

Final Report of the Group of Four -- Action Items for Academic Advising, 2004-06

Group of Four: Judith Delzell, Linda Dixon, Susan Mosley-Howard, Claudia Scott-Pavloff

	Action Item	Status
1a	Develop a Miami University homepage for advising.	Completed. To see the Miami homepage on advising go to: www.miami.muohio.edu/academics/advising . On the Miami homepage there is a link for Academics. The first link on the Academics page is Academic Advising. This website presents a general overview of academic advising at Miami University.
1b	Develop an electronic resource guide on undergraduate advising linked to each student's myMiami page. Include in this guide the name and contact information for academic advisers as well as academic support resources. For those divisions interested, set up rules to allow for the automatic assignment of adviser.	Projected completion date is Summer 2006. Draft versions of these advising pages can be seen at: http://webdev.admin.muohio.edu/cfapps/Adviser/index.html This action item is related to Action Item #9 below.
2a	Implement the use of registration holds requiring that transitional students (e.g., students relocating from a regional campus to the Oxford campus), as well as special needs students (including those on probation), see their advisers before scheduling classes.	Completed for relocated students and first-year Oxford students on probation. ##### A pilot project, Academic Probation Intervention Project, using registration holds with first-year students on probation, was initiated in December 2004 and has been continued. In 2006-07 the Academic Probation Intervention Project will be extended to include students placed on "Academic Warning." ##### Both regional campuses have also implemented an "Academic Recovery Program" with their students placed on probation during Fall 2005.
2b	Stress the importance of midterm grades with faculty so first-year students receive feedback on performance prior to the deadline for course withdrawal.	Progress Made -- Additional Effort Needed. ##### The Group of Four distributed a report to department chairs in February that gave data on Fall 2005 midterm grade submission by course by instructor by domestic campus. CAS also made a special effort starting Fall 2005 to stress with those faculty teaching challenging, pre-medicine science courses the importance of issuing mid-term grades. See Future Goal #5.
3	Better meet the needs of special populations. For 2004-05 we focused on the advising needs of student athletes, given the new NCAA progress-to-degree requirements.	Completed one project related to registration priority for student/athletes. ##### Given new, more stringent NCAA progress-to-degree requirements, the Group of Four recommended giving all student athletes priority scheduling all semesters; this was approved and implemented. ##### The Group of Four has identified "displaced students" (those not admitted to their desired major) as one of the next special populations needing attention. See Future Goal #8.

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4	Review the various means used to provide orientations to new chief departmental advisers and to provide advising updates to continuing CDAs (as appropriate).	Completed. We determined that the CDAs in the divisions other than the College of Arts and Science rarely changed. We also found the School of Education had only one "active" CDA though more are listed in the Miami Directory. The training provided new CDAs in CAS is extensive and high in quality.
5	Investigate the possibility and desirability of appointing a person involved in the daily practice of academic advising to represent the academic advising system as a non-voting member of the Liberal Education Council (LEC).	Completed. ##### Jerry Stonewater has the option of including additional people on the LEC, and he has made a practice of including a member from the ID Committee. He expects this practice will continue for the foreseeable future and does not feel there is a need to take a proposal to change the formal committee structure to University Senate. No further action is required.
6a	Establish a protocol with multiple means of notification to use when a student is placed on academic probation.	Completed. ##### First-year students placed on probation are being sent a letter from Susan Mosley-Howard, Dean of Students. The letter was sent to two locations: campus address and e-mail address. (Note: The Divisions notify upperclass students placed on probation, and the Registrar notifies students on suspension as well as those dismissed.)
6b	Eliminate the confusing 9-credit increment policy. Review the calculation currently being used to determine whether a student at risk of academic probation/suspension/dismissal is "making progress."	Completed. ##### A Student Achievement Policy was drafted by the Group of Four. This policy added a new academic status ("Academic Warning") for first-year students. It was designed to send a strong and consistent signal that academic achievement is expected of all students, and the former 1.7 GPA threshold requirement for first-year students was simply not good enough. The policy also eliminated the confusing 9-credit increment policy. It was approved by University Senate in January 2006 and will be effective Fall 2006.
7	Make certain that all students receive a letter when admitted to a new major. The letter should advise them of their new faculty adviser and other important matters related to the academic major.	Progress Underway as component of "Change of Major" Project with IT Services (see Action Item #9).
8	Establish a student email policy. Background: Some students never check their muohio.edu address and have not set up the forwarding of e-mail to their preferred address.	Completed. ##### An email policy for the Student Handbook was initiated by the Group of Four and fine tuned by a small working group formed by John Skillings (Debi Allison, Judith Delzell, Susan Mosley-Howard, Sean Poley). It was approved in April 2006 and will be effective Fall 2006.

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9	Identify the name of the faculty adviser, as well as contact info for the adviser, on a student's BannerWeb page (myMiami). Also list the names of all the Divisional Advisers as a resource.	Progress underway with "Automation of Adviser Name" Project with IT Services . ##### Once implemented, an Advising Tab will be added to myMiami. Clicking on this tab will show a student the name of her/his academic adviser (first-year adviser, faculty adviser, special advising resources, such as SEP Advisers). ##### Faculty advisers will have a new link on their BannerWeb giving a list of currently assigned advisees, and access to student records will be restricted to those on the list. Individuals, such as Divisional Advisers, will continue to have access to all student records. ##### Upon the declaration of a new major, a student would immediately see the name of his/her new academic adviser on the student's myMiami. The student will also receive correspondence welcoming her/him to the new major (see Action Item #7).
10	Make sure the process for the transfer of folders from first-year advisers to permanent advisers is working properly.	Completed. ##### The Advising Implementation Team reviewed the current procedures used for "Folder Transfer Day" by the First-Year Advisers. The procedures were excellent and no changes appear to be needed.
Recommendations for Future Goals Related to Advising:		
<i>Before proceeding with setting additional goals related to Advising, we recommend careful review of the recommendations in the previous task force reports, as well as those presented below.</i>		
Goal #1		Determine who should have responsibility for oversight and coordination of academic advising across the university, as well as policy initiation and review. The Group of Four has assumed that role for the past two years, but what about the future? Should/Could the Registrar or ID Committee assume this role? Note: Appointment of some type of advising coordinator was a recommendation of both the 1999 and 2004 reports.
Goal #2		Assign responsibility for update and refinement of the Miami University Advising Website, as well as advising pages linked to students' myMiami to an individual or group. After myMiami student advising pages are implemented, do assessment and make improvements as appropriate.
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	Goal #3	Improve training of faculty advisers, including clear delineation of responsibilities. There is a need to reward quality work. May wish to build training into new faculty orientation program.
	Goal #4	Incorporate the <i>Student Handbook</i> in the <i>Miami Bulletin</i> . Currently, only summaries of student policies are included in the <i>Miami Bulletin</i> and that practice causes problems later when the summary version differs from the full policy.

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		Recommendations for Future Goals Related to Advising (continued):
Goal #5		Continue to work to increase the percentage of faculty who submit midterm grades for first-year students. The Registrar's staff has been asked to automatically send a report (each fall and spring semester) to each department chair and divisional dean about midterm grade submission results. This report should be by course, by section, by campus. ##### IT Services (Kent Covert) and the Registrar's Office (Tim Kuykendoll) are also working to link the Blackboard Gradebook directly to BannerWeb. Currently faculty have to re-enter midterm and final grades in Banner, even though they may already be calculated in Blackboard.
Goal #6		Create a systematic form of communication with CDAs to be used for advising updates (e.g., from the ID Committee) as well as dialogue.
Goal #7		Consider possible interventions for upperclass students placed on academic probation. In conjunction with Rinella Learning Center, encourage divisions to increase support provided those students. Currently the only formal intervention university-wide is the letter of notification by the Divisional Advisers.
Goal #8		Discuss ways to meet the needs of displaced students (those students who are not admitted to their desired major). Examine factors contributing to the increase in the numbers of displaced students.
Goal #9		Schedule a portion of at least one COAD meeting a year to review issues related to academic achievement with the Deans. Include review of retention data, midterm grade submission, class scheduling & class distribution policy, course withdrawal policy, and so forth.
Goal #10		Examine academic advising relationships between regional campuses and Oxford campus.
Goal #11		Complete "Automation of Adviser Name" and "Change of Major" projects with IT Services. See Action Item #9
Goal #12		Establish means to assess the effectiveness of academic advising on a regular basis.

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