

**Project Name:** Comprehensive Undergraduate Advising Plan

**MIU Round:** Round 2

**Sponsor(s):** Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning

**Coordinator(s):** Annette McDaniel, Assistant Dean, Division of Student Life (Year 1)  
Aaron Brower, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning (Year 1)  
Wren Singer, Director of Undergraduate Advising (Year 2 and 3)

**Report Date:** Year 1, July 2011; Year 2, July 2012; Year 3, June 2013

**Project Specific Goal and Measures**

- Project Impact Measure(s)**
- Increase access to advisors by 1) reducing advising loads in key areas by hiring additional advisors, 2) targeting other new hires to the Exploration Center for Majors and Careers, the Center for Pre-Health Advising, and pre-law students, and 3) target other new hires to services for transfer students in the Transfer Transitions Program and in L&S.
  - Coordinate advising leadership and services by the creation of a campus-level unit. The new unit will be led by a Director of Advising who will report to the Provost through the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning. In addition to the Director, 3 other staff will be hired (Training and Assessment, Advising Technology, Human Resources).
  - Improve advising-related technology to maintain and enhance the Advisor Notes system (separate MIU funding). Encourage development of an early warning system to identify at-risk students and the creation of a web portal to connect students with advising resources.
  - Improve advisor training and assessment.

- Project Impact Data Source(s)**
- Number of advisors assigned to students, advising loads of individual advisors, and timing of advisor assignments (APIR queries).
  - Hiring for four administrative positions within the central advising office. Report from Director.
  - Progress towards developing an early warning system and web portal. Report from Director.
  - Development of advisor training and assessment resources. Report from Director.

- Baseline Measure(s)**
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) questions related to advising satisfaction.
  - Advising loads and timing of advisor assignments from 2009 (see <http://apa.wisc.edu/CLH/AdvisingIssuesAnalysis.pdf>).

**General MIU Goals and Measures (applicable to project)**

A	Increased access in bottleneck areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advising loads in high demand majors with under-resourced advising will be reduced. Reduced advising loads give undergraduates more timely and personal access to their assigned advisors.</li><li>• Students will be able to find some information on the web portal, reducing the need to contact advisors.</li><li>• Advisors will be better connected to each other through the Advisor Notes system resulting in consistency in information provided to students.</li></ul>
B	Increased capacity for high-demand experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students are increasingly interested in medical-related careers and will benefit from advisors knowledgeable about the breadth of career options and help provided with applications for graduate/professional programs.</li><li>• Like medical careers, students interested in the legal professions will now have targeted advising and help with career decision making and law school application issues.</li><li>• UW-Madison's enrollment plan calls for an increase in the number of transfer students. Serving more transfer students requires specialized staff who understand the different needs and issues that transfers students face.</li></ul>
F	Decreased achievement gaps	<p>Advisor training and resources in the areas of diversity should contribute to the overall campus efforts to reduce the achievement gap. Reduction of advising loads are being specifically directed at areas/programs that serve targeted students. Directing additional resources to students who are undecided should help guide these students in course selection and timely decision making increasing the likelihood that they will be retained at UW-Madison and graduate in a timely manner. Reduced advising loads facilitate increased contact (both in time and frequency) between advisors and students. The development of an early warning system and intrusive advising initiatives will identify at risk students when there is still time to address developing programs.</p>
G	Attention to diversity in new hires	<p>NA in Year 1. Recruitments for the director, assistant director, and staff positions were all national recruitments. Positions were widely posted (with some differences depending on the position) with national advising professional organizations, listserves, and targeted recruitment with peer contacts. Each position had a search committee, composed of diverse faculty, staff, and students and had a diverse applicant pool.</p>

**Progress Reports**

Year 1, 2011-12

A working group charged by the Provost was convened and met throughout the 2010-11 academic year. In April 2011, the recommendations for advising “reforms” were finalized. In June 2011, a call for pre-proposals was issued for the new advising positions. The full invitation will happen in August. The search committee for the Director of Advising was convened and began meeting in June.

Year 2, 2012-13

- Conducted a successful national search for a Director of Undergraduate Advising (Spring 2012).
- Began search process for two assistant director positions (searches will be complete in Fall 2012).
- Developed the infrastructure of the new central advising office, the advising governance and leadership structure. Worked with budget, HR and IT to move the reporting units into the Provost Office administratively.
- Conducted a successful search for the Director of Pre-Law Advising.
- Hosted 8 advising forums with staff and students to get feedback on the new advising plans, infrastructure, and areas of concern.
- Hired 21 new academic advisors campus wide. An additional 8 positions are at various stages of the search process as of August 2012.
- Increased the number of students seen by advisors, increased satisfaction with scheduling appointments at desired times, and increased the number of students who saw an advisor. For example, individual advising appointments in the five Cross College residence hall offices increased by 38% over the previous year.
- Increased advising staff led to increases in the communication, outreach, supplemental workshops and seminars. For example, the new academic and career advisor in Political Science organized 8 career panels in Spring 2012, with an average attendance of 40 student each.
- Increased usage of the Advisor Notes System (ANS) which completed its second year of operation. Since it went live, 437 faculty and staff in 134 units have adopted it for use.
- Developed a SOAR Advising Module (SAM), deployed in June 2012, to provide SOAR advisors with key information about the students they are seeing at SOAR. SAM allows advisors to manage and complete advisor assignment and program/plan changes, and record notes about the advising contact.
- Created an Advising Architecture Review Board (AARB) through collaboration with the Registrar’s Office, DoIT, and the undergraduate advising office to provide improved coordination of efforts and communication related to advising technology initiatives.

Year 3, 2013-14

- Conducted a successful national search for two Assistant Director positions and hired a Budget and Human Resource Manager to bring the Office of Undergraduate Advising to full staffing.
  - Established and communicated advising mission statement, guiding principles for academic advising, and advisory committees. 100% of the 46 committee members agreed that the meetings were productive.
  - Director Wren Singer met with all new advisors who were hired during the academic year and had in-depth interviews with all directors of advising offices.
  - Developed groundwork for an advisor resource website, set to launch in October 2013.
  - Continued to support, develop and improve the technology resources used by and for advisors. These include the Advisor Notes System (ANS) and the SOAR Advising Module (SAM).
  - Developed and implemented advisor training events, including 20 sessions attended by 731 advisors, a campus-wide advising conference, and campus recognitions for outstanding advising work.
  - Since the start of MIU funding, 34 new academic advisors and advising leaders have been hired and all MIU positions are now filled.
  - Opened the Center for Pre-Law Advising in August 2012. The center has conducted 450 appointments with individual students considering Law careers in addition to organizing workshops, panels, and participating in SOAR.
  - The Center for Pre-Health Advising advised 2016 students in appointments and drop-in meetings. Coordination of pre-health advising is complex due to both the competitive admission process into most health-related professional programs and the number and location of pre-health major programs in five schools/colleges on the UW-Madison campus.
  - The Exploration Center for Majors and Careers realized a 35% increase in student appointments with the addition of two MIU-funded advisors.
  - Two transitional advisors in CALS made over 1600 contacts with students focusing on major exploration, transferring into CALS, and course selection.
  - The Cross College Advising Service (CCAS), for students undecided about a major, increased the number of students seen in individual appointments by 24%. In total, CCAS contacts have increased by 86% over pre-MIU levels.
  - Examples of the effects of MIU funding include: reduced advising loads for Engineering advisors from 600:1 to 310:1 with the addition of 2 pre-engineering advisors; development of the L&S Career Alliance to develop career-advising competencies; building of proactive relationships between advisors in different advising units.
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