

The New Advisor Guidebook: Mastering the art of advising

Chapter 6 - Institutional and External Information: Faculty Advisor

Reader Learning Outcomes

The reader will:

RLO1: Identify the basic questions students most frequently ask, as well as whether the answers require institutional or external knowledge in the context of the advisor's role.

Activity: Break into small groups composed of advisors with common advising roles. Each group will brainstorm and compose a group list of ten questions their advisees most frequently ask and mark each question as requiring institutional or external information. Reconvene the large group and have each small group report their list of the top ten student questions. After large group discussion of similarities and differences in the groups' lists, return to small groups to modify their sets of questions as needed.

Assessment: Each group composes a list of the ten questions agreed upon by the group members as the questions most frequently asked by students and matches each question to whether the answer requires institutional or external knowledge.

RLO2: Identify available institutional and external resources that provide answers to the top ten questions students may ask in the context of the advisor's role.

Activity: Break into small groups to brainstorm and compose a list of available institutional and external resources that may be used to obtain the answer to each of the student questions identified by the small group.

Assessment: Each group composes a list of available institutional and external resources that may be used to obtain the answer to each of the student questions.

RLO3: Compose a list of Student FAQs by using the set of identified institutional and external resources to construct an answer for each of the ten student questions identified by the small group.

Activity: Each advisor will use the set of available resources to compose appropriate answers to the student questions by the next training session.

Assessment: Each advisor composes appropriate responses to the set of student questions.

RLO4: Identify current areas of knowledge and those that must be acquired to be prepared for the pop quizzes students present.

Activity: Each advisor will share their answers to the set of student questions composed by their small group. In a role-playing activity, advisors will be paired and role-play both the advisor and advisee roles in order to practice responding to students. The "advisee" will choose which questions from the list to ask. The "advisee" gives feedback as to how helpful the answer was. The "advisor" uses the feedback to revise answers as needed. Then switch roles.

Assessment: The feedback provided by the advisor playing the advisee role.

RLO5: Design and implement a professional development strategy to master the knowledge advisors need to know.

Activity: Use the *Questions for Review* presented in the chapter to identify current areas of knowledge and those that must be acquired. Use your ability to answer the *Questions* at the beginning of each continuing year to assess growth.

Assessment: The advisor feels confident in his/her ability to provide appropriate answers to student questions by being able to correctly answer each of the *Questions for Review*.

Aiming for Excellence discussion questions and activities

- Chart milestones in learning information for becoming an effective advisor. Use the questions and strategies in *The Applications and Insights*, especially *Advisor Checklist of Questions on Institutional Information to Learn in Year 1* (p. __), *Teaching Students to Navigate the Institutional System* (p. __), *Student Information to Learn in Year 1* (p. __), and *Teaching Students to Use Resources* (p. __) your first year to identify current areas of knowledge and those that must be acquired. Then use them as post-tests at the end of your first year to assess growth. This self-assessment should be repeated in each continuing year.
- Identify internal (institutional) and external sources of information that provide answers to the questions students may ask. For quick access to needed information, bookmark the most useful electronic sources and obtain hard copies of available institutional publications with basic information tabbed and highlighted.
- Construct a FAQs list by consulting with other advisors, reviewing existing lists, and listening to students. Maintain it as an evolving, dynamic document to ensure the relevancy and accuracy of the questions and answers.
- Review the file of an advisee with an upcoming appointment. How will you greet the student and open the conversation based on information gleaned from the file?
- Generate descriptions of the programs, majors, and minors offered through the institution and meet with the department chair or program director to discuss the information that students interested in these areas should know.
- Use the New Advisor Growth Chart in chapter 1 to design a professional development agenda that includes attending at least one national or regional NACADA conference, participating in available institutional training opportunities, and reading current articles on the theory and practice of advising.
- Design and implement a method to assess your effectiveness as a faculty advisor. This could include soliciting student feedback through surveys and peer observations of advising sessions.
- Does your institution create and maintain a demographic and academic profile of its students? (Admissions and registrar personnel as well as web sites may present or possess student data.) If it does, use it to learn about the students who attend your institution and specifically those you advise. In what ways do your advisees fit into the student profile at the institutional level? How do they differ from the majority cohorts?