Case Management Advising

Objective: To help the underprepared student achieve success by:

- Empowering the student to attain his/her personal and academic goals.
- Providing accurate information to students about completion of degree requirements and academic standards in a timely and efficient manner.
- Serving as a professional friend.

Note: The adviser serves as a friend to the student by demonstrating a personal interest in him/her and in his/her adjustment to college; by serving as a central contact person in obtaining suggestions, which can be used to help the student. Following is a list of suggested topics advisors address with advisees:

1. General Advising
2. Exploration of Life Goals
3. Exploration of Career/Educational Goals
4. Selection of Educational Program
5. Selection of Courses
6. Scheduling of Classes
7. Staying in close contact with the student (early semester meetings, mid-term meetings, monthly contacts)

The advisor will have the student complete and discuss together the results of the student’s Learning Style Inventory and Learning and Study Strategies Inventory.

The advisor will use information gleaned from these instruments in the advising process.

The adviser plans with the student a schedule of courses with a consideration of the over-all year’s work. It is imperative that the student’s strengths and weaknesses be considered in this process.

The advisor will assist the students with career exploration if the student is unsure of a career choice. It is important that the student is aware of the campus resources: Integrated, Advising, Testing and Career Center. Set up an appointment for the student if necessary for career exploration.

Also, it is important that the advisee knows about other student resources. If feasible, encourage your advisees to get involved with student activities. Assist with specifics if necessary.

Clearly establish communication. How will the student contact the advisor? How with the advisor contact the advisee.
Case Notes:

Each advisee will have a file stored on the “S” drive under Case Management. Every attempt will be made to include specific demographic, student information for each student prior to meeting with the advisor. However, if the file is incomplete such as not having the LASSI score, then the advisor is encouraged to contact Carol Ford to see if the student has completed the assessment. If not, have the student complete the required assessments. After each visit, the advisor should update the file with the specific information for the visit. It may be as little as “student met with me and said all was going well or it could be more detailed. Due to the confidentiality issue, the advisor should not include personal information without the student’s consent.

Advisors are encouraged to exchange email addresses with the advisee for ease of communication. Also, please obtain the student’s cell phone number if applicable.

Early on, advisors should establish the best way to communicate with the advisee. If, however, the advisor is unable to reach the advisee by telephone or email, a post card is appropriate. Post cards will be given to each advisor. In addition, the college has what is termed Phone Tree which is a means to set up electronic telephone calls to students. Contact Carol Ford for assistance. If the advisor continues to have difficulty reaching the advisee, please seek the assistance of Karen Lackey, one of the college counselors or the advising center.

It is extremely important that each advisor keep track of his/her advisee if at all possible. If by chance the advisor is unsuccessful with meeting with the advisee, the advisor is to note this in the case notes. Be specific.
STRATEGIES OF ADVISEMENT
Emphasized below are basic strategies of advisement used to assist in individual student development.

Attempt to become acquainted with the advisee in as many aspects as possible.
Getting to know the advisees outside the formality of the office when possible, and not only during class scheduling or unusual circumstances, can be extremely valuable. Knowing the academic abilities and background of the advisee is also important. Having good documentation (the advising folder) such as high school courses with grades, rank in graduating class, ACT or SAT scores, transfer courses and grades from other universities, and present academic status is essential when assessing a student’s ability and future direction.

Explore the objectives, interests, and motivations of the advisee.
The advisee’s actual certainty of future objectives and goals is difficult to ascertain. When the advisor has some knowledge of the advisee’s non-academic background—such as home influence, hobbies, and friends—a more thorough type of advisement is possible.

Develop rapport with advisees.
If the student knows the advisor as a professional person who has a genuine interest in students, the advisement process becomes much more beneficial for both advisor and advisee.

The advisor serves as a friend to the student by demonstrating a personal interest in him and in his adjustment to college; by serving as a central contact person in obtaining information that can be used to help the student; and by allowing the student freedom to make his own choices after the limitations, alternatives, and consequences involved in a decision are pointed out (Brown, 1972, pp. 93-94).

Evaluate student motivation.
Enhancing a student’s motivation by capitalizing on good academic planning can be a very helpful strategy. While lack of motivation is generally recognized as the most common cause of poor academic performance, no clear cut methods to help a student achieve maximum motivation have been developed. Suggested strategies might include:
- Matching courses early in the program to the student’s academic strengths, interests, and background.
- Helping the student, when possible, have a chance to build on success rather than failure.
- Challenging capable students to continue their efforts toward academic excellence.
- Explaining the rewards of a strong academic program and associated good grades.

Be aware of the limitations of responsibility which place the burden of the advisement process on the shoulders of the student.
Obviously, an advisor cannot make decisions for an advisee, but can be a sympathetic listener and offer various alternatives for the advisee’s consideration. Advisors cannot increase the ability of a student, but can encourage the maximum use of that ability. While advisors cannot change some aspects of class schedules or employment loads, the students can be referred to the proper offices for such adjustments when desirable.

Seek to determine the level of advisement appropriate for your own comfort and training.
Generally, advisors should not attempt to personally handle complex problems concerning financial aid, mental or physical health, personal or social counseling. When these situations do arise, the faculty advisor should refer students to professional personnel who are specially trained and knowledgeable about dealing with such problems (Morehead State University, 1981).