Measuring the Quality of Academic Advising: Making Connections between Academic Advising and Student Success

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Overview

- How did it begin?
- Research questions
- Review of Literature
- What did the students say?
- NSSE academic advising experimental items
- NSSE academic advising scales and results
- Implications
- Questions & Discussion
“The primary purpose of academic advising is to assist student in the development of meaningful educational plans”

Council for Academic Standards for Higher Education

NSSE Academic Advising Item

12. Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?
Research Questions

• How to measure the quality of academic advising?
• How did academic advising affect student engagement, retention, and other desirable college outcomes?

Literature Review

• National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)
  • “Academic advising is integral to fulfilling the teaching and learning mission of higher education. Through academic advising, students learn to become members of their higher education community, to think critically about their roles and responsibilities as students, and to prepare to be educated as citizens of a democratic society and a global community.”
Literature Review

- Pascarella and Terenzini (2005)
  - “Research indicates that academic advising can play a role in students’ decisions to persist in their chances of graduating”

- Metzer (1989)
  - High-quality academic advising has been attributed to improved student retention

Literature Review

  - Adopt a talent development approach to advising
  - Help students map out a path to success
  - Connect students to co-curricular learning opportunities
  - Encourage students to seek out and learn from experiences with different form of diversity
A Short Introduction of NSSE

- National Survey of Student Engagement
- Evaluates the extent to which first-year and senior students engage in effective educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development
- Piloted in 1999; inaugural year 2000
- This year close to 800 institutions and 1.5 million students surveyed

What did the students say?

- I am a single parent, work full time day shifts with the county Sheriff’s Office as a Deputy Sheriff and attend this university three nights a week (9cr) a semester. The advisors work strongly with my needs and inability of my not so flexible school schedule. I truly admire and find this university a valuable and much needed part of this community.
What did the students say?

- I have been at NSSEville State University for two years now and never was told who my advisor was. The teachers who did advise me didn't know what they were talking about and gave me bad advice. Now I am at my last semester trying to graduate, and I have a class that did not count for what I was told it would.

What did the students say?

- I have had, for the most part, a terrific experience at NSSEville State University. I feel that my professors (within the English and Education department) are very helpful and friendly, and my advisors vital to my success.
What did the students say?

- My advisor did not help at all. I had to do everything on my own. Whenever I asked questions, my advisor made me feel like I was either stupid or wasting his time.

Data Sources

- 27 U.S. 4-year Colleges and Universities
- Carnegie Classifications
  - Research universities - 5
  - Master’s - 8
  - Baccalaureate – 12
  - Others - 2
- 9,664 randomly selected students
  - 4,692 First-Year students
  - 4,970 Seniors
NSSE Academic Advising Items

- Original – 16 items
- Initial model – 2 scales & 14 items
Quality of Academic Advising

Informative & Availability (5)
Career Support (3)
Educational Support (3)

Psychometric Properties

- Confirmatory Factor Analysis
  - GFI = .958
  - RMSEA = .055
- Reliability
  - Informative & Availability - .94
  - Career Support - .95
  - Educational Support - .89
Meeting with advisor(s)

About how many times have you met with your academic advisor in the current academic year?

- 0: 4%
- 1: 13%
- 2: 9%
- 3: 25%
- 4: 18%
- 5: 21%
- More than 5: 10%

Meeting with advisor(s) – by gender

- Male: 8%, 18%, 23%, 24%, 18%, 18%, 11%, 9%, 5%, 4%, 10%, 16%
- Female: 9%, 18%, 14%, 12%, 11%, 11%, 9%, 5%, 4%, 10%, 10%, 16%

T-test p<.001, Cohen's d = 0.19
Meeting with advisor(s) – by GPA

One-way ANOVA p = 0.6

Meeting with advisor(s) – by institutional type

One-way ANOVA p < .001
Quality of academic advising

Informative & Availability: Seniors only
- Never met with advisor
- Met with advisor once

Career Support

Educational Support

Quality of Academic Advising

Academic advising and student engagement

Supportive campus environment

Enriching educational experiences

Student-faculty interaction

Active & collaborative learning

Level of academic challenge

More than 2 times
Less than one time
Satisfaction with academic advising

Percentage of students who rate their academic advising experiences as good or excellent

Overall satisfaction

How many times the student met with his/her academic advisor in the current academic year.
What causes students NOT to meet with their academic advisors?

- My advisor provides accurate information about courses
- My advisor provides my school’s academic rules and policies
- My advisor provides me with accurate information about academic requirements
- My advisor talks with me about my career interests and plans

What makes students come back?

- My advisor keeps me informed of support options such as tutoring (.3)
- My advisor shows me where to get information on different educational options (.28)
- My advisor assists me when I have academic difficulties (.28)
- My advisor is interested in my plans for the future (.28)
Implications

- Academic advisors must provide accurate information about courses & academic policies
- At least meet with academic advisor once. Twice is better!
- Academic advisor must provide information on academic supports and educational options

Implications (continues)

- Attitude is important! Students know if you are interested in them or not!
- Good academic advising can promote student engagement and better learning outcomes
Questions & Discussion

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