

**The AAP must assure that academic advisors collaborate in the collection of relevant data about students for use in individual academic advising conferences. Individual academic advising conferences must be available to students each academic term.**

Through private, individual conferences with students, the academic advisors should provide assistance in refining goals and objectives, understanding available choices, and assessing the consequences of alternative courses of action. Course selection, understanding and meeting institutional requirements, and providing clear and accurate information regarding institutional policies, procedures, resources, and programs may be carried out individually or in groups.

The academic status of the student being advised should be taken into consideration when determining caseloads. For example, first year, undecided, under prepared, and honors students may require more advising time than upper division students who have declared their majors.

**Academic advising caseloads must be consistent with the time required for the effective performance of this activity.**

When determining workloads it should be recognized that advisors may work with students not officially assigned to them and that contacts regarding advising may extend beyond direct contact with the student.

**The AAP must provide current and accurate advising information to academic advisors.**

Supplemental systems for the delivery of advising information, such as on-line computer programs, may be employed.

Referrals to appropriate institutional or community support services should be made as needed.

The academic advising program should make available to academic advisors all pertinent research (e.g., about students, the academic advising program, and perceptions of the institution).

### **Part 3. LEADERSHIP**

**Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint position and empower academic advising program (AAP) leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. Leaders at various levels must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant professional credentials, as well as potential for promoting learning and development in students, applying effective practices to educational processes, and enhancing institutional effectiveness. Institutions must determine expectations of accountability for leaders and fairly assess their performance.**

**AAP leaders must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions.**

**AAP leaders must . . .**

- articulate a vision for their organization
- set goals and objectives based on the needs and capabilities of the population served
- promote student learning and development
- prescribe and practice ethical behavior
- recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization
- manage financial resources
- coordinate human resources
- plan, budget for, and evaluate personnel and programs
- apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes
- communicate effectively
- initiate collaborative interaction between individuals and agencies that possess legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area

**AAP leaders must identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement. Leaders must promote campus environments that result in multiple opportunities for student learning and development.**

**AAP leaders must continuously improve programs and services in response to changing needs of students and other constituents, and evolving institutional priorities.**

### **Part 4. ORGANIZATION and MANAGEMENT**

**The academic advising program (AAP) must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve its stated goals. Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability and evaluation systems, and recognition and reward processes. The program must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.**

**The AAP must provide channels within the organization for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.**

The design of the AAP must be compatible with the institution's organizational structure and its students' needs. Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly delineated, published, and disseminated to both advisors and advisees.

In some institutions, academic advising is a centralized function, while in others, it is decentralized, with a variety of people throughout the institution assuming responsibilities. Whatever system is used, students, faculty advisors, and professional staff should be informed of their respective advising responsibilities.

## Part 5. HUMAN RESOURCES

The academic advising program (AAP) must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. Within established guidelines of the institution, the program must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision, and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. The program must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.

Academic advisors must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position held or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.

Degree or credential-seeking interns must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience. These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision.

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of assistance to qualified staff members and have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments. Student employees and volunteers must be provided clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.

The AAP must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish its mission. Staff members must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable of ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training. The level

of staffing and workloads must be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.

Salary levels and fringe benefits for all AAP staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

The AAP must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. AAP must employ a diverse staff to provide readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community.

AAP must create and maintain position descriptions for all staff members and provide regular performance planning and appraisals.

The AAP must have a system for regular staff evaluation and must provide access to continuing education and professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and participation in professional conferences and workshops.

The institution must designate a specific individual to direct the AAP. The director must possess either an earned graduate degree or equivalent combination of academic and educational experience, previous experience as an academic advisor, and knowledge of the literature of academic advising. The director must be skilled in fiscal management, personnel selection and training, conceptualization, planning and evaluation tasks.

Academic advisors should have an understanding of student development; a comprehensive knowledge of the institution's programs, academic requirements, majors, minors, and support services; a demonstrated interest in working with and assisting students; a willingness to participate in pre-service and in-service workshops and other professional activities; and demonstrated interpersonal skills.

Sufficient personnel should be available to meet students' advising needs without unreasonable delay. Advisors should allow an appropriate amount of time for students to discuss plans, programs, courses, academic progress, and other subjects related to their educational programs.

Academic advising personnel may be organized in various ways. They may be full-time or part-time professionals who have advising as their primary function or may be faculty whose responsibilities include academic advising. Paraprofessionals (e.g., graduate students in practice, interns, or assistants) or peer advisors may also assist advisors.

Support personnel should maintain student records, organize resource materials, receive students, make appointments, and handle correspondence and other

operational needs. Technical staff may be used in research, data collection, systems development, and special projects.

Technical and support personnel should be carefully selected and adequately trained, supervised, and evaluated.

### **Part 6. FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The academic advising program (AAP) must have adequate funding to accomplish its mission and goals. Funding priorities must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, objectives and comprehensive analysis of the needs and capabilities of students and the availability of internal or external resources.

The AAP must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.

Special consideration should be given to providing funding for training and development of advisors, particularly those for whom the advisory function is part-time and/or secondary assignment.

Financial resources should be sufficient to provide high quality print and non-print information for students and training materials for advisors. Also, there should be sufficient resources to promote the academic advising program.

### **Part 7. FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, EQUIPMENT**

The academic advising program (AAP) must have adequate, suitably located facilities, adequate technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals efficiently and effectively. Facilities, technology, and equipment must be evaluated regularly and be in compliance with relevant federal, state, provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

The AAP must assure that technology-assisted advising includes appropriate approvals, consultations, and referrals.

Computing equipment and access to local networks, student data bases, and the Internet should be available to academic advisors.

Privacy and freedom from visual and auditory distractions should be considerations in designing appropriate facilities.

### **Part 8. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Academic advising program (AAP) staff members must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities. Staff members must inform users of programs and services and officials, as appropriate, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution's policies.

Academic advisors must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Academic advisors must be informed about institutional policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for academic advisors as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities and must inform academic advisors and students, in a timely and systematic fashion, about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities.

### **Part 9. EQUITY and ACCESS**

Academic advising program (AAP) staff members must ensure that services are provided on a fair and equitable basis. Facilities, programs, and services must be accessible. Hours of operation and delivery of and access to programs and services must be responsive to the needs of all students and other constituents. The AAP must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

The AAP must be open and readily accessible to all students and must not discriminate except where sanctioned by law and institutional policy. Discrimination must especially be avoided on the bases of age; color, creed; cultural heritage; disability; ethnicity; gender identity; nationality; political affiliation, religious affiliation, sex, sexual orientation; or economic, marital, social, or veteran status.

Consistent with the mission and goals, the AAP must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

As the demographic profiles of campuses change and new instructional delivery methods are introduced, institutions must recognize the needs of students who participate in distance learning for access to programs and services offered on campus. □ Institutions must provide appropriate services in ways that are accessible to distance learners and assist them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.

### **PART 10. CAMPUS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

The academic advising program (AAP) must establish, maintain, and promote effective relations with relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies.

Academic advising is integral to the educational process and depends upon close working relationships with other institutional agencies and the administration. The academic advising program should be fully integrated into other processes of the institution.

For referral purposes, the academic advising program should provide academic advisors a comprehensive list of relevant external agencies, campus offices, and opportunities.

### **Part 11. DIVERSITY**

Within the context of the institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, the academic advising program (AAP) must nurture environments where similarities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

The AAP must promote educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and heritage, and that of others. The AAP must educate and promote respect about commonalities and differences in their historical and cultural contexts.

The AAP must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

### **Part 12. ETHICS**

All persons involved in the delivery of the academic advising program (AAP) must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. The AAP must develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. The AAP must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

Ethical standards or other statements from relevant professional associations should be considered.

AAP staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice. Information contained in students' education records must not be disclosed without written consent except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies. Staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.

All AAP staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the

institution's human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

AAP staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others.

AAP staff members must strive to ensure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. Staff members must not participate in nor condone any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

When handling institutional funds, all AAP staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

AAP staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

AAP staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

AAP staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

### **Part 13. ASSESSMENT and EVALUATION**

The academic advising program (AAP) must conduct regular assessment and evaluations. The AAP must employ effective qualitative and quantitative methodologies as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes are being met. The process must employ sufficient and sound assessment measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students and other affected constituencies.

The program must evaluate periodically how well they complement and enhance the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness.

Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving the program in recognizing staff performance.