

Beyond Foundations: Developing as a Master Advisor

Chapter 9 - A Human capital approach to academic and career advising

Reader Learning Outcomes

Readers will use knowledge gained about student success to

- Describe maximization of human capital,
- Explain the process of calculating the costs of a 2- or 4-year college education,
- Identify several different types of academic courses students could select to develop human capital,
- Define and illustrate transferable skills,
- Explain the behaviors that put students at financial risk,
- List some warning signs that advisees may be financially at risk,
- Articulate the rationale for undertaking career interventions with advisees, and
- Explain the importance of documenting human capital development.

Aiming for Excellence

- In your own words, explain human capital and ways to maximize it.
- Develop a worksheet for calculating the costs of earning a degree at your institution; include the current costs of tuition, room and board, and books and fees.
- Know the published entry-level wages or salaries for jobs related to degree programs offered at your institution.
- Create a plan to talk with advisees about financing their education and develop a set of probes to check for signs of risky financial practices.
- Identify a network of professional contacts for student referrals concerning any financial issues or questions.
- Perform a periodic human capital inventory to help students recognize and document the skills and special knowledge they learn in courses, cocurricular activities, and job experiences.
- Develop an approach to helping students start a human capital portfolio and a plan for reviewing students' progress in maintaining that portfolio.
- Identify career intervention strategies that help students gather information about possible careers and encourage them to explore major and minor curriculum choices.

Assessment Strategies

Strategy 1: Human Capital Inventory Assessment

Perform an initial human capital inventory with students by reviewing their transcripts and written summaries of cocurricular activities, systematically recording students' perceptions of skills and special knowledge acquired with each course on the transcript and each activity reported. Ask students to retain the records of each completed inventory and update the entries at regular intervals until students complete graduation requirements. Document the cumulative growth of human capital throughout the college career both for student feedback as well as academic assessment purposes. Collect data including (but not limited to) the following categories: courses taken to improve human capital (e.g., a statistics to increase numeracy skills), career exploration activities (e.g., formal career-interest batteries), cocurricular activities (e.g., serving as a staff writer or editor for a school newspaper), and career interventions (e.g., completing a service-learning project in a course required for the student's major).

Strategy 2: Portfolio Assessment

Collect data about student documentation of human capital development. Determine the proportion who have started a portfolio, and document the time when they started collecting documents for their portfolio. Analyze the number and types of human capital development activities students have included in their portfolios. Develop a means for collecting these data at intervals both to assess students' progress in human capital development and to provide feedback and suggestions to students so they can improve upon their previous choices of course work and activities.