



A NEWSLETTER FOR ACADEMIC ADVISORS

ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND:

Advising First-Year Undecided Students: Research, Practice & Policy

Friday, September 13 • 12 – 1:30 p.m. • Swain Hall, Rm 118

OVERVIEW

The first-year undecided student population warrants considerable attention from higher education administrators and educators. As a group, research indicates undecided students can be susceptible to lower academic achievement and persistence rates when compared to their counterparts who have declared majors. Nationally, first-year students also tend to have lower persistence rates with nearly one quarter of entering first-year students not persisting to their second year of college. This susceptibility takes on added importance given that the population of undecided students in higher education is rapidly increasing despite more academic options being offered. This growth becomes even more evident when you look at the incoming first-year class as a whole—the fact that at most institutions, undecided students represent as much as one third of the incoming first-year class.

This webinar will review the current literature on first-year undecided students. This includes identifying the diversity of needs among this group and challenging the “deficiency” perspective that argues that first-year undecided students tend to have lower academic achievement and persistence rates compared to their peers. In addition, this webinar will review some of the best practices employed in delivering high-quality academic advising services that address the identified needs of this group. Finally, the presenter will discuss the implication for future practice, research, and policy.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Discuss the significance of the various classification systems and nomenclature associated with undecided students
- Identify needs of first-year undecided students
- Examine multiple approaches used to providing advising services and programs to this population
- Highlight best practices in advising first-year undecided students
- Recommend considerations for future practice, research, and policy development relative to this population

September 2013

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, September 4

Last day to add

Friday, September 13

Undeclared Advising Webinar

September 16 – 20

Student Success Workshops —
Academic Enrichment Focus

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SPEAKER

Dr. Kimberly S. Smith entered the field of higher education administration in 1996. In 1999, she joined Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University as an administrator where she serves as the Director of the University Academic Advising Center. Dr. Smith's primary responsibility in this position involves serving as the academic dean for the University Studies department, which is the academic "home" for students who are undecided about a major or want to explore a variety of degree programs before selecting a major.

In addition, Dr. Smith has been appointed to serve as the Director of Undergraduate Academic Advising where she provides leadership and coordination for university-wide programs and initiatives related to enhancing academic advising. She is responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and assessing academic advising activities throughout the university community through administrative collaborations with the academic colleges, the University Academic Advising Center, and various other university stakeholders in support of undergraduate education. She has also served as the university's interim associate vice provost for academic support services where she provided university leadership for institutional support programs and services for students.

Dr. Smith has presented at the local, state, and national level at various professional conferences on topics related to assessment of advising, advising undecided students, utilization of technology in advising, developing an effective advising program for orientation, and changing an institution's advising culture. She is the co-author of a chapter entitled "Applying Quality Educational Principles to Academic Advising."

Degree Audit Training

Registrar's Office staff, Rebecca Porter and Erica Sundahl, will be holding a degree audit training in the Conference Center of the Student Center on October 7th and 8th for MSU faculty, staff and students from 1:00-2:30 p.m. Faculty training will be held from 1:00-1:30 p.m. and student training from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Please encourage your advisees to attend the student training, as well!

Using the College Student Inventory (CSI)

The College Student Inventory (CSI) is an assessment, given to first year students at CONNECT/Orientation sessions that identifies the strengths these students have, the challenges they may face in their first year at MSU, and their receptivity to interventions. The purpose of the CSI is to help students connect with the university and identify those services students may need. One responsibility in advising first year students is to share the results of the CSI with first year advisees. Administrative Assistants have access to print both the Student and the Advisor/Counselor Reports. Please contact

these students and set up a meeting to discuss the results with them, preferably in the first few weeks of the semester. During the meeting please spend time talking about the students' educational background and their strengths and weaknesses. Please include information about available resources on campus and in the community and ensure the students that you, as their academic advisor, will be there to provide support throughout their academic career at Minot State. Attached is a CSI Advisor's Guide and a campus resource handout. This guide is designed to assist advisors with understanding the purpose of the CSI and how to use this tool when working with first year advisees. Should questions arise regarding the use of the CSI, please contact Heather Martin at 3265 or heather.martin@minotstateu.edu.

Purpose of Record Keeping

Conference note records provide a history of advisors' interactions with students. They include information, recommendations, and options outlines by advisors as well as student responses and decisions. Clear, accurate, and complete records

- enable advisors to stay abreast of each student's academic situation. A quick review of conference notes prior to seeing a student should allow an advisor to see what decisions, actions, or discussion occurred in previous sessions and to determine the important issues to address in the upcoming conference.
- provide documentation of important decisions and exceptions (e.g., change of major, use of second-grade-only option, and collegiate, admissions, or departmental waivers or exceptions).
- provide an academic narrative that provides a solid foundation for other advisors who may meet with the student.
- protect students, advisors, and the advising unit. For example, a student may ask an advisor to verify that a course substitution was made for the student to graduate on time. Advising administrators may be asked to provide documentation of decisions and discussions when parents, students, or staff from other university offices have questions regarding specific advice given to students.

Folsom, P. (2007) Purpose of Record Keeping. In Folsom, P. and Chamberlain, B. (Eds.) *The new advisor guidebook: Mastering the art of advising through the first year and beyond* (p137). Manhattan, KS: National Academic Advising Association.

Running a Transcript in CampusConnection

Due to the recent CampusConnection upgrades, the old transcript version is no longer accessible. To run a transcript, go to "Request Transcript Report". Instructions for how to run a

transcript are available at http://www.minotstateu.edu/cc/pdf/run_a_transcript.pdf or under Staff Training Materials: http://www.minotstateu.edu/cc/cc_v9.shtml.

Quote of the Month

Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience.

Light, R.J. (2001) Making the most of college. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

CETL Student of the Month

The CETL Student of the Month has been established in order to recognize the outstanding contributions of the many student leaders working with the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning's programs. Each month, one CETL student leader will be selected as the CETL Student of the Month and featured on the CETL website. Anyone may nominate a student for this recognition; however, a student may only be recognized once during the academic year. Nominations are due on the 20th of each month.

The following student leaders are eligible for the CETL Student of the Month:

- CETL Peer Mentors
- CETL Peer Tutors
- Supplemental Instruction leaders
- Student Interns supported through CETL
- TRANSITIONS leaders
- Campus Compact members

Go to http://www.minotstateu.edu/cetl/sotm_form.shtml to complete the nomination form.

Thank You to All Advisors who Assisted at CONNECT

CONNECT/Orientation sessions were held this past spring/summer to welcome new freshman and transfer students to campus. One piece of this program is to assist students with advisement and registration. This could not be done without the assistance from many faculty across campus. The CONNECT/Orientation team would like to thank all faculty who assisted with academic advising at the summer CONNECT sessions!

ASC Course Number Change

Beginning Algebra, a 3 credit developmental Math course, taught through Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) was formerly known as ASC 092; however, the class number has changed to ASC 094. All other ASC courses through DCB remain unchanged. Students who wish to enroll in an ASC course through DCB must continue to complete the online Collaborative Form through the Center for Extended Learning (CEL) to request enrollment into the specified course.

Student Success Workshops

The Student Success and POWER Centers will again be hosting Student Success Workshops for the fall semester. We are changing it up a bit from previous semesters where workshops have been spread throughout the semester. This semester we will have two weeks filled with workshops, most of them being offered two different days and times to give students more flexibility in attending. The first week of workshops, Monday, September 16 through Friday, September 20, will concentrate on Academic Enrichment. The second week of workshops, Monday, October 21 through Friday, October 25 will concentrate on Personal Growth. Please see the attached document for the entire listing of workshops.

In an effort to draw more participants at our workshops, we would ask you to consider promoting them to your students. If you feel any of the workshops would enhance the learning experience in your classroom, please consider the possibility of offering extra credit for attendance — we would be happy to supply you with a list of students attending.