

Tulane University School of Social Work Faculty Advising Expectations

“Academic advising is more than clerical recordkeeping; it is the very human art of building relationships with students and helping them connect their personal strengths and interests with their academic and life goals.”

~ Jayne K. Drake ~

What is advising?

Advising consists of a series of intentional communication and informational interactions with students to make informed decisions in order to reach their academic potential through a relationship with an academic advisor (Drake, 2011¹). Academic advising is a critical component of the teaching and learning mission of higher educational institutions.

According to Drake (2011), good academic advising synthesizes and contextualizes students' educational experiences in terms of their aspirations, abilities and lives in order to extend students' learning beyond campus. Advising can increase the value students place on the learning process, increase students' decision-making ability and application and can help to put students' college experience into perspective, establish priorities, evaluate events, develop thinking and learning skills, make informed choices, and value the learning and educational process. Finally, good academic advising can provide in many cases the only opportunity for students to have a personal, consistent relationship with someone in higher educational settings who cares about them (Drake, 2011).

Empirical Evidence Regarding Advising

Four decades of research on advising have found that:

- Advising leads to students success while in school, is related to persistence to graduation, builds relationships with students, identifies places where they get disconnected and help them get reconnected, allows students to have a powerful, transformative out-of-class interaction with a faculty member (Drake, 2011, p.8).
- “Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience” (Light, 2001, p. 81²).
- “Students who are the happiest and academically the most successful have developed a solid relationship with an academic advisor, a faculty member, or an administrator who can help them navigate the academic and social shoals of the academy” (Drake, 2011, p.10).

¹ Drake, J. K. (2011). The role of academic advising in student retention and persistence. *About Campus*, 16(3), 8-12.

²Light, R. (2001). *Making the most of college: Students speak their minds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- “Advising programs . . . that emphasize registration and record keeping, while neglecting attention to students’ educational and personal experiences in the institution, are missing an excellent opportunity to influence directly and immediately the quality of students’ education” (Winston, Miller, Enders, Grites et al., 1984, p. 542³).
- “Advising helps students become more self-aware of their distinctive interests, talents, values, and priorities; who enables students to see the ‘connection’ between their present academic experience and their future life plans; who helps students discover their potential, purpose, and passion; who broadens students’ perspectives with respect to their personal life choices, and sharpens their cognitive skills for making these choices, such as effective problem-solving, critical thinking, and reflective decision-making” (Drake, 2011, p. 11).

What Do Advisers Do

Advisors *teach* students to:

- Negotiate the higher education maze,
- Make effective and thoughtful decisions about their futures,
- Adapt their life skills to the new academic world, and
- Cultivate the academic skills and knowledge needed to succeed (Drake, 2011, p. 11).

Minimum Requirements**

The TSSW faculty adopted the following **minimum requirements** for per semester beginning in the fall. (Additional meetings may be scheduled at the advisor’s discretion based on student interest and/or need.) The minimum expectation is that faculty **meet with their advisees either in person or over skype two times during the fall semester and once a semester thereafter until the student graduates or leaves the program.** If for some reason, you and your advisee are having a hard time connecting, one meeting may take place over the phone or email.

Types of Advising (In-person or Skype/Zoom)

- Group advising meetings
- Individual meetings

Important Times to Connect with Students

- First couple weeks
- Mid-term
- Signing up for field
- End of the semester
- Beginning of the next semester

Possible Topics for Discussion

³ Winston,R.B.,Jr.,Miller,T.K., Ender,S.C.,Grites, T.J.,& Associates.(1984).*Developmental academicad- vising*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Individual issues and concerns
- Field placement application decisions
- Clarification of field questions
- Final field decisions
- Academic and time management
- Follow-up on field outcome
- Progress toward achieving foundation objectives
- Transfer to field advisor
- Students' education, practice experience, and practice interests
- Orientation to New Orleans
- Exchange contact information
- Introduction to the process of choosing and assigning field placements
- Adjusting to academic and time demands of graduate school
- Review of foundation year program objectives

**Please note that whether you met the advising requirement will be part of the merit review process. You will be required to submit documentation of your meeting and/or attempts in the event that you are unable to meet with your advisees. Students will be instructed to talk to the Dean of Academic Affairs if they are unable to connect with their advisor.