

## *Chapter 14*

### **Advisor Reporting Lines**

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In this chapter, the response to one survey question is examined to better understand the reporting lines that academic advisors use at their institutions. Respondents were asked to indicate to which of five campus units undergraduate academic advisors report: academic affairs, student affairs, academic and student affairs jointly, enrollment management, or the registrar. An open response option allowed respondents to cite a campus unit not listed as an answer option on the survey. The four answers provided to the open response option were subsequently categorized as nontraditional/continuing education, a college of the university, and a branch campus (one additional response was not interpretable). Respondents could only endorse one answer option for this survey item.

This chapter is organized as follows: The Executive Summary highlights the overarching findings for the item on advisor reporting lines, the Advisor Reporting Line Summary presents the overall findings for each advising line in more detail than in the Executive Summary, and the Results section, the most detailed, presents general and disaggregated results by institutional size and type, mandatory advising, advising personnel, and advising situation. Furthermore, see “Implications for Advisor Reporting Lines” by Nancy King for her thoughts about the meaning of results for academic advisors, administrators, the profession of academic advising, and future research.

The following question was used to collect information on advisor reporting lines:

Where does undergraduate academic advising report in your **advising situation**?

### **Executive Summary of Advisor Reporting Lines**

The extent to which undergraduate academic advisors report to five campus units is reviewed in this chapter. The phrase *in general* refers to a review of results without consideration for other factors, such as size of institution; this information is found in Figure 14.1 and Table 14.1. The phrase *categories of institutions* refers to results reviewed in a disaggregated format for factors such as size of institution, advising personnel, and status of mandatory advising. For example, when size of institution is used to disaggregate the data, small, medium, and large institutions are compared to determine similarities or differences among advisor reporting lines. This information is found in Figures 14.2 to 14.4 and Tables 14.2 to 14.6.

Three overarching findings characterize the responses to the survey item on advisor reporting lines. First, in general, according to the survey respondents, advisors at most institutions (nearly 3 of 5) report to academic affairs. The other top reporting lines, in descending order, are student affairs (1 of 5), academic and student affairs jointly (1 of 10), enrollment management (approximately 1 of 10), and the registrar (1 of 50). Second, the disaggregated data show that across most categories of institutions, more advisors report to academic affairs than student affairs. However, more respondents (more than 2 of 5) from 2-year and proprietary institutions report to student affairs than academic affairs. Third, although academic affairs is the most reported line across institutional size and type, mandatory advising policy, and advising personnel categories, the percentages of institutions within these categories notably differ. For example, academic affairs is the

most used reporting line at six of the eight institution types, but the percentages range from 53 to 84%. Additionally, although academic and student affairs jointly is the third-most cited reporting line, notably more (1 of 5) respondents from 2-year institutions selected it. Notable differences also characterize the endorsement of student affairs and enrollment management as reporting lines for advisors.

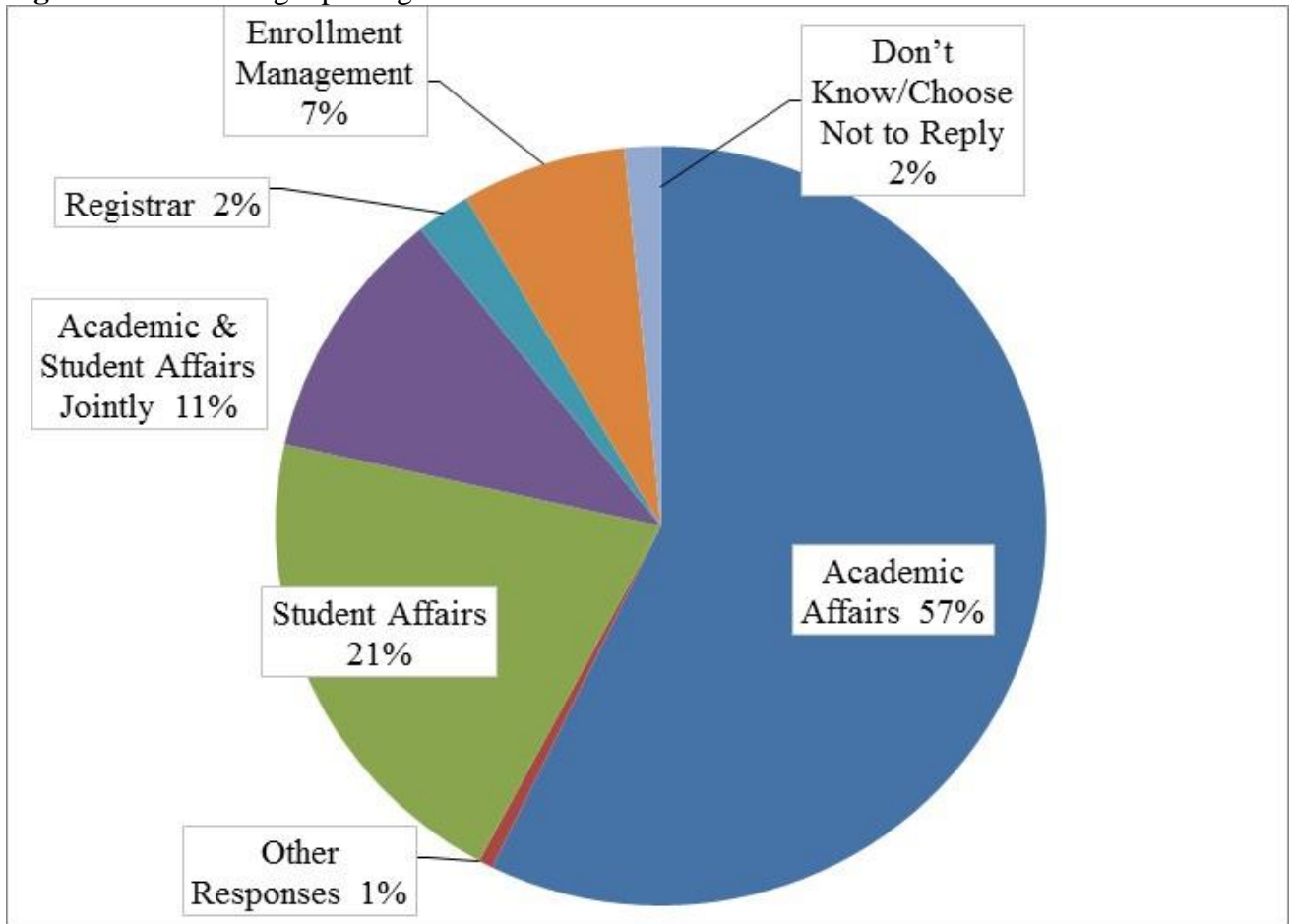
### **Notable Differences**

To help readers assess the meaning of the data, differences of 10% or more between categories of institutions (e.g., large vs. small institutions, advising is mandatory vs. advising is not mandatory) are labeled *notable*. For example, at 63% of large and 49% of medium institutions advisors report to academic affairs. This difference of 14% is equal to or greater than 10%, so it is labeled *notable*. All results are presented in tables, and bar graphs present data that show two or more notable differences within a category of institution for a specific reporting-line type. For example, because two notable differences emerged for two advisor reporting lines by advising personnel, a bar graph is provided in Figure 14.4.

Furthermore, three groups comprise samples of fewer than 50 institutions, and thus, a change in the answer of one respondent would result in a change of more than 2%. A difference found among these groups is reported only if it meets or exceeds 10% when one response is added or subtracted. For example, 66% of respondents from private doctorate and 53% from public bachelor institutions indicated that academic affairs is a reporting line. However, only 30 respondents comprised the public bachelor institution category, and if one more respondent from this group reported use of academic affairs, then the response rate would become 57%, creating a difference between respondents

from public bachelor and private doctorate institutions of less than 10%, meaning the difference is not labeled *notable*. The following three groups are comprised of fewer than 50 representatives, and the approximate percentage change associated with one respondent is provided in parentheses: public bachelor institutions ( $n = 30$ ; 3.3%), proprietary institutions ( $n = 24$ ; 4.2%), and respondents who answered at the department level ( $n = 42$ ; 2.4%). Inferences involving these groups should be made cautiously.

**Figure 14.1.** Advising reporting lines

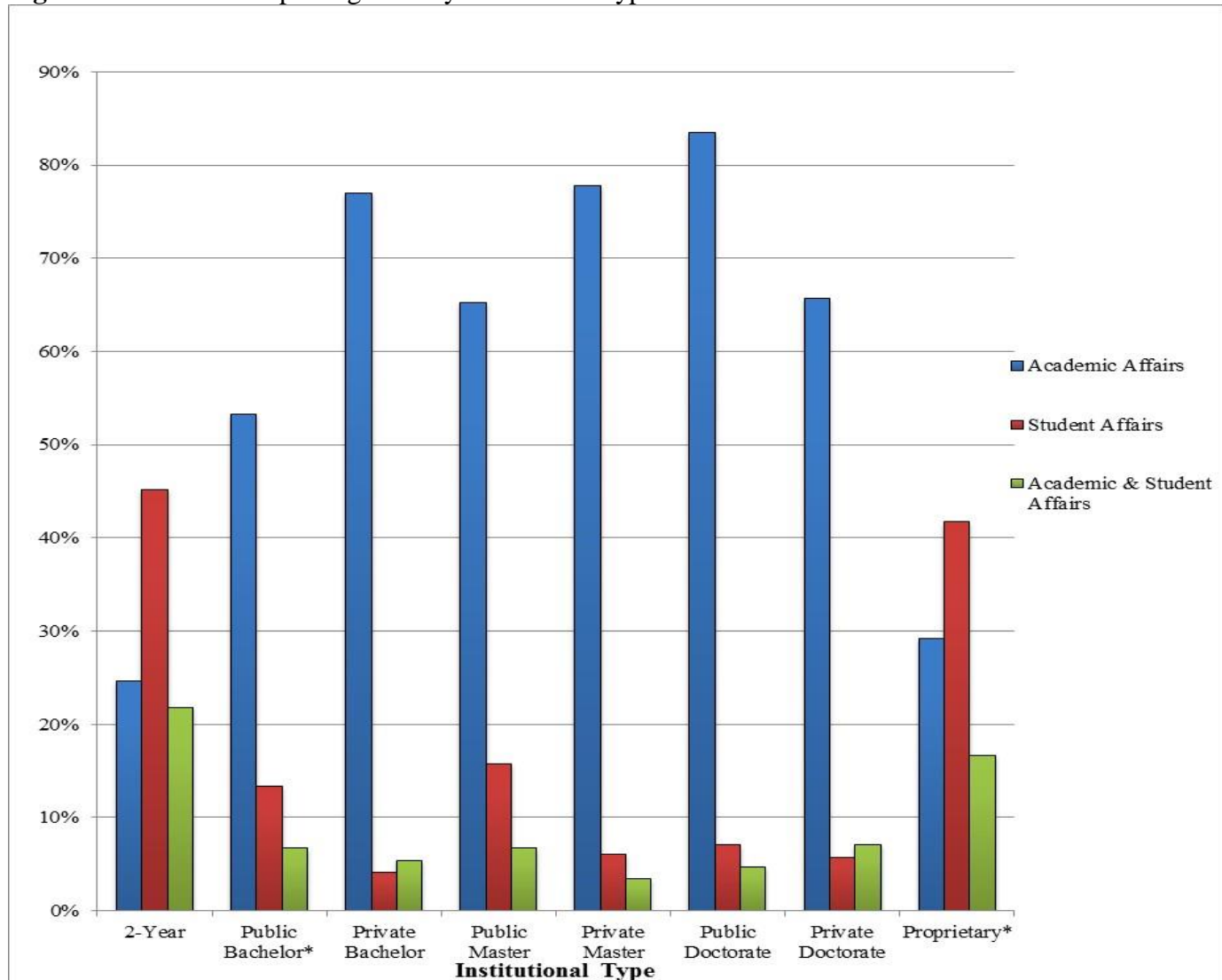


*Note.* Three responses emerged from the Open Response option and labeled as *Other* in the figure: nontraditional/continuing education, university college, and branch campus.

<b>Reporting Line</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Affairs	57
Student Affairs	21
Academic & Student Affairs	11
Enrollment Management	7
Registrar	2
Don't Know/Choose Not to Reply	2
Other Responses	1

*Note.* Three responses emerged from the Open Response option and labeled as *Other* in the figure: nontraditional/continuing education, university college, and branch campus.

**Figure 14.2.** Advisor reporting lines by institutional type

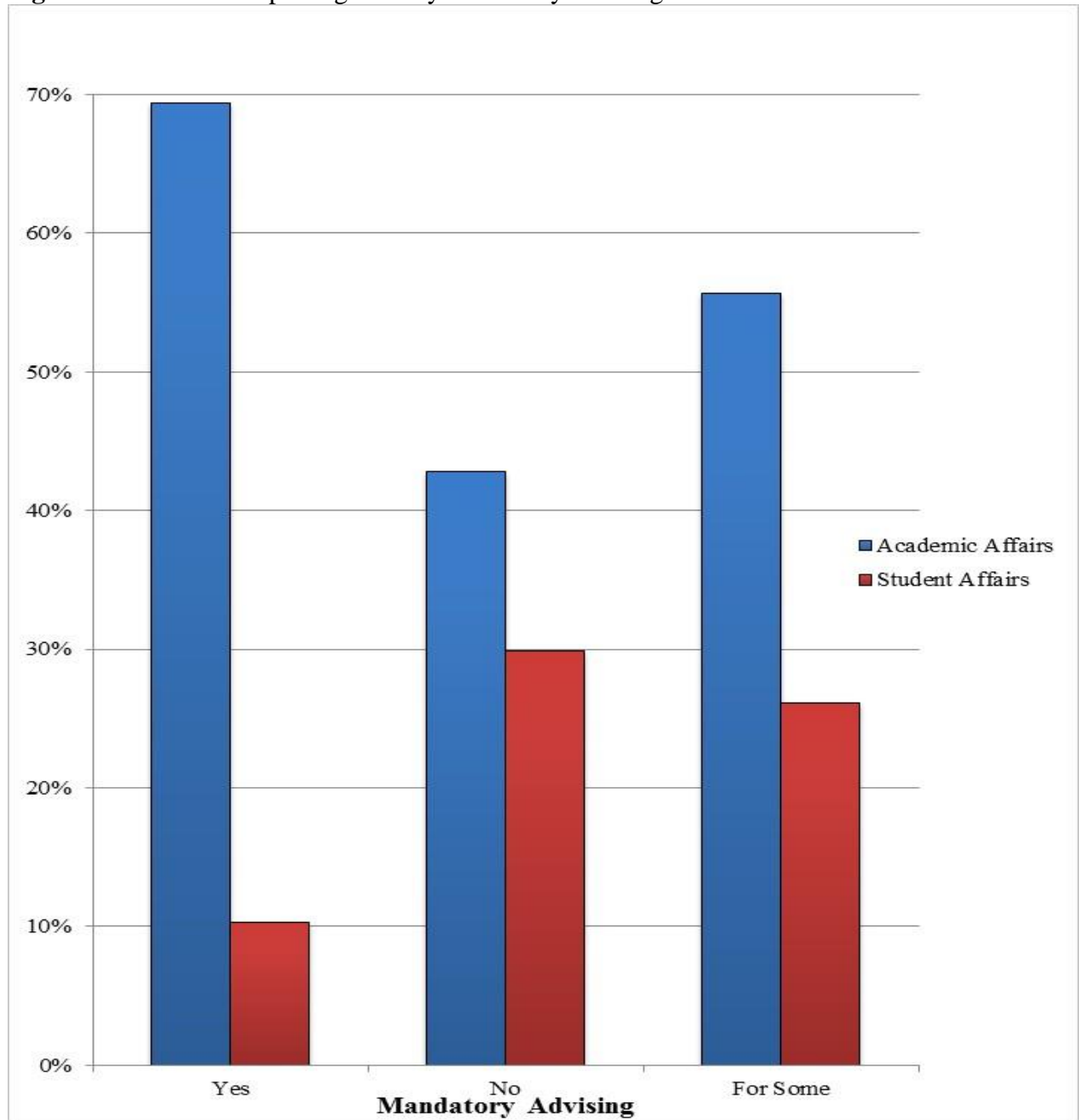


Note. \*Fewer than 50 institutions represented

Reporting Line	Percentage by Institutional Type							
	2-Year	Public Bachelor*	Private Bachelor	Public Master	Private Master	Public Doctorate	Private Doctorate	Proprietary*
Academic Affairs	24.7	53.3	77.0	65.2	77.8	83.5	65.7	29.2
Student Affairs	45.2	13.3	4.1	15.7	6	7.1	5.7	41.7
Academic & Student Affairs	21.8	6.7	5.4	6.7	3.4	4.7	7.1	16.7

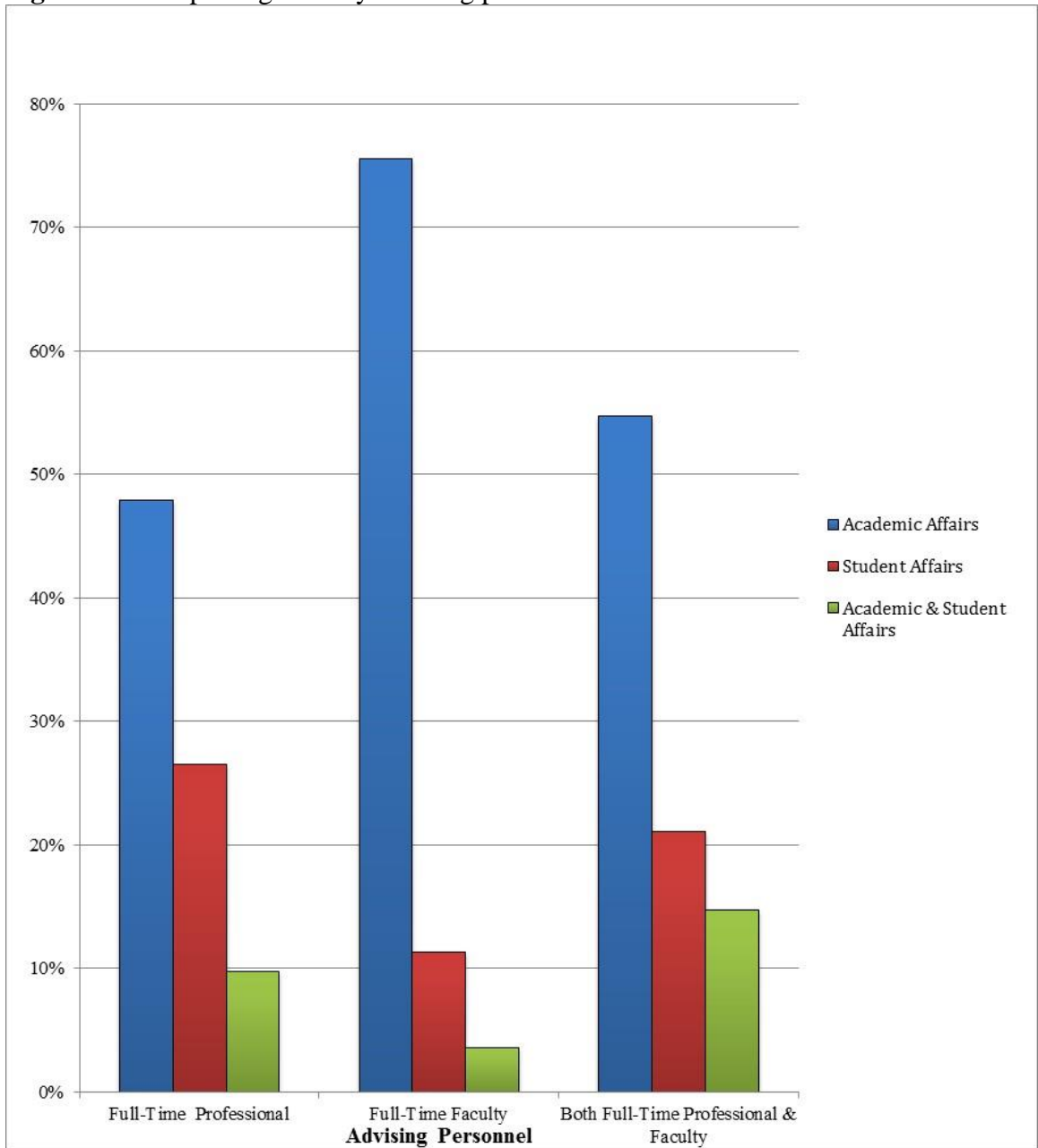
Note. Fewer than 50 institutions represented from public bachelor and proprietary institutions.

**Figure 14.3.** Advisor reporting lines by mandatory advising



<b>Percentage per Mandatory Advising Status</b>			
<b>Reporting Line</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>For Some</b>
Academic Affairs	69.4	42.8	55.7
Student Affairs	10.3	29.9	26.1

**Figure 14.4.** Reporting lines by advising personnel



<b>Percentage by Advising Personnel</b>			
<b>Reporting Line</b>	<b>Full-Time Professional</b>	<b>Full-Time Faculty</b>	<b>Both Full-Time Professional &amp; Faculty</b>
Academic Affairs	47.9	75.6	54.7
Student Affairs	26.5	11.3	21.1
Academic & Student Affairs	9.8	3.6	14.7



## Advisor Reporting Lines Summary

In this section, both in general and disaggregated findings are summarized. As in the Executive Summary, in this section *in general* refers to a review of results without consideration for other factors, such as size of institution; this information is found in Figure 14.1 and Table 14.1. *Categories of institutions* refers to results reviewed in a disaggregated format for factors such as size and type of institution, mandatory advising policy, and advising personnel; this information is found in Figures 14.2 to 14.4 and Tables 14.2 to 14.6.

In general, most respondents (nearly 3 of 5) indicated that advisors in their situation report to academic affairs. In descending order, they also cited the following campus units where advisors report to supervisors: student affairs (1 of 5), academic and student affairs jointly (1 of 10), enrollment management (1 of 14), and the registrar (1 of 50) (see Figure 14.1 and Table 14.1).

However, when the results are disaggregated, deviations emerge from the general pattern. First, the rank order of advisor reporting lines varies among institutional types. For example, more respondents from 2-year and proprietary institutions indicated student affairs, over all other campus units, as the reporting line. Second, among categories in which the rank order of reporting lines is similar, notable differences in the percentages of institutions are seen in terms of institutional size and type, mandatory advising policy, advising personnel, and advising situation among those reporting use of academic affairs, student affairs, academic and student affairs jointly, and enrollment management reporting lines (see Figures 14.2 and 14.4 as well as Tables 14.2 to 14.6).

According to respondents, academic advisors report to academic affairs at

- more small and large than medium institutions.
- more public doctorate, private bachelor, and private master than all other institution types.
- fewer 2-year and proprietary institutions than all other institution types, the only schools from which it is not the most reported choice.
- more institutions mandating advising for some or all than where it is not mandated for anyone.
- more institutions with full-time faculty than other types of advisors.

According to respondents, academic advisors report to student affairs at more

- 2-year and proprietary institutions, which are the only schools from which most respondents indicated it over other choices.
- public master than private bachelor and public doctorate institutions.
- institutions where advising is not mandatory and where it is mandatory for some students.
- institutions with full-time professional advisors and those with both full-time professional and faculty advisors.

Academic advising units report to academic and student affairs jointly at more 2-year institutions and those employing both full-time professional and faculty advisors than those using full-time faculty or professional advisors. In addition, more respondents from public bachelor institutions indicated that advisors report to enrollment management than did their counterparts from private bachelor, private master, and public doctorate institutions. Additionally, the percentages of respondents who indicated either academic affairs or student affairs as the advising reporting line notably differ by advising situation (see Table 14.6).

## **Results**

In this section, results relating to the academic advising reporting line are presented in general. They are also disaggregated for size and type of institution, mandatory advising policy, advising personnel, and advising situation.

### **General Findings**

In general, at the majority of institutions, academic advisors report to academic affairs (almost 3 of 5), followed by student affairs (1 of 5), academic and student affairs jointly (1 of 10), enrollment management (1 of 14), and the registrar (1 of 50). All the remaining campus units, which were reported through the open-response answer option (i.e., nontraditional/continuing education, a college of the university, and a branch campus), together were reported by approximately 1% of respondents (see Figure 14.1 and Table 14.1).

### **Size of Institution**

For all three sizes of institutions, the rank order of campus units where undergraduate advisors report is the same: academic affairs, student affairs, academic and student affairs jointly, enrollment management, and the registrar. However, the percentages of institutions where advisors report to academic affairs notably differ by institutional size (see Table 14.2). Specifically, although 1 of 2 respondents, regardless of institution size, cited academic affairs as the reporting line, the most (3 of 5) came from small and large compared to medium institutions by 12 and 14%, respectively.

## **Institutional Type**

Academic affairs is the most-cited reporting line at six of the eight institution types: It is cited by at least 50% of respondents from all private and public institutions (bachelor, master, and doctorate). The other reporting lines reported are each used at no more than 1 of 5 institutions.

More respondents (2 of 5) from 2-year and proprietary institutions cited student affairs as the reporting line for advisors. They indicated use of the other reporting lines in the following descending order: academic affairs (1 of 4 and 3 of 10, respectively), and academic and student affairs jointly (approximately 1 of 5).

However, the percentages of respondents citing academic affairs, student affairs, academic and student affairs jointly, and enrollment management notably differ by institutional type (see Figure 14.2 and Table 14.3). Specifically, academic affairs is the advising reporting line at more public doctorate (more than 4 of 5) as well as private master and bachelor (3 of 4) than at the other five institution types by 18 to 59%, 12 to 53%, and 11 to 52%, respectively. Fewer respondents from 2-year (1 of 4) and proprietary (3 of 10) institutions than from the other six institution types cited it by 28 to 59% and 24 to 54%, respectively.

Student affairs is reported by more respondents at 2-year (more than 2 of 5) and proprietary (2 of 5) institutions than all other institution types by 29 to 41% and 26 to 38%, respectively; these are the only institutional categories for which student affairs is cited by the most respondents. However, it is cited by more respondents from public master than from private bachelor and public doctorate institutions by 12 and 10%, respectively.

Academic and student affairs jointly is the advising reporting line indicated by more respondents from 2-year institutions (more than 1 of 5) than those from all other institution types (except proprietary) by 15 to 19%. Enrollment management is the advising reporting line cited by more respondents from public bachelor (1 of 5) than those from private bachelor and master as well as public doctorate institutions (approximately 1 of 20) by 15 to 17%. It is the second-most cited reporting line only by those from public bachelor institutions.

### **Mandatory Advising**

For all three mandatory advising categories, the rank order of campus units where undergraduate advisors report is the same (in descending order): academic affairs, student affairs, academic and student affairs jointly, enrollment management, and the registrar. However, the percentages of institutions where advisors report to academic affairs and student affairs notably differ by mandatory advising policy (see Figure 14.3 and Table 14.4).

Specifically, more respondents from institutions with a mandatory advising policy cited academic affairs as the reporting line for advisors. According to respondents, 13% more institutions where advising is mandatory (7 of 10) use an academic affairs reporting line than where it is mandatory for some students (more than 1 of 2); however, it is reported by 13% fewer respondents from institutions where advising is not mandatory (2 of 5) than where it is mandated it for some. More respondents from institutions where advising is not mandatory (3 of 10) and where it is mandatory for some students (1 of 4) cited student affairs as the reporting line than did those from institutions where it is mandatory (by 20 and 16%, respectively).

## **Advising Personnel**

Across all three advising personnel categories, academic affairs is the most-cited reporting line for academic advising, and student affairs is the second-most cited reporting line. However, the percentages of institutions where advisors report to academic affairs, student affairs, as well as academic and student affairs jointly notably differ by advising personnel (see Figure 14.4 and Table 14.5). Specifically, more respondents cited

- academic affairs as the advising reporting line at institutions with full-time faculty advisors (3 of 4) than did those from institutions with both full-time professional and faculty advisors (more than 1 of 2) and full-time professional advisors (nearly 1 of 2) by 21 and 28%, respectively.
- student affairs as the advising reporting line at institutions with full-time professional advisors (1 of 4) and those with both full-time professional and faculty advisors (1 of 5) than did those from institutions with full-time faculty advisors (1 of 10) by 16 and 10%, respectively.
- academic and student affairs jointly as the reporting line at institutions with both full-time professional and faculty advisors than at those with full-time faculty advisors by 11%.

## **Advising Situation**

More respondents in each advising situation cited academic affairs as the reporting line over the other campus unit options. They reported using student affairs over academic and student affairs jointly and the remaining two campus units.

However, the percentages of respondents who reported academic affairs and student affairs notably differ by advising situation (see Table 14.6). Specifically, more respondents from the college, school, and division (more than 7 of 10) and department (2 of 3) levels selected the academic affairs option by 22 and 17% over those who answered from the institutional perspective (1 of 2). Conversely, more respondents (1 of 4)

answering from the institutional viewpoint cited student affairs over those in the other situations by 13%.