

FROM MISSION TO MEASUREMENT: ADVANCING POSTSECONDARY
ACADEMIC ADVISING ASSESSMENT AND PRACTICE THROUGH
EVALUATING PROGRAM THEORY AND OUTCOMES

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by
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FROM MISSION TO MEASUREMENT: ADVANCING POSTSECONDARY
ACADEMIC ADVISING ASSESSMENT AND PRACTICE THROUGH
EVALUATING PROGRAM THEORY AND OUTCOMES

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DEDICATION

I am grateful to God, my family, and my friends!

Your encouragement across my doctoral studies has meant and continues to mean the world to me. Your support helped me to attain this lifelong goal and will touch the lives of future students I am privileged to influence. May I handle that influence ethically, responsibly, and with the sustained passion that has characterized my development as a scholar and educator.

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From Mission to Measurement: Advancing Postsecondary Academic Advising
Assessment and Practice through Evaluating Program Theory and Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

Through a program evaluation, this study was designed as a mixed method, causal comparative, cross-sectional inquiry into academic advising program theory and outcomes at Missouri State University (MSU). Data (i.e., advising mission statement, best practices, and surveys) revealed only implicit articulation of program theory—that is, the operational plan did not logically connect desired advising outcomes with program activities. Chi square analyses demonstrated significant differences between freshman expectations and senior experiences related to advising. ANOVA results revealed no significant GPA differences based on different amounts of advising. ANOVA results linked advisor support, advisor information, and personal responsibility to senior GPA, and regression analyses revealed each as significant GPA predictors. Qualitative data supported quantitative findings, providing insights to expand advising theory. In sum, findings were aligned with advising theory and constructs from the literature, including advisor accountability and empowerment, student responsibility, self-efficacy, study skills, and perceived advisor support (Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones, Burt, Dixon, & Hawthorne, 2013), and resulted in recommendations to enhance institutional advising assessment.

Keywords: academic advising, advisor, evaluation, learning outcomes

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION TO DISSERTATION

Background

In an era of increasing accountability demands (e.g., mandated assessment, outcome-based funding), to what extent do higher education institutions leverage the power of academic advising among other overlapping initiatives to promote student retention and success (Kuh, 2002; McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005)? The influence of advising is underestimated in studies investigating the impact of institutional initiatives on student achievement, and it is understudied in scholarly literature (Aiken-Wisniewski, Smith, & Troxel, 2010; Habley, 2009; Nutt, 2003; Shaffer, Zalewski, & Leveille, 2010). Leveraging the potential influence of advising requires identifying expected outcomes, providing a rationale for why programs expect to achieve those results (i.e., program theory), and assessing impact or the extent to which desired results are attained (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

Perhaps the shift over past decades from prescriptive, to developmental, and more recently, to learning-centered advising is linked to the broader trend of increasing stakeholder demands for demonstrated postsecondary program effectiveness (Lowenstein, 2005; McLendon et al., 2005). Thus, developing measurable advising outcomes related to student achievement and advisor effectiveness may be approached by considering advising as teaching expected to produce student learning (Hemwall & Trachte, 2003; Hurt, 2007). The validity of an advising program's theory, described by Rossi et al. (2004) as "assumptions and expectations inherent in a program's services and practices" (p. 168), may be supported through assessing advisor effectiveness and student learning outcomes. How can higher education institutions assess advising from a learning-centered perspective?

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA, 2006) views advising as an educational process with a clear curriculum, unique pedagogy, and measurable student learning outcomes; however, the assessment of advising outcomes is less advanced than the practice of classroom assessment (Kelley, 2008). As paradigms shift toward outcome-based assessment of advising, institutions will receive increased pressure from stakeholders to demonstrate successful outcomes of funded programs. The impact of advising needs to be measured and communicated in terms that align with current higher education accountability demands (Keeling, 2010). Thus, the present study aims to evaluate a university's advising program theory and impact and to provide related recommendations for enhancing institutional advising assessment.

Statement of the Problem

Does today's truth in higher education rest on the adage that if it doesn't make dollars, it doesn't make sense? The plight of higher education in terms of financial pressures, budget cuts, and strategic financial planning may require institutions to alter the very missions guiding the education of college students (Shao & Shao, 2011). Institutions that wish to avoid such core changes in response to external pressures will adopt assessment practices that demonstrate why programs function as they do and how expected educational standards are being maintained (i.e., institutions will clearly communicate program theory and impact with stakeholders). In the *Imperatives for Change 2011 Annual Report*, the Missouri Department of Higher Education highlighted a near 38% decline (in constant dollars) for state public higher education funding over the last decade. In the resulting economic climate, accountability is a key to institutional survival.

According to the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA, 2009), accreditation is a well-tested system to assure that quality is maintained and processes improved to facilitate higher education accountability. Through institutional self-studies and both internal and external program reviews, colleges and universities may demonstrate to accrediting agencies (and thereby to other stakeholders) that expected educational standards are upheld. The necessity and value of assessment are apparent; however, who is most responsible for collecting accountability data for programs like academic advising that bridge academic and student support arenas in higher education institutions?

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB, 2009), in alignment with the state's educational plan, aims to strengthen academic advising to address issues that impact student success. The THECB touted advising as a "cornerstone for successful retention programs" that often "receives insufficient support and focus" (p. 9). The THECB also reported that faculty advisors typically receive inadequate training or reward for providing quality advising. To strengthen advising in Texas undergraduate education, THECB suggested vertically integrating advising across all levels of education (P-16), creating purposeful advising interactions based on academic plans that align with individual student needs, and redesigning processes to include academic advising in faculty tenure and promotion considerations. These aims are admirable; however, the THECB may not have advanced them at the expected pace.

The Texas Governor signed 2011 legislation requiring the THECB to develop and implement a method to assess advising quality and effectiveness at all state institutions of higher education. The THECB was required to consult with academic advisors and other

appropriate representatives of Texas colleges and universities to develop the assessment process. The bill's author, Senator Zaffirini, referred to advising as a currently underused key predictor of undergraduate success and suggested that a formal assessment system would contribute to student success and degree completion. While advising proponents may applaud the rationale behind this legislation, concerns arise regarding institutional autonomy and applicability of standardized assessment for a process that is practiced differently across institutions and is uniquely incorporated with each college student.

The Missouri government has not mandated formal, standardized, statewide assessment of advising, though Missouri State University (MSU) did receive related recommendations from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in its 2005 comprehensive evaluative report. According to the HLC, "recognition that assessment and evaluation is vital for continuous improvement, and which has informed the academic divisions' planning processes" has been "unevenly applied in... academic support areas across campus" (p. 12). They recommended that MSU implement "improvement strategies in the assessment of student learning outcomes" (p. 12). Perhaps the HLC's suggestions motivated the MSU Provost's 2008 charter of a campus wide Academic Advising Council (AAC) charged to enhance MSU's advising consistency and quality by evaluating advising, recommending improvements, and identifying and encouraging successful existing practices.

Significant work remains for MSU to develop an ongoing advising assessment process; however, MSU is privileged to self-direct the plan's development, unbound by legislative mandate. Creation of the AAC is allowing for authentic institutional inquiry into how advising impacts students, thus affording MSU the opportunity to demonstrate

through assessment how stakeholder expectations are being met in relation to academic advising. This is needed as in 2005 the HLC indicated that MSU's self-study included "no comment about 'pre-advising' or 2+2 advising guides" (p. 17) to assist potential transfer students. Pre-advising was already being provided, but without a clear program theory (i.e., strategies and tactics identified by MSU's advising system to achieve measurable goals and objectives) and an effective evaluation process, the elements of actual advising practice were not visible to the HLC (Rossi et al., 2004). As an accrediting body (and thus an influential stakeholder with important expectations), the HLC's concerns about advising assessment aligned with broader accountability trends in the postsecondary political arena (McLendon et al., 2005). Specifically, MSU lacks an effective assessment feedback loop to leverage advising and its evaluation as strategic tools to impact and communicate student outcomes in relation to an explicitly articulated program theory (Light, 2004; Maki, 2004; Rossi et al., 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The impact of academic advising needs to be measured and communicated in terms that align with current higher education accountability trends (Keeling, 2010; McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005). Where might a higher education institution begin to develop a comprehensive assessment process for academic advising? In alignment with a paradigm shift toward advising as an educational process that produces measurable outcomes, institutions may initially wish to evaluate alignment of their advising missions and practices with the learning-centered paradigm (Gordon, 2004; Hurt, 2007; Lowenstein, 2005). Such comparison can begin with a closer look at an institution's advising mission (or vision) statement (Abelman & Molina, 2006; Maki, 2004). Though

a mission statement does not articulate a program's intended impact in a manner that allows for assessment of specific outcomes, program evaluation methodology may inform and advance related investigation (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; McGillin, 2003).

Rossi et al. (2004) articulated a comprehensive program evaluation process that includes assessments of program theory and outcomes. Program theory can be implicitly or explicitly articulated and can be supported through its alignment with scholarly literature. Program theory evaluation can be applied to academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU) to determine a starting point for assessment and to inform future investigation of important advising issues (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010). Primary elements of the MSU advising mission statement (see Appendix A) appear to align with elements of Lowenstein's (2005) learning-centered advising paradigm that are supported through extant literature (see Appendix B); however, MSU's advising program theory may not be clearly articulated in terms of program goals and measurable outcomes. Through exploration of its advising program theory, literature related to academic advising assessment, and data from MSU's existing advising assessment efforts, how can MSU articulate (and demonstrate progress toward meeting) learning-centered advising program goals and objectives? The purpose of this study is to evaluate MSU's advising program theory and current assessment outcomes to inform recommendations that advance MSU's advising assessment practices in alignment with accountability demands.

Research Questions

Three research questions will guide data collection and analyses in the present study. Research Question One (R1) will be addressed through qualitative inquiry, and

Research Question Two (R2) will be addressed through mixed methods inquiry.

Research Question Three (R3) will be addressed based on findings from R1 and R2.

R1: How can MSU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?

R2: What can be learned about MSU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?

R3: How can MSU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?

Conceptual Underpinnings for the Study

A developmental as opposed to learning-centered approach as the advising field's paradigm of choice over the past 25 years may have contributed to measuring advising in terms of student satisfaction with the advising relationship (e.g., Smith, 1983; Fielstein & Lammers, 1992; Smith & Allen, 2006). Though satisfaction is an important aspect of a student's college experience (Propp & Rhodes, 2006), effective advising reaches beyond student satisfaction to measurably impact achievement (Young-Jones, Burt, Dixon, & Hawthorne, 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) provocative question, "If advising is teaching, what do advisors teach?" (p. 123) can guide the articulation of advising program theory and outcomes, both of which are necessary to conduct effective program evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004).

Lowenstein (2005) provided four conceptual responses to the question of what advisors teach. First, he asserted that advisors teach students to find or create logic in their education in a manner that promotes active learning (i.e., advisors teach students to seek out the structure or rationale behind the overall educational process just as a

classroom teacher organizes material to motivate student ownership and pursuit of meaningful course objectives). Second, he asserted that advisors teach students to view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense (i.e., advisors help students to put curricular elements into perspective in a manner that leads to building connections between various areas of study or seeking out experiences that promote new types of learning or thinking). Third, advisors teach students to base educational choices on a developing sense of the overall edifice being self-built (i.e., advisors teach students to responsibly build mental connections between various components of their education as practice for using those same cognitive and behavioral skills to reason through and successfully master future challenges). Finally, Lowenstein suggested that advisors teach students to continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned—a skill that results in a “well-constructed education that prepares one for lifelong learning... [continued] every time new information is juxtaposed with previously acquired knowledge” (p. 130).

Lowenstein’s (2005) framework is supported by current literature connecting the advising process to measurable outcomes (see Appendix B). For example, Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified six factors linking academic advising to student success as defined by grade point average (GPA) and meeting basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Two factors in their study emerged in relation to advisor outcomes (i.e., *empowerment* of students through providing information and referrals, and advisor *accountability* to be professional, accessible, and competent). Four additional factors pointed toward student outcomes that contribute to academic success (i.e., *self-efficacy*, personal *responsibility*, *study skills*, and

perceived support). These factors are embedded in academic advising literature and support application of the four elements comprising Lowenstein's conceptual framework in the present study aiming to advance institutional assessment of advising outcomes (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz, Kaplan, & Gueta, 2010; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins, Lauver, Le, Davis, Langley, & Carlstrom, 2004; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010).

Design for the Study

The present study's research questions were addressed through a program theory and impact evaluation approach (Rossi et al., 2004). This approach was initially applied to identify and articulate MSU's advising program theory. Program theory is the operational plan through which desired outcomes are logically connected with a program's activities (Rossi et al., 2004). Review of the organizational context of advising at MSU provided insight into a program theory that is not explicitly articulated. Relevant knowledge was extracted through review and qualitative analysis of documents guiding advising practice at MSU, and mixed methods analyses of existing assessment data allowed the researcher to determine what can be known at present about program theory and impact.

The study is designed as a mixed method, causal comparative, cross-sectional inquiry into MSU's academic advising program theory and outcomes (Creswell, 2009; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Rossi et al., 2004; Salkind, 2010). Qualitative typological analyses were applied to extrapolate program theory from existing documents (R1). R2 was addressed through mixed methods (i.e., statistical and typological) analyses of

ordinal, interval, and qualitative data which comprise an archival data set from the AAC's 2012-2013 assessment effort (R2) (Field, 2009; Hatch, 2002). MSU requires academic advising for all undergraduate students until at least 75 credit hours have been completed, thus a true experimental design with a control group of MSU students who have not been advised was not feasible. A causal-comparative (i.e., *ex post facto*) design allowed for exploration of relationships between independent and dependent variables even though advising and its assessment had already occurred (Salkin, 2010). R3 was addressed based on findings from R1 and R2.

Participants and Sample

Participants ($N = 1172$) consisted of a cross-section of undergraduate freshmen and seniors at MSU who completed advising surveys between September 2012 and May 2013. MSU is a public Midwestern university with over 20,000 students enrolled across seven colleges/schools, as well as interdisciplinary and global studies programs (MSU, 2013a). MSU's 2012 first-fall to second-fall retention rate for full time students who were new to college (i.e., retention of first-time college students who returned to the university after the first year) was 75.25% (MSU, 2013, September). Additionally, 59% of MSU's students are female, and 80.64% are White or Caucasian (MSU, 2013, September). The MSU AAC determined that an initial advising assessment effort would likely be most effective in settings where student attendance was already required, thus first-year seminar classes and senior exit exam administrations were targeted as desired assessment venues. As large, randomly selected samples typically reduce sampling errors (Fink, 2009), the AAC aimed to acquire samples that represented at least 20% of the students from each identified freshman and senior population.

The MSU Director of First-Year Programs permitted the AAC to conduct the freshman assessment during first-year seminar class periods from September through November of the fall 2012 semester. Simple random cluster sampling (Fink, 2009) was employed to select and survey 22 of 89 class sections of a First-Year Foundations (GEP 101) course required of all incoming freshmen. The same process was used to select two from 15 sections of the required Honors College first-year seminar (UHC 110) for administration of the freshman survey. The freshman response rate was 75% ($n = 501$) of 667 students enrolled in the sampled first-year seminar sections, and the selected sample represented 20% of 2465 students enrolled in all fall 2012 first-year seminar courses. This sample size is estimated to provide a 3.91% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Senior participants ($n = 671$) completed the advising survey during administration of the University Exit Exam (GEN 499). The exam is required of all graduating seniors and may be taken when convenient after students complete 90 credit hours. The AAC collaborated with MSU's Assessment Research Coordinator to arrange for administration of the senior survey through this venue. Senior surveys ($n = 675$) were printed to accompany exam administrations from February through May of the spring 2013 semester, with group sizes of 30 to 227 students, until all but four forms had been distributed. The senior survey response rate was 100% as it was distributed for completion to students who actually attended their registered test administrations. Of 1756 students who registered for the spring 2013 exit exam, 38% completed the survey. This sample size is estimated to provide a 2.97% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Data Collection

Data for the present study were obtained through review of existing documents and a set of archived advising survey responses. Initial qualitative data were collected through review of MSU's advising mission statement (see Appendix A), advising best practices (see Appendix C), and the "Be Advised" document intended to communicate advisor expectations to students (see Appendix D). The researcher created a document analysis guide (see Appendix E) for this study to organize the review of materials created by the AAC to shape institutional advising practices. The guide was created based on this study's conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) as it aligns with the literature (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz et al., 2010; Kuh et al., 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins et al., 2004; Wentzel et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Reviewed documents were expected to provide information about MSU's advising program theory (Hatch, 2002; Rossi et al., 2004).

Qualitative and quantitative archival data collected from MSU's 2012-2013 advising surveys were analyzed in the present study. The existing data set resulted from the university's campus wide assessment attempt using surveys created by the AAC in alignment with the institution's advising mission statement (see Appendix A). As such, these data were expected to provide key insights into the relationship between MSU's advising program theory and student outcomes (e.g., GPA). Access to survey data was acquired by the researcher who served as AAC Chair for academic years 2011 and 2012. The group developed the survey during the researcher's terms as Chair, and the researcher is the current Chair of the AAC Assessment Subcommittee. Permission was granted by AAC members for the researcher to analyze survey data in the present study,

and follow-up communication with the Associate Provost for Student Development and Public Affairs confirmed that permission remains intact through completion and potential publication of this study.

Freshman Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 14-item instrument (see Appendix F) in alignment with the MSU advising mission statement (see Appendix A) to collect information from freshmen about their expectations and experiences related to MSU advising (e.g., overall experience, personal responsibility, advisor support, types of expected assistance). Item formats included use of a five point Likert type scale, multiple response selection, and short answer for collecting qualitative and GPA data. The survey also requested demographic information (e.g., Honors College involvement, athletic participation, race, ethnicity, sex, and college in the university). No pilot assessment was conducted, however, AAC members worked through multiple iterations of the instrument before approving its final form.

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 15-item instrument (see Appendix G) to mirror the survey administered to freshmen. However, the senior survey focused on actual experiences instead of expectations related to advising (e.g., overall experience, personal responsibility, advisor support, types of assistance). Item formats included use of a five point Likert type scale, multiple response selection, and short answer for collecting qualitative and GPA data. The survey also requested demographic information (e.g., Honors College involvement, athletic participation, race, ethnicity, sex, and college in the university). Additionally, MSU seniors were asked to provide information about the number of credit hours completed elsewhere to allow for statistical analyses based on transfer student status. The MSU

Assessment Research Coordinator conducted analyses of pilot assessment data from this instrument. The pilot sample ($n = 23$) was too small for robust reliability analyses (Field, 2009), however, results suggested acceptable item reliability (see Appendix H).

Human Subjects Protection

The researcher sought Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the degree-granting institution, the University of Missouri (MU), to conduct this study. Because only archival data without student identifiers were proposed for intended analyses, the condition of human subjects research was not met and conduct of the study was approved without further review. MSU's IRB also granted permission for conduct of the study without further review. Confidentiality of student participants is assured as no student names or other identifiers were collected through the 2012-2013 MSU advising assessment.

Data Analysis

Mixed methods analyses of collected data were undertaken in three steps to address this study's research questions. To address R1, the first step included a qualitative typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) of data collected from documents reviewed to investigate MSU's advising program theory. The second step included multiple quantitative analyses of ordinal and interval survey data, as well as GPA, to address R2 (Field, 2009). The third step included qualitative typological analysis of open ended advising survey responses to also address R2. Typological analyses in steps one and three were conducted in alignment with the conceptual framework guiding the present study (Lowenstein, 2005). Related literature and findings from R1 and R2 informed

findings for R3 (i.e., empirically based recommendations for enhancing future advising assessment at MSU).

Step 1: Qualitative typological analysis. Typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) was employed to process artifact (i.e., document) findings in alignment with the conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) guiding the present study. This analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which MSU's advising program theory (Rossi et al., 2004) can be understood through related program documents. According to Hatch, typological procedures are indicated for studies organized "around a set of fairly consistent guiding questions" with a "goal to capture the perspectives of a group of individuals around particular topics" (p. 152). Data from documents related to MSU academic advising were processed systematically by typology based on the study's conceptual framework, after which they were semantically organized to report as findings to address R1. Trustworthiness of data was further validated through triangulation with survey results and current literature (Patton, 1999).

Step 2: Quantitative analyses. Quantitative data from Likert type responses were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) through descriptive and inferential statistics (Field, 2009) to address R2 and R3. Analyses included crosstabs with chi square tests of independence, analyses of variance, and multiple regression with significance levels of $p < .05$. The intended purpose of each statistical analysis is summarized below.

- Descriptive summaries were provided for freshman and senior samples by college, honors status, athletic status, and transfer student status (in the senior

sample) to determine if advising was received and perceived differently based on group membership.

- Crosstabs with chi square tests of independence were employed to determine if proportions shifted significantly between freshman expectations and senior experiences with MSU academic advising in relation to continuing advisement after completing 75 credit hours, seeking specific types of assistance from advisors, taking personal responsibility for academic and post-graduation planning, and perceptions of advisor support.
- Analysis of variance (2x2 ANOVA) was incorporated to determine if different amounts of MSU advising significantly impacted student GPA. Mediating variables included whether or not seniors continued with advising after 75 credit hours and whether or not they self-identified as transfer students, with GPA as the dependent variable.
- Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the extent to which the combination of advisor support, advisor information, and personal responsibility could predict senior GPA. Regression analysis followed creation of three subscales (i.e., advisor support, advisor information, and personal responsibility), each consisting of two related items on the survey.

Step 3: Qualitative typological analysis. Typological analysis with theme identification (Hatch, 2002) was employed to process student responses to open-ended survey questions in alignment with the conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) guiding the present study. These analyses addressed R2 and R3 by identifying alignment of themes with program theory and existing literature to establish a foundation for

recommending sound learning objectives to assess MSU's advising system. In addition to aligning findings with the study's conceptual framework, data were further validated through triangulation with results of document analyses conducted in step one and quantitative findings from step two (Patton, 1999).

Credibility of the Study

The following section addresses how the role of the researcher, assumptions, and limitations relate to credibility of this study. The researcher chaired the AAC for two years during which she led the group's effort to design a campus wide assessment of academic advising aligned with MSU's advising mission statement (see Appendix A). Advising assessment practices are not well defined in the literature (or at MSU's benchmark institutions) where the present researcher sought guidance as a leader. Thus, the Chair attended a NACADA Advising Assessment Institute seeking knowledge to lead the AAC's assessment efforts. This resulted in the group's collaborative creation of freshman and senior advising surveys. The present research proceeded under assumptions that MSU's implicit advising program theory is correctly organized and implemented. Additionally, the researcher assumed that freshman and senior samples were demographically representative of the MSU student population and that honest, thoughtful student survey responses comprised the archival data set to be analyzed.

Limitations of this study relate to the survey instrument, as well as the study's design and setting. AAC members created surveys to collect the archival data under investigation but did so in the absence of an explicitly articulated advising program theory. The instruments' reliability and validity were not empirically tested prior to data collection. Additionally, the causal comparative design of this study is not as robust as

longitudinal experimental design. Finally, transferability of findings across other institutions is limited and should be attempted with caution as this study specifically explored MSU advising program theory and assessment outcomes for the purpose of enhancing institutional assessment practices.

Mixed methods design of the present study required intentional efforts to address existing limitations. Typologically analyzed qualitative findings were triangulated against the study's conceptual framework, related literature, and quantitative findings to enhance trustworthiness of the results (Hatch, 2002). Quantitative design controls were applied to increase reliability and validity of ordinal and interval data analyses (Field, 2009). For example, the senior student sample was stripped of transfer students (i.e., those with at least 24 college credits from a university other than MSU) for comparison of seniors with freshmen. Crosstabs with chi square analyses were employed to compare the senior and freshman samples to optimally demonstrate response patterns beyond simple mean comparisons. Additionally, qualitative analyses were included to enhance interpretation of quantitative findings to better inform recommendations for future assessment.

Definition of Key Terms

Elements of Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is the “use of social research methods to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs in ways that are adapted to their political and organizational environments” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 29). The purpose of such research is often process improvement. As assessment of program theory and

impact are primary components of the present study's research design, understanding of related terms is critical.

Articulated (explicit) program theory. This is “an explicitly stated version of program theory that is spelled out in some detail as a part of a program's documentation and identity” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 167). Findings from document analysis (e.g., mission statement, best practice summaries) to address R1 highlighted the extent to which MSU's advising program has been articulated.

Impact evaluation. According to Rossi et al. (2004), impact assessment or evaluation answers questions about program outcomes. Qualitative and quantitative survey data analyzed to address R2 provided insight into the impact of academic advising at MSU (e.g., expected versus received services, identification of factors that may predict student GPA).

Implicit program theory. Implicit program theory refers to “assumptions or expectations inherent in a program's services and practices that have not been fully articulated and recorded” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 168). Qualitative analysis of data collected from document review (e.g., mission statement, best practice summaries) demonstrated the extent to which MSU's advising program theory is articulated.

Organizational plan. This plan includes “assumptions and expectations about what a program must do to bring about the transactions between the target population and the program that will produce the intended changes in social conditions” including the “functions and activities the program is expected to perform” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 168). While data will be analyzed related to first year students' expectations of advising,

document review (e.g., best practice documents) will provide information about MSU's organizational plan for academic advising.

Service utilization plan. This plan consists of “assumptions and expectations about how the target population will make initial contact with the program and be engaged with it through the completion of the intended services” (Rossi et al., 2004, p. 168). Review of documents (e.g., best practices, freshman orientation handbook) will reveal advising program service utilization policies and plans.

Student Learning Outcomes and Process/Delivery Outcomes

Aligned with the view of advising as a teaching and learning process (Lowenstein, 2005), advising assessment requires identification of measurable outcomes. Such assessment includes a broad view of desired student *and* advisor outcomes (Robbins, 2011). For clarification, student learning outcomes (e.g., self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) can be distinguished from advising process and delivery outcomes (e.g., advisor accountability and empowerment).

Advisor accountability. This term refers to an advisor's professionalism, preparation, and availability in relation to assisting students (Young-Jones et al., 2013). While specific survey questions did not address advisor accountability, opportunities for students to explain responses to questions about advisor support expectations and overall experience with MSU advising provided qualitative data revealing student expectations and perceptions of advisor accountability.

Advisor empowerment. According to Demetriou (2011), “academic advisors may influence the development or decline of motivation by helping students identify strategies they can employ for academic success” (p. 19). Young-Jones et al. (2013)

referred to this type of support as *empowerment*, and expanded the definition to include helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful referrals. In the present study, one survey question asked students to identify any among seven listed areas in which they expected or received help from an academic advisor; the same question sought qualitative feedback to address an “other” option for expected or provided assistance that was not a survey option. These data provided insight into students’ perceptions of advisor support and empowerment, particularly in relation to information about majors, minors, and careers.

Perceived support. Perceived support (Young-Jones et al., 2013) describes the intrapersonal and interpersonal adjustment of a college student in terms of relationships (i.e., with friends and instructors) and dealing with stress (i.e., academic, personal, employment-related, or associated with a learning disability). A full exploration of perceived support was not included in the present study; however, two Likert-type survey items (i.e., “So far, how would you rate your overall experience with academic advising [e.g., SOAR] at Missouri State University?” and “Do you expect your advisor to support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?”) were combined to form a scale for measuring freshman expectations of advisor support. Two items from the senior survey (i.e., “How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University?” and “Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?”) were also combined to create an advisor support scale.

Student responsibility. This term refers to ways in which students expect themselves to contribute to the academic advising process, for example through goal-

setting and planning, preparation for appointments, following up on referrals, communicating with advisors, and treating advisors courteously (Young-Jones et al., 2013). A student responsibility scale was created by combining two items from the freshman survey (i.e., “How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your goals following college graduation?”). A similar scale was created by combining two items from the senior advising survey (i.e., “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?”).

Student self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to students’ beliefs regarding their capability to succeed in college, for example, capacity to deal with stress, preparation for college-level work, and ability to understand course content and take exams (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Survey items did not directly address self-efficacy, though qualitative feedback in response to other questions provided insight into students’ self-efficacy beliefs in relation to academic advising.

Student study skills. These skills relate to academic success in college, and include time and grade management, skills related to learning course content (e.g., reading, note taking), preparation for exams, ability to concentrate, motivation, getting adequate sleep, and contacting an advisor for assistance (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Two data sources in the present study provided a partial view of student study skills as currently operationalized. One survey question asked students how often they expected to meet (or met) with their academic advisors after it was no longer required (i.e., after

completing 75 credit hours), and students were also asked to report their cumulative GPA (an artifact of grade management).

Significance of the Study

The present study was designed to advance the theory and practice of advising assessment at the institutional level and beyond. Advising theory and assessment literature will be expanded through potential publication of results. Additionally, results may help to align academic advising with MSU's existing institutional initiatives. Finally, results are intended to enhance advising assessment and practice at MSU while demonstrating a proactive assessment development process that can be implemented by other higher education institutions.

Expanded Literature

The practice of assessing advising outcomes needs to be advanced (Kelley, 2008). Results of this study will encourage development of theoretically guided, outcome focused institutional advising assessment practices. For the scholar-practitioner, results are also intended to encourage future research and development of instruments to assess learning-centered advising outcomes (Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Advising Aligned with Existing Institutional Initiatives

Overlapping initiatives contribute to student outcomes more than isolated experiences (e.g., Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008; Patton, Morelon, Whitehead, & Hossler, 2006; Robbins, Allen, Casillas, Peterson, & Le, 2006). The influence of advising is underestimated in studies investigating the impact of institutional initiatives (Nutt, 2003), thus this study will help to align advising with MSU efforts to engage and retain students. Assessment across diverse initiatives is complicated;

however, regardless of the initiative, quality interaction between a student and a concerned individual on campus impacts retention (Habley, 2004). Institutions can facilitate such engagement through advising. Higher education institutions increasingly seek to retain students in the current economic climate (Shao & Shao, 2011). Although literature suggests that advising supports success, Campbell and Nutt (2008) posited that the case may not be made explicitly enough. Consequently, retention efforts need to recognize the contribution of advising to student success (Nutt, 2003). Results of this study are intended to highlight the measurable influence of advising on important student outcomes.

Contribution to Institutional Accreditation Efforts

Accreditation as a quality assurance and improvement system facilitates higher education accountability (CHEA, 2009). For administrators who oversee provision of advising and answer to accrediting bodies, this study demonstrates how MSU is systematically devising assessment practices to identify and communicate measurable, empirically aligned learning outcomes from advising. NACADA (2004) recommended as a core value that advising processes be shaped by understanding of institutional and student needs. Results of this study demonstrate how such needs are addressed by MSU's academic advising program. Additionally, as accreditation provides a measure of the extent to which institutions meet stakeholder expectations (CHEA, 2009), communicating this study's recommendations to identify learning outcomes will help to shape learning expectations of students and the institution in relation to advising. Hemwall and Trachte (2003) suggested that viewing advising as a learning process allows assessment of specific outcomes. Thus, the link between advising and student

achievement can be demonstrated by revealing how the process helps students to develop specific skills and understanding necessary for success. Such information will be valuable for inclusion in MSU's future self-study for reaccreditation.

Enhanced Advising Practice through Proactive Assessment

Recent Texas legislation (THECB, 2009) regarding assessment of advising quality and effectiveness in statewide postsecondary institutions may be applauded by proponents of strong academic advising; however, institutions that must assess advising by legislative mandate miss the opportunity to autonomously develop assessment processes as uniquely practiced by the given institution. Authentic inquiry into the impact of advising on student outcomes can contribute to development of an effective feedback loop that allows an institution to use advising and its assessment as tools to influence and communicate student outcomes. For MSU, an important contribution of this study will be to help the university identify measurable advising outcomes that align with its advising program theory and that are supported by existing literature as proven contributors to student success. Additionally, disseminating the study's results in the literature will allow MSU to exemplify for other institutions how to assess the theory and impact of academic advising programs.

Summary

The influence of advising is underestimated in studies investigating the impact of institutional initiatives, and it is understudied in the broader literature (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; Habley, 2009; Nutt, 2003; Shaffer et al., 2010). The impact of advising needs to be measured and communicated in terms that align with current higher education accountability demands (Keeling, 2010). However, significant work remains for most

institutions, including MSU, to develop assessment processes to impact and communicate advising outcomes (Light, 2004).

In alignment with a paradigm shift toward advising as teaching that produces measurable outcomes, institutions may initially wish to evaluate alignment of advising programs with the learning-centered paradigm (Gordon, 2004; Hurt, 2007; Lowenstein, 2005). Through exploration of its advising program theory, literature related to advising assessment, and MSU's existing advising assessment data, the purpose of this study was to evaluate MSU's advising program theory and current assessment data to inform recommendations that advance MSU's advising assessment efforts. Results are intended to expand the literature, align academic advising with existing institutional initiatives, contribute to accreditation efforts, and exemplify for other institutions how a university's academic advising system can proactively move from mission to measurable outcomes.

CHAPTER TWO:
LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT FOR STUDY

Introduction

Substantial work remains for most higher education institutions toward implementing assessment policies and practices to impact and communicate advising outcomes (Light, 2004). In fact, underuse of advising as a key predictor of undergraduate success led the state of Texas to legislate standardized advising assessment practices for Texas colleges and universities (THECB, 2009). The higher education community has evolved into a policy arena wherein institutions resemble special interest groups “seeking a public handout for [their] own private benefit” (Parsons, 2004, p. 401). Thus, the move toward performance based educational funding is not surprising, nor is the pressure for institutions to address accountability demands by assessing program contributions toward desired outcomes (McLendon et al., 2005). In institutions that may yet *autonomously* craft meaningful advising assessment policies and practices, what should educational leaders bring to related policy work?

Leaders need expansive knowledge bases that include theoretical principles related to areas of influence and the ability to apply such knowledge to practice. Indeed, if the “acid test of theory is its relevance to practice” (Bush, 2003, p. 23), how can higher education institutions translate empirically investigated constructs from theories supported across the literature into measurable outcomes to guide advising practice and assessment? Evaluation practices are tied to overlapping considerations such as an institution’s organizational structure, leadership, and external environment (Bush; Caffarella, 2002). Thus, a thorough understanding of an institution’s organizational context and leadership related to academic advising is essential to frame inquiry into its advising assessment processes.

The present discussion explores authentic leadership and organizational theory in relation to the AAC's work to influence institutional advising assessment policy and practice at MSU (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Northouse, 2010). Authentic leaders can influence policy in the postsecondary arena through agenda setting, information processing, and relationships (Ehrensals & First, 2008; Fowler, 2008). As MSU academic advising is decentralized, the AAC's representatives from all MSU colleges and advisement centers are well-positioned to authentically lead and advance the practice of advising assessment at MSU. Analyzing the structural and political contexts (Bolman & Deal) of the AAC's advising assessment agenda is expected to provide additional insight into the implications of conducting assessment related research in this complex context.

Authentic Leadership in Political Context

Individuals with formal or informal power can influence policy, and policy is shaped both through action or inaction of leaders (Ehrensals & First, 2008; Fowler, 2008; French & Raven, 1959; Kanter, 1979). Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson (2008) identified four characteristics of authentic leadership that can underlie a skillful approach to policy work: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. Authentic leaders at any level of an organization's structure may demonstrate the skills and understanding needed to address complex policy issues (Mintzberg, 1979). This is possible through applying self-awareness and internalized moral perspective in agenda setting, practicing balanced processing that turns information into a tool for change, and demonstrating relational transparency to build collaborative support for change agendas (Northouse, 2010; Walumbwa et al., 2008). The following discussion illustrates how, individually and

collectively, authentic leaders can approach policy work with the requisite skills needed to gain support for agendas that advance education as a common good focused on meeting student needs (Furman, 2004; Stone, 2011).

Influencing Policy through Agenda Setting

An authentic leader espouses a “humane agenda” (Ehrensals & First, 2008, p. 74) that demonstrates personal awareness and an internalized moral perspective. Self-awareness, key to emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998), allows authentic leaders to apply understanding of their personal emotions, capabilities, and motivations in complex situations, while internalized moral perspective refers to authentic leaders’ use of “internal moral standards and values to guide their behavior” (Northouse, 2010, p. 218). Both principles contribute to leaders establishing agendas that positively impact organizational policy and outcomes—and neither principle is limited only to those leading from an organization’s strategic apex (Mintzberg, 1979). Walumbwa et al. (2008) stated that “authentic leaders show to others that they genuinely desire to understand their own leadership to serve others more effectively” (p. 96). Authentic leaders constantly test themselves against life’s experiences and reframe personal narratives to remain conscious of who they are and where they are headed (George, Sims, McLean, & Mayer, 2007; Northouse, 2010). In fact, George et al. suggested that leadership consists of enacted values and that effective leaders practice values and principles based on understanding the deep purpose beneath their approaches to leadership. Internalized moral perspective, then, is best demonstrated in a policy arena by behaving consistently with espoused beliefs identified through reflections on practice that lead to self-awareness (Peca & Isham, 2001; Schön, 1982).

Beliefs, values, and principles interact with rules and structures in a manner that “generates power, regulates power, and provides the channels and boundaries of power in the higher education policy arena” (Parsons, 2004, p. 399). Thus, educational leaders wield power through advancing agendas that demonstrate some combination of self-interest and public interest (Stone, 2011). Education is viewed by some as a “private consumer good rather than a social good whose benefits are publicly shared” (Parsons, p. 401), but it is viewed by others as a reality with a moral purpose that is socially constructed through power (Ehrensals & First, 2008; Furman, 2004). A leader’s moral perspective becomes evident through a track record of work to support policy agendas beneficial to the educational community. Policy actors select, interpret, and act on information in alignment with their established agendas (Johnson, 1999). In response to external demands for institutional attainment of performance-based standards, authentic leaders demonstrate personal responsibility to seek the common good through shaping policy that meets external accountability demands while attending to students’ best interests (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005).

Influencing Policy through Information Processing

Balanced processing is the ability of authentic leaders to objectively analyze information and mindfully consider others’ perspectives to make decisions through understanding a situation’s overall reality (Northouse, 2010; Schwalbe, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). As information is the “raw material used by policy actors to frame, support, oppose, and justify policy arguments in various decision-making arenas” (Johnson, 1999, p. 18), authentic leaders are equipped to skillfully handle information. Johnson further explained that politics shapes how information is used to influence policy (i.e., political

survival and legitimacy with selected audiences may dictate what information a policy actor needs, acts on, or ignores).

“Power accrues to those who possess information that is critical to the realization of the valued ends of others” (Johnson, 1999, p. 26)—and to those who skillfully handle information in the political arena. Kingdon (2010) referred to the “implicit hierarchical notion that information must flow up and down through channels, to and from superiors and subordinates” and asserted that such a view “misses the extraordinary looseness of the information system” (p. 76). An individual’s position does not control the flow of information within an organization’s structure. In fact, considering diverse perspectives validates that authentic leaders believe others can contribute to mutual understanding of a situation. Rooke and Torbert (2005) suggested reframing inquiry into a collaborative process wherein a group challenges and informs a leader’s practice. Seeking information through a collaborative approach allows employees without legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959) to experience leading from below. Further, through balanced processing, individuals can lead, ostensibly from any organizational position, with only a question in hand (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997) as opposed to needing to know all of the answers in order to effectively lead. Authentic leaders are aware of interpersonal and organizational nuances as they seek and handle information to address challenges.

Influencing Policy through Relationships

While competition is an integral element of political action (Bolman & Deal, 2008), cooperation is critical to building the coalitions needed to support specific agendas. An authentic leader’s relational transparency, displayed through empathy and social skills, signifies cross-cultural sensitivity, effectiveness in leading change, and

ability to build and lead effective teams (Goleman, 1998; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Northouse (2010) described relational transparency as “communicating openly and being real in relationships” (p. 218) which involves appropriate self-disclosure of emotions, motivations, and vulnerabilities. Relational transparency allows leaders to touch others at deep levels (Kotter, 1990) where personal values may align with those of the leader in support of particular policy agendas (Kingdon, 2010).

Institutions house interactions within an organizational community, and this “institutional foundation answers the ‘where’ of addressing problems, while persons and social relationships represent the ‘who,’ and beliefs and values the ‘why’ of policymaking” (Parsons, 2004, p. 399). Leaders cannot effect organizational or other policy change in isolation (Kingdon, 2010). Relational transparency allows leaders to build support groups to provide reciprocal feedback against which to evaluate evolving agendas (George et al., 2007). In sum, policy rationales “exist primarily within the social network in which they are created, thus the power of rationales can be expanded by increasing the scope of the social network” (Parsons, p. 402).

Authentic Leadership in the Higher Education Political Arena

Educational leadership has expanded into a public arena requiring persuasion, coalition building, and political strategies to lead within and beyond established hierarchies. Leaders must follow political issues in order to purposefully influence and implement policy (Fowler, 2008). Recent postsecondary policy innovation has emphasized institutional accountability and assessment (McLendon et al., 2005), and authentic leaders (Northouse, 2010; Walumbwa et al., 2008) are prepared to shape related

policy across organizations and the higher education community through agenda setting, information processing, and coalition building.

Authentic leaders can combine self-awareness and internalized moral perspective to develop personal agendas for guiding policy formation and implementation. Furman (2004) discussed the moral purpose of education and the responsibility of educational leaders to practice an ethic of community wherein leaders support the best interests of education as a common good for the polis—beyond meeting market accountability demands (Stone, 2011). Authentic leaders are responsibly aware of their impact on others (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Higham, Freathy, & Wegerif, 2010). As “counting can be used to stimulate public demands for change” (Stone, p. 203), leaders wield power in the higher education assessment policy arena. Savvy leaders frame situations from varying perspectives to analyze issues and focus others’ attention to support a given agenda (Bolman & Deal; Stone). Institutional assessment may comprise an initial agenda; however, measurement may inform future institutional and external political agendas related to advising assessment across the higher education community.

Authentic leaders who apply balanced processing to skillful use of information can influence policy through power independent of position within an organization’s structure. “The power to measure is the power to control. Measurers have a lot of discretion in their choice of what and how to measure” (Stone, 2011, p. 203). This perspective links organizational influence with handling information as opposed to holding a position of legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959). Those who measure outcomes will collect and interpret facts through value-tinted lenses (Fowler, 2008; Johnson, 1999; Stone). In higher education, the use of information is less rational and

more aligned with selected interests to construct arguments that influence stakeholder advocacy of a political actor's agenda (Ehrensals & First, 2008; Johnson). According to Ehrensals and First, "strategies deployed by power allow only that knowledge which suits its purpose" (p. 80), suggesting that leaders may acquire power to shape policy by interacting with information and stakeholders through institutional assessment.

Finally, authentic leaders can impact higher education policy by demonstrating the relational transparency required to establish supportive relationships with individuals beyond departmental, institutional, and other silos. Stone (2011) suggested that "measuring creates alliances between the measurers and the measured" (p. 203). As such, leaders can employ the common language of assessment (Bruffee, 1999) to connect organizational and external stakeholders around an agenda of demonstrated accountability. Authentic leaders can "foster shared visions and goals within the organization by mobilizing internal coalitions" (Ehrensals & First, 2008, p. 80) to support a value-based agenda even if goals are not clearly articulated in advance (Kingdon, 2010). Though information is essential to build a credible agenda, political success often relies more on leaders persuading others of the legitimacy of constructed arguments than on the validity of included information (Johnson, 1999). Authentic leaders shape policy through building informed agendas and collaborative relationships to effect change in the political arenas of their own institutions and in the broader context of higher education. Such leadership has emerged from the MSU AAC.

Background of MSU Advising and the Academic Advising Council

Missouri State University (MSU) is a higher education system with multiple campuses in a Midwestern metropolitan region populated by over 444,000 citizens

(MSU, 2013b; Springfield Business Development Corporation, 2013). MSU was founded in the early 1900's to prepare teachers for positions in the state's public schools, but it has since evolved to provide undergraduate and graduate degree programs for annual enrollments of over 20,000 students (MSU, 2013a, 2013b). MSU's primary campus is a selective-admission, graduate-level teaching and research institution. An additional open-admission campus offers two-year programs and degrees to students in seven counties across the state. MSU also administers programs in other locations that provide educational opportunities based on community needs (e.g., distance learning and study away). A public affairs mission guides MSU's aim to develop educated individuals through an institutional commitment to promote citizenship, competence, and responsibility of students, employees, and MSU alumni within local and global society (MSU, 2013a, 2013b).

The MSU system is overseen by a board of individuals appointed by the state Governor. As its chief executive officer, the President reports directly to the Board of Governors and supervises the Chief of Staff, General Counsel, two-year campus Chancellor, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Equal Opportunity Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Provost/Vice Presidents. The Provost (also titled Vice President for Academic Affairs) supervises the Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs (AP-FAA), the Associate Provost for Student Development and Public Affairs (AP-SDPA), the Associate Provost for Access and Outreach (AP-AO), and all academic colleges and units. Academic deans report to the Provost and are responsible for overseeing seven undergraduate colleges/schools, the Graduate College, and Library

Services. Determining who oversees academic advising, however, requires more than a review of the university's organizational chart (MSU, 2013c).

Academic Advising at Missouri State University

MSU's three Associate Provosts and Vice President for Student Affairs oversee numerous institutional programs and services, but a common thread woven through each division (and each MSU student's educational experience) is academic advising. The process of academic advising begins when prospective students and their families visit MSU to learn about academic programs of interest. These visits may be with advisors overseen by the AP-SDPA, AP-AO, or college deans (all of whom report to the Provost). Early advising also occurs at local and regional events geared toward recruitment of high school, community college, or adult and non-traditional students (with representatives overseen by Associate Provosts or college deans depending on the targeted group of students).

Once admitted to MSU and before beginning classes, traditional students with less than 24 post-high school college (transfer) credit hours participate in a two-day orientation program (overseen by the Vice President of Student Affairs who reports to the President). Orientation includes an extensive academic advising component that covers general education details, special opportunities for first-year college students, and the rationale for students establishing positive relationships with their assigned academic advisors. Transfer students are invited to attend an orientation overseen by a Transfer Admissions Coordinator who reports to the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and a Transfer Advisor who reports to the AP-SDPA. Continued transfer advising for students with undeclared majors is overseen by the AP-SDPA, and transfer

advising for those with declared majors is overseen by deans of individual academic departments. Adult and non-traditional student advising is initially overseen by the AP-AO. These students do not have an official group orientation to the university, and initial advising is followed by advising overseen by the AP-SDPA for undeclared students and deans of individual academic departments for declared students.

Academic advising is required for MSU students at least once a semester prior to course registration until they have completed 75 credit hours. Students with undeclared majors are advised by professional staff advisors in the Academic Advisement Center whose director reports to the AP-SDPA. Adult or non-traditional students are advised through the Adult and Non-Traditional Resources office, overseen by the AP-AO. Once students declare majors, they are advised primarily by faculty members whose department heads report to academic deans (while faculty concerns are also partially overseen by the AP-FAA) or professional advisors, all of whom are overseen by department heads supervised by deans who report directly to the Provost.

At first glance, this advising system appears to seamlessly cover bases for all students; however, very little is known at MSU about the actual impact of academic advising on student higher education experiences. This lack of understanding (and data) is not unique to MSU. In fact, even though academic advising is commonly assumed to contribute to college student success and retention, Campbell and Nutt (2008) suggested that this case is not explicitly supported in existing literature. Additionally, the American College Testing (ACT) program and the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) indicated that many higher education institutions do not capitalize on the potential of academic advising to promote student success (Habley, 2004; NACADA,

2004). How can an institution like MSU address the challenge of advising assessment in such a decentralized structure?

MSU Academic Advising Council

In November 2008, MSU's Provost displayed interest in more clearly understanding the relationship between academic advising and student success by establishing the Academic Advising Council (AAC). Provost-appointed AAC membership includes advisement coordinators, directors of programs with advising components, faculty advisors, and professional staff advisors. These individuals represent all MSU colleges as well as campus advisement centers serving specific populations (i.e., undecided, business, psychology, and education majors). The AAC reports to the AP-SDPA though some members represent academic or other divisions not under her administrative oversight. The Provost charged the group to evaluate administration and delivery of advising to all MSU students, make recommendations for improvements, identify and encourage successful advising practices, and enhance consistency and quality of the MSU advising system—though without a budget.

Leadership Context of MSU Advising Assessment

The AAC has demonstrated leadership across multiple aspects of MSU advising practice. In 2008, charter members composed a mission statement for campus academic advising (see Appendix A) and, based on recommendations from the Council for Advancement of Standards in higher education, they identified best practices for advisors (see Appendix C). These materials have been distributed across campus through multiple methods and are now core components of MSU advisor training, recognized by NACADA as one of the nation's ten exemplary advisor training programs (Voller, Miller,

& Neste, 2010). The AAC also worked collaboratively with other campus groups including Computer Services, Student Government, and the Office of the Registrar to acquire software intended to reduce the time required for advisors to assist students with course scheduling, thereby increasing the time available for goal oriented, learning centered advising interactions. These accomplishments highlight AAC's early progress toward meeting its charge; however, evaluation of advising remained uncharted territory.

In 2009, the AAC conducted a survey to investigate student satisfaction with academic advising at MSU. Understanding student satisfaction with advising is important; however, results of this evaluation did not address the impact of advising on student success, learning, or retention. Though results were incorporated to guide improvement of the advising process (e.g., training advisors to inform students about co-curricular engagement opportunities like internships), AAC membership agreed that satisfaction surveys could not be the sole data source applied to evaluation and enhancement of MSU's advising system. Members decided that these elements of AAC's charge could be most effectively and accurately met through implementation of a systematic, consistent, assessment process investigating both advising delivery and student outcomes. In 2010 and again in 2011, the AAC elected the present researcher (a standing member) to chair the AAC and lead the group toward development of an advising assessment agenda.

Authentic Leadership and the Advising Assessment Political Agenda

According to Parsons (2004), "higher education advocates and associations have shown neither the ability to respond to the challenges nor an understanding of the changes in the new context of higher education policymaking" (p. 405). However, the

AAC understood that collaboration and multiple methods of inquiry are required to address complex leadership issues in an organizational setting. Since its inception, this group of authentic leaders has brought a collective political intelligence (Stone, 2011) to leadership practice, complete with skills to develop and garner support for agendas, use information as a powerful organizational tool, and build relationships needed to meet its charge from the Provost.

Self-awareness and internalized moral perspective (Northouse, 2010; Walumbwa et al., 2008) form the foundation of an authentically led political agenda in relation to academic advising assessment. The AAC constructed such an agenda based on the values of student learning and development, accountability, and professional autonomy (Johnson 1999; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). As academic advising is a primary element of AAC members' jobs, continued funding of advising programs and related job preservation are elements of self-interest in their assessment agenda (Stone, 2011). However, student learning and development are among the deepest purposes of higher education and are enhanced through quality advising (Burt, Young-Jones, Yadon, & Carr, 2013; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Assessment is essential for demonstrating accountability to stakeholders with power to impact institutional viability through government funding, accreditation, and tuition dollars.

The AAC's work to shape MSU advising assessment policy and practices can help to maintain institutional and individual autonomy in relation to advising practice while satisfying external accountability demands through assessment that demonstrates student learning. The market wields substantial influence on higher education (Stone, 2011), but because the AAC's agenda is based on deeply held values, members are aware

of the need to protect the institution's (and the field's) humanity through focusing on individual students. Program evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004) tied directly to MSU's advising mission statement (see Appendix A) can help maintain institutional focus on improving processes to serve students even as external accountability demands continue to increase. Though the AAC's assessment aims align with education's moral purpose (Furman, 2004), well-constructed arguments and interpersonal interactions are at least as important to garnering support for the agenda (Stone).

Contributions of Collective Information Processing to Advising Assessment

Information is the basic building block of policy, but communities make decisions about policy based on “meaning, not matter” (Stone, 2011, p. 377)—with policy actors working to construct the meaning of information into change agendas. The AAC's charge from the Provost includes evaluation and improvement of academic advising at MSU. To acquire needed information, AAC leaders reviewed previous site visit reports from the last accreditation self-study as well as literature on student learning and development, advising assessment, leadership and organizational theory, and policy analysis. Members collectively stepped out of departmental silos to identify embedded assessment practices across MSU, and they worked to benchmark peer institutions' advising assessment practices. These actions provided information the AAC needed to begin addressing the campus advising assessment dilemma.

Organizational Context of MSU Advising Assessment

The AAC holds unique power to frame MSU's organizational advising assessment situation and to construct a viable plan based on the group's definition of the issues (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Parsons, 2004). The group collaboratively composed the

MSU advising mission statement (see Appendix A) and identified best practices for advisors (see Appendix C) based on national advising standards to guide campus advising but also to lay a foundation for future assessment planning. From an organizational perspective, MSU's advising assessment policy and practices are ambiguous (i.e., they are not coherently structured, goal-oriented, or consistently led) (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972; Kingdon, 2010). However, analysis through structural and political frames (Bolman & Deal) may help to clarify important issues for the AAC to consider when approaching its charge to evaluate and improve campus wide advising.

Structural Analysis

Bolman and Deal (2008) likened formally assigned roles and responsibilities to a skeletal structure or framework within which an organization can successfully attain its goals. While most MSU roles and responsibilities are clearly assigned to a single department, program, or employee, academic advising spans numerous aspects of the institution's complex structure. To address diverse needs of different student populations, MSU advising is distributed among faculty and professional staff. Decentralized advising for different MSU student groups (e.g., decided and undecided majors) contributes to the dilemma of developing a unified advising assessment program. For example, staff advisors advise students prior to their selection of a major. This work is overseen by the Academic Advisement Center Director (supervised by the AP-SDPA).

Advising is provided at the college or departmental level for MSU students with declared majors. Business and education majors are advised by professional staff advisors, and other majors are advised by faculty in their respective academic departments, all overseen by department heads who report to college deans (overseen by

the Provost). The divisionalized nature of MSU's advising structure requires complex labor coordination processes, particularly with regard to assessing advising practice. As advising assessment is an initiative handed to the AAC from the Provost, the group's efforts may appear to be an institutional move toward centralization of authority with the potential to not be well received across campus silos. Consequently, faculty may perceive participation in shared institutional governance as diminishing. According to Merton (1957), informal structure may emerge alongside a centralized bureaucratic structure. As a result, group members may behave defensively to guard personal interests when traditional advantage appears threatened by potential change. Thus, faculty accustomed to high autonomy may resist assessment of their advising activity even if the initiative is meant to foster an outcome most faculty espouse as valued: student success.

Structural analysis of the MSU advising assessment dilemma highlights how the top-down nature of the assessment initiative (i.e., the Provost's charge to the AAC) in a decentralized advising system contributes to complexity. The group's charge is difficult due to the highly educated nature of those whose advising will be assessed within formal and informal structures that distinguish between staff and faculty advising. The task is further complicated by the fact that the AAC has no legitimate, reward, or coercive power (French & Raven, 1959) within MSU's organizational structure to encourage faculty, staff, or administrators to participate in advising assessment. As such, the following advice from Stone (2011) is important to heed:

To analyze how the exercise of power works, one must get behind, around, underneath, and through the organization chart to ask who benefits—in exactly what ways? – and who loses—in what ways? Who benefits and loses from any

rearrangement of power? Losses and gains might be short-term or long-term, material and economic, or political and strategic. (p. 377)

Considering the issue from a political perspective can contribute to better understanding the potential organizational impact of advising assessment implementation.

Political Analysis

The political frame compares organizations to jungles or arenas where interdependent individuals and coalitions with enduring differences grapple for scarce resources (Bolman & Deal, 2008). This view illustrates why conflict is a core element and power a crucial asset within organizational dynamics, why bargaining and negotiation are necessary for attaining desirable outcomes, and why “organizations are inevitably political” (Bolman & Deal, p. 196). In addition to explaining core assumptions of politics in organizations, Bolman and Deal contended that effective leaders must master certain skills to thrive in the organizational arena. How do power, conflict, and political skills relate to MSU advising assessment?

Power often carries negative connotations of dominance and control, but it can also be productive as the impetus for positive organizational change through job activities and political alliances (Kanter, 1979). From this perspective, the concept of power bridges structural and political aspects of organizational dynamics. For example, a job assignment that structures work activities as more flexible, visible, and central to an organization’s operations contributes to a position’s power potential; additionally, interaction with influential members of an organization and alliances with acquaintances across a wide section of the organization can contribute to power potential. The AAC is a group filled with power potential due to the diverse organizational roles and

institutional alliances of its members. In spite of this potential, the AAC does not have reward, coercive, or legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959)—deficits which may be overcome through the group’s rich collective of expert power. Members are knowledgeable of institutional policy and student development, and they are known to apply that knowledge to assist students and colleagues who are less familiar with related policy and practices.

Power is also conferred through framing or controlling meaning in a given situation (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Parsons, 2004). The ACC drafted the MSU advising mission statement (see Appendix A) to emphasize advising as teaching. By defining advising as an interaction wherein a student is expected to learn, the statement points to future assessment of advising learning outcomes. Instead of mandated implementation of a pre-fabricated plan, the AAC’s motivation to proactively address advising assessment is advantageous because members have the autonomy to design and implement meaningful assessment processes that seek input from and meet the needs of all MSU constituents. However, in spite of the AAC’s defining advantage and collective expert power, other MSU professionals may counter assessment efforts with power of their own.

Bolman and Deal (2008) suggested that “conflict is particularly likely to occur at boundaries, or interfaces, between groups and units” (p. 207). Academic advising crosses the boundary between MSU professional (staff) advisors and faculty advisors, and the AAC may encounter faculty resistance to assessment of their advising activity. Faculty and professional advisors are distinguished not only by a formal structure determining their assigned advisees, but by organizational norms that confer what is, in essence, higher status on faculty. Faculty members collectively have higher degrees, work fewer

days each year, earn more, and have more autonomy to determine their own work schedules and responsibilities than staff advisors. Additionally, faculty may view advising as a time-usurping service activity that is less valuable than research and publication in pursuit of tenure (a perk not available to staff advisors). Time initially appears to be the scarce resource around which conflict emerges; however, when viewed from a political perspective, faculty advisors are advantaged by greater status and privilege than staff advisors, which uncovers a seedbed of potential conflict over power. Additionally, a top-down initiative requiring assessment of advising could be seen as a loss of power by faculty accustomed to shared governance in institutional decision making. Faculty attempts to protect current status differentials may conflict with the AAC's aim to implement assessment across MSU's advising system.

Implications for Research in Context

Although the structural and political frames are particularly applicable to understanding the MSU advising assessment issue, the AAC will need to incorporate broader human resource and symbolic perspectives (Bolman & Deal, 2008) in its development and implementation of a campus wide advising assessment process. The AAC needs to understand and sensitively address the fact that systemic change reverberates to the core of each person's experience within an organization's structure. People need to feel heard, valued, and included in the inquiry and developmental stages of the advising assessment process. For example, students are important stakeholders in relation to academic advising; thus, the AAC needs to share early assessment findings in a venue frequently accessed by students (e.g., the university newspaper). Additionally, the AAC should remember that implementing an advising assessment program will be

more effective if MSU stakeholders help to build it and can internalize the process as meaningful and significant to their roles in the authentic mission of Missouri State University (Bolman & Deal). The carefully planned and timely dissemination of results from this study can foster a sense of involvement, pride, and ownership among the many MSU employees who advise students—motivating them to embrace assessment as an avenue to celebrate achievements and improve advising practice.

As change significantly impacts anyone touched by it, the AAC has worked to acquire understanding of the potential implications of advising assessment for all constituents within the existing MSU structure. AAC members met with representatives from offices across campus to discuss ongoing campus wide assessment processes and their possible links to academic advising. AAC members also explored MSU’s past accreditation efforts to investigate advising-related recommendations and possible contributions to future self-studies. These inquiries revealed existing processes to which advising assessment could be attached without great disruption to work flow and norms—a tactic suggested by Bolman and Deal (2008) as “essential to successful change” (p. 387). Similar processes will be maintained to facilitate implementation of an ongoing program to assess advising. For example, implementing advising assessment within academic units will require political savvy to acquire buy-in from deans, department heads, and faculty (e.g., potentially through encouraging documentation of advising outcomes for tenure and promotion consideration).

Change initiatives often fail because they originate from the top down without considering factors that impact personnel within the organization’s structure (Beer, Eisenstat, & Spector, 1990). Solid rationales and agendas are important, but relationships

are the venue through which policy actors garner support for agendas. According to Bolman and Deal (2008), leaders must develop core navigational and interactive skills to protect their interests in the jungle of organizational politics. These skills (i.e., agenda setting, political terrain-mapping, networking, forming coalitions, bargaining, and negotiating) have been demonstrated through the AAC's collective authentic leadership, and will be helpful in acquiring a broader array of data in future assessment efforts. For example, the AAC has begun to bargain for resources and negotiate alliances within MSU's power structure in ways that benefit all involved. This began through seeking (and receiving) funding from the Provost and AP-SDPA for training as well as resources needed to conduct previous assessments. Additionally, the AAC has met with various groups to determine how its assessment efforts can help to address external accountability demands related to reaccreditation. Archival data in the present study are expected to provide a strong foundation for guiding MSU's future assessment efforts, but present efforts could have been strengthened if student identification numbers had been collected to allow for advising assessment related to retention and graduation rates and if data had been collected from advisors in addition to students.

An effective political agenda is a strategy developed to advance a set of interests in an environment wherein channels of communication and influence have been carefully investigated (Bolman & Deal, 2008). AAC members are exploring the MSU advising system, mapping the political terrain (including potential sources of support and opposition), and developing an agenda to navigate toward the AAC's vision: implementing assessment that meets stakeholder needs and enhances MSU advising. The AAC cannot implement a systemic assessment process in a strategic vacuum; in fact,

relying “too much on reason and too little on relationships” is a common root of failure in many leadership initiatives (Bolman & Deal, p. 218). Thus, recommendations from this study need to be skillfully communicated in the context of collaborative partnerships within the AAC and between the AAC and MSU administrators across the organization’s structure. The AP-SDPA is an *ex officio* member of the AAC, however, other administrators (e.g., the AP-FAA, AP-AO, and college deans) could be invited to AAC meetings to discuss how forthcoming results of this study may prove beneficial to their programs and how the AAC could collaborate with their units (e.g., through engaging faculty) to enhance future advising practice and assessment.

Summary

AAC representatives have worked and continue efforts to nurture relationships across their professional networks to strengthen a coalition supporting the group’s advising assessment agenda. Building connections across campus silos may enhance motivation of employees across all levels of MSU’s organizational structure to implement recommendations related to advising assessment. Such connections will also keep the AAC visible so administrators may be more receptive to considering reported assessment results when implementing relevant policies to enhance future advising—policies that could allow MSU to maintain autonomous (unlegislated) responsibility for authentic, theoretically based assessment of institutional advising outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE:
SCHOLARLY CONTEXT FOR THE STUDY

Introduction

Assessment of academic advising is not as advanced as that of classroom learning (Kelley, 2008). Historically, measurement of advising outcomes focused on student satisfaction with the advisor or advising system rather than on student success. Satisfaction of students as consumers is important; however, assessing learning requires a different approach (Propp & Rhodes, 2006). Viewing advising as a learning process allows assessment of specific outcomes that can be linked to student achievement (Hemwall & Trachte, 2003). Thus, the link between advising and student achievement can be demonstrated by assessing the process and outcomes to reveal how advisors teach students to develop skills and understanding necessary to fulfill their goals and institutional missions.

Advising Theories and Approaches: Shifting Paradigms

Academic advising is approached from developmental, prescriptive, and learning centered perspectives and is practiced through numerous styles (e.g., appreciative, strengths-based, integrative, collaborative, and holistic) drawn from student development, leadership, pedagogical, and other theories from diverse academic disciplines (Hagen & Jordan, 2008; Huggett, 2004; Lerstrom, 2008; Museus & Ravello, 2010; Schreiner & Anderson, 2005). Robbins (2010) indicated that a unified theory of advising is unlikely to be developed, though others have argued that a coherent body of theory should be developed from which to educate advisors and empirically investigate the impact of advising on desired educational outcomes (Habley, 2009; Kuhn & Padak, 2009; Shaffer et al., 2010). Advisors trained as scholar-practitioners are well-situated to advance the

scholarly and practical growth of the field (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; Schulenberg & Lindhorst, 2008).

Advising practice is evolving along with political and economic changes that have refocused the aims of higher education to emphasize demonstrated attainment of student learning goals (Cook, 2009; Gordon, 2004; Melander, 2005). However, advising as a field has lagged behind classroom instruction in its ability to demonstrate positive impact on desired learning outcomes (Kelley, 2008), in part due to unsubstantiated assertions by advising proponents that their work promotes student success and institutional effectiveness (Habley, 2009). Empirical research of greater quality and quantity are needed to strengthen claims that the work of advising is integral, if not central, to institutional missions aimed at advancing teaching and learning (Shaffer et al., 2010). Schulenberg and Lindhorst (2008) suggested scholarly engagement of all advising professionals as a requisite element of establishing a theoretical basis for advising practice, pointing out that such research aligns naturally with implementation of assessment that illuminates the impact of advising on student learning and fulfilling institutional and program missions. Indeed, the field of advising needs to strengthen its scholarly foundation to extend its reach into the higher echelons of institutional planning and decision making—securing a seat for advisors at the planning table as scholar-practitioners with empirical data in hand (Cervero & Wilson, 2006; Padak & Kuhn, 2009).

According to Padak and Kuhn (2009), research documenting advising practices and outcomes will elevate advising within institutions and as a professional field. Promising studies of this nature are emerging as practice in the field shifts to an emphasis

on student learning. For example, Pizzolato (2006) applied the learning partnerships model (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004) to advising as a process that helps students develop self-authorship through validating them as knowers, situating learning in the context of their experiences, and defining learning as mutually constructed meaning. Additional advising studies emphasize students' academic motivation and achievement (Burt et al., 2013; Schreiner & Anderson, 2005), their development of higher order thinking skills and attainment of learning goals (Hemwall & Trachte, 2005), and their responsibility to design impactful learning experiences (Huggett, 2004) through collaboration with advisors—all providing evidence of a shift in the advising literature toward research aligned with meeting increasing higher education accountability demands.

Advising as Teaching

Although learning outcomes have been insufficiently assessed, the teaching function of advising was identified in literature over four decades ago (see Crookston, 1994), as inextricably linked to the principles of sound pedagogy that are central to college student learning (Hagen, 2005). Huggett's (2004) description of learner-centered advising suggested that advisors should elicit student examination of and reflection on academic goals, aspirations, decisions, and potential outcomes. Lowenstein (2005) further extrapolated the advisor's role as an educator by stating that advisors teach students the logic of the college curriculum—the ability to create a meaningful education out of individual college courses and cocurricular experiences. He also asserted that advisors teach students to make responsible educational choices as they relate learning experiences to existing knowledge. While conceptually elucidating advising as teaching, these descriptions have not clarified specific teaching responsibilities, pedagogy, learning

activities, or measurable outcomes needed to demonstrate that advising indeed teaches students to responsibly manage their development as lifelong learners (Melander, 2005). Melander highlighted that institutions need to adopt excellence criteria and performance monitoring to demonstrate the impact of advising on learning outcomes.

Assessment of Academic Advising

As advising practice has shifted toward an emphasis on student learning outcomes, how have institutions responded to increasing accountability demands through advising assessment? In a NACADA survey of 1623 postsecondary institutions (Macaruso, 2007), 71% of responding institutions ($N = 649$) reported having no explicitly articulated student learning outcomes for advising (though 59% reported conducting advising assessment), and 32% had only conducted surveys of student satisfaction. In these situations, efforts to assess attainment of unidentified objectives may result from and maintain confusion and ambiguity related to assessment of student learning in relation to academic advising. A lack of clarity for institutional leaders of advising assessment efforts may be tied to the underestimation of advising as an integral factor contributing to student success and retention (Light, 2001), though studies have evaluated broad advising outcomes related to student satisfaction (Barnes, Williams, & Archer, 2010; Hsu & Bailey, 2007; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008) and success as measured by GPA, retention, study skills, self-efficacy, student responsibility, and following up on referrals to campus resources (Gerdes & Crews, 2010; Molina & Abelman, 2000; Reh fuss & Quillin, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Effective advising assessment requires institutions to implement and evaluate policies and practices aligned with scholarly findings from the fields of education and

organizational management (Melander, 2005). Program evaluation has been successfully applied to assess advising for students who are exploring majors (Sams, Brown, Hussey, & Leonard, 2003) and is recommended as an approach to advising assessment because of its emphasis on data-driven decision making and continuous improvement of advising practice and related outcomes (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010). However, many advising systems do not clearly articulate program theories and intended outcomes, making impact assessment challenging at best (Aiken-Wisniewski et al.; Habley, 2005). Program evaluation is a promising approach to advising assessment as evidenced by the balanced scorecard focus on multiple measures (e.g., finance, processes, customer satisfaction, and learning) employed within one advising system as a formative organizational assessment to promote dialogue as opposed to evaluating individual advising (Hurt, 2004).

Ultimately, embedding advising assessment into program planning, implementation, and evaluation can allow faculty advisors and staff advisors to view their advising work as the context wherein students' goals are connected to institutional mission in meaningful and measurable ways (Kelley, 2008).

Identifying Desired Advising Outcomes

In the absence of clear guidelines for assessing academic advising, what can help an institution to identify and assess desired, empirically supported advising outcomes? Critical areas of research identified by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Research Committee include developing assessment instruments for measuring academic advising and examining group differences on specific demographic factors related to student success (NACADA, 2008). How does such assessment development look at an institutional level? A constellation of supportive interactions and

activities can ensure congruency between student goals and the institutional support needed to facilitate student and institutional attainment of graduation and other goals (Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Jamelske, 2009). However, program theory, goals, and outcomes need to be identified before they can be effectively assessed (Robbins, 2009; Robbins & Zarges, 2011).

Exploration of student expectations and institutional mission and vision statements may be starting points for articulating advising program theories and identifying program goals and intended outcomes. Students' expectations of advising vary for numerous reasons (see Propp & Rhodes, 2006), but their expectations are important as these stakeholders hold increasing financial responsibility for their education due to external funding cuts. Advisors are in a prime position to shape students' expectations of college and advising in alignment with institutional vision even though 41% of vision statements for advising units were created independently of (and may not clearly align with) university vision statements or other official school documents (Abelman, Atkin, Dalessandro, Snyder-Suhy, & Janstova, 2007; Abelman, Dalessandro, Janstova, Snyder-Suhy, & Pettey, 2007; Demetriou, 2005; Miller, Bender, & Schuh, 2005). Applying institutional vision to advising could guide assessment and enhance existing advising practices (Abelman & Molina, 2006; Maki, 2004), and it is recommended in order to evaluate alignment of a system's advising model with institutional goals and objectives (Abelman, Atkin, et al.). For example, investigation of for-profit postsecondary institutions' vision statements revealed their greater emphasis on career development and enrollment management than student development—guidance that establishes a more narrow scope than traditionally expected activities for advising

units (Abelman, Dalessandro, Janstova, & Snyder-Suhy, 2007; Kinser, 2006; Woods, 2006).

Literature related to current assessment trends in higher education can also provide institutions with guidance in developing advising program outcomes (Bok, 2003; Holberg & Taylor, 2005; Kelley, 2008; Potts, 2005). The *NACADA Journal* (published by the National Academic Advising Association) is the seminal outlet of empirical findings related to advising and its assessment (Danis & Wall, 2009), and the NACADA Clearinghouse archives information available to institutions to guide improvement of advising practices. Published findings from postsecondary advising assessment efforts have long been accompanied by calls for more advising programs to be accountable to the investment made in them by higher education stakeholders (Macaruso, 2007; Nutt & Self, 2009; Trombley & Holmes, 1981). Researchers have begun answering those calls by investigating learning outcomes related to usefulness of campus advising resources (Hsu & Bailey, 2007); through application of Bloom's (1956) taxonomy in planning advising programs (Hurt, 2007); and to document the impact of intrusive advising on student appointment scheduling and attendance (Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds, & Klyce, 2008).

Sorting through empirical studies and unique aspects of an organizational structure to articulate desired advising outcomes is a daunting task. Lowenstein's (2005) advising-as-teaching framework is applicable for an institution seeking to gather theoretically-based information about the impact of its advising system. He suggested that effective advising teaches students to find or create logic in their education, view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense, base

educational choices on developing a sense of an overall edifice being self-built, and continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned. Lowenstein's conceptual framework aligns with empirically identified factors linking advising to measurable student and advisor outcomes (Young-Jones et al., 2013)—specifically, advisor empowerment, advisor accountability, student self-efficacy, student responsibility, student study skills, and perceived support.

Advisor Outcomes

In addition to an increasing focus on student learning outcomes, institutions need to clarify the role of advisors in the advising process. Shaffer et al. (2010) highlighted that specific educational programs are not required in order for academic advisors to enter the profession. Additionally, even though professional standards were created by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in higher education (CAS, 2003) to guide advising practice toward a focus on student learning and development, Keeling (2010) found that many advisors are not familiar with them (leaving advisors' roles to be determined by their hiring institutions). With variable credentialing and inadequate literature documenting its impact, the work of advising may remain at the periphery of students' postsecondary experiences (Habley, 2009). However, emerging research suggests that advisors should be trained to work with special populations (Preece et al., 2007) and be willing to meet in person, provide correct information, communicate effectively, and demonstrate concern and professionalism as they teach students to develop self-authorship of educational plans and outcomes (Barnes et al., 2010; Baxter Magolda, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; Bitz, 2010; Hester, 2008; Simmons, 2008; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Aligned with findings supporting advising as teaching, two primary factors emerge for institutions to consider when identifying measurable advisor outcomes: advisor empowerment and advisor accountability (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) theoretical framework addressed advisors teaching students how to connect seemingly disparate elements of the higher education curriculum into a meaningful whole—an outcome that likely results from adequate advisor empowerment, accountability, and support. While Lowenstein's framework does not expressly include these factors to explain how advisors teach, high standards and support from advisors are linked with more positive student perceptions of learning and higher satisfaction with their educational experiences (Lan & Williams, 2005). Additionally, Burt et al. (2013) found positive relationships between perceived advisor support and satisfaction of basic needs (i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) underlying academic motivation and related to GPA (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Similarly, Demetriou (2011) stated that “academic advisors may influence the development or decline of motivation by helping students identify strategies they can employ for academic success” (p. 19). For an institution to assess the extent to which advising results in learning, how can these concepts be translated into measurable outcomes?

Advisor accountability. Young-Jones et al. (2013) defined advisor accountability as student expectations regarding professionalism, preparation, and availability of their advisors. Their regression model demonstrated that higher student expectations of advisor accountability predicted higher levels of self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support. Thus, the extent to which advisors meet accountability expectations is linked to factors that predict student success. The

quality of interaction between a student and a concerned individual on campus is a key contributor to college retention (Habley & McClanahan, 2004), and an institution can formally implement this type of interaction through academic advising. Research is needed that focuses on peer and faculty relationships as such interactions appear to “serve more than an academic function” (Beachboard, Beachboard, Li, & Adkison, 2011, p. 40). For example, Wiseman and Messitt (2010) highlighted the advisor’s potential to promote student learning through mentoring students toward effective goal setting, decision making, relationship building, incorporating strategies for academic success, and developing self-regulation and self-determination. Accessibility and demonstrated interest in individual students’ outcomes are critical to developing helpful, supportive advising relationships that can facilitate educational success and socialization into a profession (Barnes et al., 2010; Bloom, Propst Cuevas, Hall, & Evans, 2007; Lerstrom, 2008).

Advisor empowerment. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified advisor empowerment as helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful referrals. They found that advisor empowerment marginally predicted GPA, significantly predicted levels of student responsibility, and that higher expectations of advisor empowerment were reported by females than males and by freshmen than students from other classifications. Advising interactions can help students to shape meaningful learning experiences, thus encouraging achievement of educational, career, and life goals (Hunter & White, 2004). Additionally, empowering college students to feel positively about themselves and in control of their environment can increase learning motivation (Frymier & Houser, 2000). Sometimes, an advisor’s

contribution to empowering students lies in the recognition that another professional (e.g., a counselor) is better suited to assist with issues students bring to advisement meetings (Kuhn, Gordon, & Webber, 2006). Aligned with Borgard's (1981) early findings, academic advisors can help to connect students' diverse interactions (e.g., with specific course content, campus resources, and educational professionals) to the overall college experience in a manner that contributes to success.

Student Learning Outcomes of Advising

Postsecondary institutions need to leverage the contribution of advising to student learning as students may master content of specific courses, yet still be at risk of dropping out if they “fail to develop adequate academic self-confidence, academic goals, institutional commitment, achievement motivation, and social support and involvement” (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004, p. 10). Lowenstein (2005) suggested that advising can teach students to find or create logic within a self-built, continually enhanced learning edifice, echoing Tinto's (2006) assertion that advising can enhance students' expectations of themselves as scholars who are important members of a university. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified related student variables (i.e., self-efficacy, personal responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) that can help institutions to frame student learning outcomes of advising as teaching (Lowenstein).

Student self-efficacy. Student self-efficacy relates to beliefs about the ability to succeed in college (e.g., dealing with stress, preparation for college, ability to navigate coursework and exams), and Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified it as a significant predictor of student GPA that is lower in first-generation college students but higher in students who meet with an advisor at least once a semester and hold greater

accountability expectations of their advisors. Indeed, academic advising can help students to cultivate a sense of academic self-efficacy (Gore, 2006) and can be transformative in students as they develop and reflect on academic goals and volitional planning that are characteristic of self-direction or self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2009; Firmin & MacKillop, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006; Simmons 2008). Students and faculty may hold fragmented views of the educational experience (Borgard, 1981)—and advisors can help to connect isolated elements of the overall educational experience into a cohesive framework within which students can develop their capacity to succeed in college and beyond.

Student responsibility. Though multifaceted, student responsibility was operationalized by Young-Jones et al. (2013) as student contributions to advising in the form of goal-setting and planning, preparing for appointments, following up on referrals, and communicating with advisors. They found that students who met with an advisor at least once a semester reported higher responsibility, as did female students and those holding higher expectations of advisor empowerment and accountability. Multiple studies link academic achievement and retention with goal-setting (e.g., Cheng & Chiou, 2010; Kem & Navan, 2006; Kim, Newton, Downey, & Benton, 2010; Hurt, 2007; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005), and others have investigated appointment keeping (Schwebel et al., 2008), decision making (Lerstrom, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), educational and life planning (Hurt & Barro, 2006; Melander, 2005), communicating openly with advisors about GPA realities (Moore, 2006; Svanum & Bigatti, 2006), and extrinsic (e.g., information about majors) and intrinsic (e.g., fear of making long-term decisions) factors related to frequent major changes (Firmin & MacKillop, 2008). These studies suggest

that advisors need to help students learn about their interests and abilities, set related educational and career goals, and take responsibility for incorporating high impact learning opportunities into the overall college experience.

Student study skills. Young-Jones et al. (2013) summarized study skills as a set of behaviors related to academic success (i.e., time and grade management, studying, exam preparation, concentration, motivation, getting adequate sleep, and seeking an advisor's assistance). They found that this factor predicted GPA, and that meeting with an advisor at least once a semester and holding higher expectations of advisor accountability and empowerment predicted greater study skills. Whereas college instructors may focus on developing students' abilities aligned with specific course content, advisors may be more able to help students develop strategies that enhance motivation and achievement (e.g., GPA, graduation rates) across the broader educational experience (Burt et al., 2013; Graunke, Woosley, & Helms, 2006; Kallenbach & Zafft, 2004; Moore, 2006; Smith, Dai, & Szelest, 2006; Vander Schee, 2007).

Perceived support. According to Young-Jones et al. (2013), perceived support addresses a student's relational and stress management resources. They found that perceptions of advisor support were higher in students who met with advisors at least once a semester and in those who reported higher expectations of advisor accountability and empowerment. Existing research suggests that academic advisors are in a prime position to identify students who are struggling to adjust in the college environment and to teach them effective methods for coping with academic stress (McClellan, 2005). Advisors also contribute to satisfaction of students' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in educational settings (Burt et al., 2013; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci,

2000). Though perceived support is linked to student motivation and success (Jones, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), further research is needed to explore the influence of complex academic support relationships on student learning (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009; Wentzel et al., 2010).

Summary

Assessment of academic advising is not as advanced as that of classroom learning (Kelley, 2008), and the link between advising and student achievement needs to be demonstrated. Advising systems are evolving along with higher education toward a need to demonstrate accountability through performance outcomes. This accompanies a paradigm shift toward viewing advising as teaching—thereby facilitating assessment of how advisors teach students to develop skills and understanding necessary for success. However, improved assessment practices and an expanded scholarly foundation are still needed across the field of advising. Identifying desired advisor outcomes (e.g., accountability, empowerment) and related student learning outcomes (e.g., self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, perceived support) is complicated and may be guided by exploration of student expectations and experiences, analysis of organizational structure and mission, and review of related scholarly literature.

CHAPTER FOUR:
CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE

**Academic Advising at Missouri State University:
2012-2013 Program Evaluation Report**

Presented by the MSU Academic Advising Council Assessment Committee

Author: Tracie D. Burt

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It is no small feat to evaluate academic advising at an institution the size of MSU, and this report of findings and recommendations would not have been possible without the assistance of those mentioned here. I offer my sincerest thanks, Tracie.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



2012-2013 Academic Advising Program Evaluation Report Executive Summary

Presented by the MSU Academic Advising Council Assessment Committee
Author: Tracie D. Burt

Introduction

The influence of advising is underestimated in studies investigating the impact of institutional initiatives, and it is understudied in the broader literature (Aiken-Wisniewski, Smith, & Troxel, 2010; Habley, 2009). The impact of advising needs to be measured and communicated in terms that align with current higher education accountability demands (Keeling, 2010). However, significant work remains for most institutions, including MSU, to develop assessment processes to impact and communicate advising outcomes (Light, 2004).

In alignment with a paradigm shift toward advising as teaching that produces measurable outcomes, institutions may initially wish to evaluate alignment of advising programs with the learning-centered paradigm (Gordon, 2004; Hurt, 2007; Lowenstein, 2005). Through exploration of documents guiding MSU advising, literature related to advising assessment, and MSU's existing advising assessment data, the purpose of this study was to evaluate MSU's advising program theory (i.e., identified strategies for achieving measurable outcomes) and existing data to inform recommendations for advancing MSU's advising assessment efforts. The carefully planned and timely dissemination of results from this study can foster a sense of involvement, pride, and ownership among the many MSU employees who advise students—motivating them to embrace assessment as an avenue to celebrate achievements and improve advising.

Scholarly Context

Assessment of academic advising is less advanced than that of classroom learning (Kelley, 2008), and the link between advising and student achievement needs to be demonstrated. Advising systems are evolving along with higher education toward a need to demonstrate accountability through measuring performance outcomes. This accompanies a paradigm shift toward viewing advising as teaching—thereby facilitating assessment of how advisors teach students to develop skills and understanding necessary for success. However, improved assessment practices and an expanded scholarly foundation are still needed across the field of advising.

Identifying desired advisor outcomes (e.g., accountability, empowerment) and related student learning outcomes (e.g., self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, perceived support) is complicated and may be guided by exploration of student expectations and experiences, analysis of program structure and mission, and review of related scholarly literature (Young-Jones, Burt, Dixon, Hawthorne, 2013).

Evaluation Findings

RQ1: How can MSU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?

Typological analyses (Hatch, 2002) demonstrated that documents guiding advising at MSU align with extant literature (Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013). The documents implicitly articulate advising program theory, meaning that assumptions inherent in MSU advising are not clearly tied to expected outcomes.

- **Advising Mission Statement***: Each element of MSU's advising mission corresponds to conceptual and operational constructs identified in the literature.
- **Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University***: Activities are suggested for MSU advisors. Although no measurable outcomes are articulated, this is an important source of information for identifying desirable outcomes.
- **Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You***: Elements suggest but do not clearly articulate measurable student outcomes (e.g., producing a degree audit, demonstrating knowledge of program requirements and course prerequisites).

While the connection between advising and expected outcomes is clearer in the "Be Advised" document than through the mission statement or advisor best practices, program theory is not articulated in a manner directly facilitating outcome measurement.

RQ2: What can be learned about MSU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?

- **Demographics**: The freshman sample ($n = 500$) consisted primarily of White (85.4%) female (60.2%) students with 10.6% reporting Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. The senior sample ($n = 645$) was comprised of mostly White (86.2%) female (59.5%) students, 3.3% of whom reported Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.
- **Personal responsibility for academic planning**: Most students reported that they would or did take the lead role in decision making with input from their advisor (freshmen = 67.2%; seniors = 62.3%), followed by students partnering 50/50 with their advisor (freshmen = 24.4%; seniors = 23.4%).
- **Personal responsibility for post-graduation planning**: Among freshmen, 66% expected to take the lead role with input from the advisor, while 45.9% of seniors reporting doing so. Only 17% of freshmen expected to make all decisions in this area, whereas 45.4% of seniors reported making all related decisions.
- **Overall experience with MSU advising**: Most students reported extremely positive or positive experiences (freshmen = 75.6%; seniors = 75.8%).
- **Meeting after 75 credit hours**: Most freshmen (91.2%) reported expecting to meet with their advisor occasionally or at least once a year after completing 75 credit hours, and 85.1% of seniors met with advisors at least once a year after that point.

- **Advisors providing career-related information:** More freshmen (89%) reported expecting advisors to provide information about career-related options than seniors (43.6%) reported receiving.
- **Advisors providing information about cocurricular involvement:** More freshmen (50.8%) expected information from advisors about cocurricular involvement opportunities (e.g., internships) than seniors (21.7%) reported receiving.
- **Advisor support of best possible MSU education:** More freshmen (93.8%) reported expecting advisors to support them in seeking the best possible education at MSU than seniors (78%) who reported experiencing such support.
- **Advising as teaching:** Typological analyses of qualitative student feedback revealed themes that elucidate Lowenstein’s (2005) conceptualization of advising as teaching. Findings guided recommendations of measurable outcomes related to advisor accountability, advisor empowerment, perceived support, student responsibility, student self-efficacy, and study skills.
- **Freshman expectations versus senior experiences:** Chi square analyses revealed that freshmen held significantly higher expectations than seniors reported experiencing with regard to information provided through advising (i.e., academic rules, regulations, and deadlines; referrals to campus resources; career related options; study habits and time management; and, opportunities for involvement).
- **GPA predictors related to advising:** *Advisor information* (i.e., related to majors, minors, and careers), *advisor support*, and students’ levels of *personal responsibility* for planning were revealed as significant predictors of senior GPA. The regression model explained 4% of GPA variance, predicting with 95% confidence a GPA range between 3.06 and 3.62 based on scores for the three predictors. In light of the restricted GPA range of 2.00 to 4.00 for students to continue their studies at MSU, a 4% increase in GPA related to academic advising is meaningful.

Assessment Recommendations

RQ3: How can MSU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?

The present study incorporated empirically supported constructs from the literature into evaluation of MSU’s advising program theory and impact. NACADA (2004) recommended as a core value that advising processes be shaped by understanding of institutional and student expectations.

- Results of this study demonstrated how student expectations are addressed by MSU’s advising program and how these findings align with institutional expectations broadly defined in MSU’s advising mission statement and identified best practices.
- Findings highlighted deficiencies in advising outcome measurement and informed recommendations for addressing them.

For MSU Provost and Associate Provosts to consider:

- Purposefully communicate elements of this study's findings (e.g., survey summaries*) with college deans and program directors, and encourage their receptivity to working with the taskforce recommended below.
- Appoint an advising assessment taskforce comprised of faculty, staff, and students with an interest in advising assessment and with at least one representative from Computer Services. Charge the group to collaborate with AAC's Assessment Subcommittee to implement the following recommendations across campus programs with advising components. As possible, support group members with stipends or release time toward this effort.
 - Review and expand the preliminary assessment plan* resulting from this study to create a comprehensive advising assessment plan for MSU. This will require additional mapping of recommended outcomes and adding new outcomes identified by programs and offices across campus.
 - Create rubrics to assess specific outcomes, conduct focus groups, and program computerized data collection tied to screens frequently accessed by advisors and students through My Missouri State. Investigate how such assessment tools can best be embedded into normal work flow (Bolman & Deal, 2008).
 - Collaborate with the Office of Assessment and AAC Assessment Subcommittee to develop a five-year plan to evaluate one outcome a year, and develop plans to disseminate findings (i.e., to whom, how). Once the plan and data collection tools are in place, the AAC will have access to a consistent influx of data upon which to base future recommendations for enhancing MSU advising (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010).

Qualitative and quantitative analyses in the present study revealed that MSU's advising practices are empirically grounded and producing desirable results. Findings of this study highlighted individual and programmatic practices that MSU can celebrate while providing recommendations to enhance future advising assessment efforts.

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*See Academic Advising at Missouri State University: 2012-2013 Program Evaluation Report

SECTION ONE:

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM EVALUATION STUDY

Over the past 25 years, a developmental as opposed to learning-centered approach to academic advising may have contributed to its measurement in terms of student satisfaction with the advising relationship (e.g., Smith, 1983; Fielstein & Lammers, 1992; Smith & Allen, 2006). Though satisfaction is an important aspect of a student's college experience (Propp & Rhodes, 2006), effective advising measurably impacts numerous outcomes related to student achievement and success (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) provocative question, "If advising is teaching, what do advisors teach?" (p. 123) can guide the articulation of advising program theory and outcomes, both of which are necessary to conduct effective program evaluation (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

This study aimed to evaluate Missouri State University's (MSU) advising program theory and current assessment outcomes to inform recommendations for advancing MSU's advising assessment practices in alignment with accountability demands (Keeling, 2010; McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005). Three research questions guided the study:

- RQ1: How can MSU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?
- RQ2: What can be learned about MSU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?
- RQ3: How can MSU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?

Conceptual Underpinnings for the Study

Lowenstein (2005) provided four conceptual responses to the question of what advisors teach. First, he asserted that advisors teach students to find or create logic in their education in a manner that promotes active learning (i.e., advisors teach students to seek out the structure or rationale behind the overall educational process just as a classroom teacher organizes material to motivate student ownership and pursuit of meaningful course objectives). Second, he asserted that advisors teach students to view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense (i.e., advisors help students to put curricular elements into perspective in a manner that leads to building connections between various areas of study or seeking out experiences that promote new types of learning or thinking). Third, advisors teach students to base educational choices on a developing sense of the overall edifice being self-built (i.e., advisors teach students to responsibly build mental connections between various components of their education as practice for using those same cognitive and behavioral skills to reason through and successfully master future challenges). Finally, Lowenstein suggested that advisors teach students to continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned—a skill that results in a “well-constructed education that prepares one for lifelong learning... [continued] every time new information is juxtaposed with previously acquired knowledge” (p. 130).

Lowenstein’s (2005) framework is supported by current literature connecting the advising process to measurable constructs. For example, Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified six factors (i.e., advisor accountability, advisor empowerment, student self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) linking academic advising to

student success as defined by grade point average (GPA) and meeting basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

These factors are embedded in academic advising literature and support application of Lowenstein's conceptual framework in this study aiming to advance institutional assessment of advising outcomes (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz, Kaplan, & Gueta, 2010; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins et al., 2004; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010).

Scholarly Context for the Study

Although learning outcomes have been insufficiently assessed, the teaching function of advising was identified in literature over four decades ago (Crookston, 1994), as inextricably linked to the principles of sound pedagogy that are central to college student learning (Hagen, 2005). Huggett's (2004) description of learner-centered advising suggested that advisors should elicit student examination of and reflection on academic goals, aspirations, decisions, and potential outcomes. While Lowenstein (2005) conceptually elucidated advising as teaching, his descriptions did not clarify specific teaching responsibilities, pedagogy, learning activities, or measurable outcomes needed to demonstrate that advising teaches students to responsibly manage their development as lifelong learners (Melander, 2005). Melander highlighted that institutions need to adopt excellence criteria and performance monitoring to demonstrate the impact of advising on learning outcomes.

Assessment of Academic Advising

As advising practice has shifted toward an emphasis on student learning outcomes, how have institutions responded to increasing accountability demands through advising assessment? In a NACADA survey of 1623 postsecondary institutions (Macaruso, 2007), 71% of responding institutions ($N = 649$) reported the absence of explicitly articulated student learning outcomes for advising (though 59% reported conducting advising assessment), and 32% had only conducted surveys of student satisfaction. In these situations, efforts to assess attainment of unidentified objectives may result from and maintain confusion and ambiguity about assessment of student learning in relation to academic advising.

Effective advising assessment requires institutions to implement and evaluate policies and practices aligned with scholarly findings from the fields of education and organizational management (Melander, 2005). Program evaluation has been successfully applied to assess advising for students who are exploring majors (Sams, Brown, Hussey, & Leonard, 2003) and is recommended as an approach to advising assessment because of its emphasis on data-driven decision making and continuous improvement of advising practice and related outcomes (Aiken-Wisniewski, Smith, & Troxel, 2010). However, many advising systems do not clearly articulate program theories and intended outcomes, making impact assessment challenging at best (Aiken-Wisniewski et al.; Habley, 2005). Ultimately, embedding advising assessment into program planning, implementation, and evaluation can allow advisors to view their work as the context wherein students' goals are connected to institutional mission in meaningful and measurable ways (Kelley, 2008).

Identifying Desired Advising Outcomes

What can help an institution to identify and assess desired, empirically supported advising outcomes? Program theory, goals, and objectives need to be identified before outcomes can be effectively assessed (Robbins, 2009; Robbins & Zarges, 2011).

Exploration of student expectations and institutional mission and vision statements may be starting points for articulating advising program theories and identifying program goals and intended outcomes. Students' expectations of advising vary for numerous reasons (see Propp & Rhodes, 2006), but their expectations are important as these stakeholders hold increasing financial responsibility for their education due to external funding cuts.

Advisors are in a prime position to shape students' expectations of college and advising in alignment with institutional vision even though 41% of vision statements for advising units were created independently of (and may not clearly align with) university vision statements or other official school documents (Abelman, Atkin, Dalessandro, Snyder-Suhy, & Janstova, 2007; Demetriou, 2005; Miller, Bender, & Schuh, 2005). Applying institutional vision to advising could guide assessment and enhance existing advising practices (Abelman & Molina, 2006; Maki, 2004), and it is recommended in order to evaluate alignment of a system's advising model with institutional goals and objectives (Abelman, Atkin, et al.). Sorting through empirical studies and unique aspects of an organizational structure to articulate desired advising outcomes is a daunting task. Application of Lowenstein's (2005) advising-as-teaching framework may be helpful for an institution seeking to gather theoretically-based information about the impact of its

advising system. Lowenstein's conceptual framework aligns with empirically identified factors linking advising to measurable advisor and student outcomes.

Advisor Outcomes

In addition to an increasing focus on student learning outcomes, institutions need to clarify the role of advisors in the advising process. Even though the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, 2003) has established professional standards to guide advising practice toward a focus on student learning and development, many advisors are not familiar with them (Keeling, 2010). With inadequate literature documenting its impact, the work of advising may remain at the periphery of students' postsecondary experiences (Habley, 2009). However, emerging research suggests that advisors should be willing to meet in person, provide correct information, communicate effectively, and demonstrate concern and professionalism as they teach students to develop self-authorship of educational plans and outcomes (Barnes, Williams, & Archer, 2010; Baxter Magolda, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; Bitz, 2010; Hester, 2008; Simmons, 2008; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Aligned with findings supporting advising as teaching, two primary factors emerge for institutions to consider when identifying measurable advisor outcomes: advisor accountability and advisor empowerment (Burt, Young-Jones, Yadon, & Carr, 2013; Demetriou, 2011; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) theoretical framework addressed advisors teaching students how to connect seemingly disparate elements of the higher education curriculum into a meaningful whole—an outcome that likely results from adequate advisor empowerment, accountability, and support.

However, for an institution to assess the extent to which advising results in learning, advisor accountability and empowerment need to be translated into measurable outcomes.

Young-Jones et al. (2013) found significant relationships between advisor accountability and empowerment and desired outcomes from advising. They defined advisor accountability as student expectations regarding professionalism, preparation, and availability of their advisors, and their regression model identified higher student expectations of advisor accountability as a predictor of higher self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support. Similarly, Wiseman and Messitt (2010) highlighted the advisor's potential to promote student learning through mentoring students toward effective goal setting, decision making, relationship building, incorporating strategies for academic success, and developing self-regulation and self-determination. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified advisor empowerment as helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful referrals, and they found it marginally predicted GPA and significantly predicted levels of student responsibility. Empowering college students to feel positively about themselves and in control of their environment can increase learning motivation and help to connect students' diverse interactions (e.g., with specific course content, campus resources, and educational professionals) to the overall college experience in a manner that contributes to success (Borgard, 1981; Frymier & Houser, 2000).

Student Learning Outcomes of Advising

Postsecondary institutions need to leverage the contribution of advising to student learning in regard to goal setting, academic self-confidence, motivation, and engagement as well as mastery of specific course content (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004).

Lowenstein (2005) suggested that advising can teach students to find or create logic within a self-built, continually enhanced learning edifice. These findings echoed Tinto's (2006) assertion that advising can enhance students' expectations of themselves as scholars who are important members of a university community. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified related student variables (i.e., self-efficacy, personal responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) that can help institutions frame student learning outcomes from advising. Student self-efficacy relates to beliefs about the ability to succeed in college (e.g., dealing with stress, preparation for college, ability to navigate coursework and exams), and Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified it as a significant predictor of student GPA that is highest in students who meet with an advisor at least once a semester and hold greater accountability expectations of their advisors. Literature on self-direction and self-authorship supports these findings (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2009; Firmin & MacKillop, 2008; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006; Simmons, 2008).

Though multifaceted, student responsibility was operationalized by Young-Jones et al. (2013) as student contributions to advising through goal setting and planning, preparing for appointments, following up on referrals, and communicating with advisors. They found that students who met with an advisor at least once a semester reported higher responsibility, as did those holding higher expectations of advisor empowerment and accountability. Multiple studies link academic achievement and retention with goal setting (e.g., Cheng & Chiou, 2010; Kem & Navan, 2006; Kim, Newton, Downey, & Benton, 2010; Hurt, 2007; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005), while others address appointment keeping (Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds, & Klyce, 2008), decision making (Lerstrom, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), educational and life planning (Hurt & Barro,

2006; Melander, 2005), communicating openly with advisors about GPA realities (Moore, 2006; Svanum & Bigatti, 2006), and factors related to frequent major changes (Firmin & MacKillop, 2008). Additionally, Young-Jones et al. (2013) summarized study skills as a set of behaviors related to academic success (i.e., time and grade management, studying, exam preparation, concentration, motivation, getting adequate sleep, and seeking an advisor's assistance). Advisors can help students develop strategies that enhance motivation and achievement (e.g., GPA, graduation rates) across the college experience (Burt et al., 2013; Graunke, Woosley, & Helms, 2006; Kallenbach & Zafft, 2004; Moore, 2006; Smith, Dai, & Szelest, 2006; Vander Schee, 2007).

According to Young-Jones et al. (2013), perceived support addresses a student's relational and stress management resources. They found that perceptions of advisor support were higher in students who met with advisors at least once a semester and in those who reported higher expectations of advisor accountability and empowerment. Existing research suggests that academic advisors are in a prime position to identify students who are struggling to adjust in the college environment and to teach them effective methods for coping with academic stress (McClellan, 2005). Though perceived support is linked to student motivation and success (Burt et al., 2013; Jones, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), further research is needed to explore the influence of complex academic support relationships on student learning (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009; Wentzel et al., 2010).

Setting for the Study

Missouri State University (MSU) is a public higher education system providing undergraduate and graduate degree programs for annual enrollments of over 20,000

students in a Midwestern metropolitan region populated by over 444,000 citizens (MSU, 2013a; MSU, 2013b; Springfield Business Development Corporation, 2013). MSU's 2012 first fall to second fall retention rate for full time students who were new to college (i.e., retention of first-time college students who returned to the university after the first year) was 75.25% (MSU, 2013, September). Additionally, 59% of MSU's students are female, and 80.64% are White or Caucasian (MSU, 2013, September). MSU's divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs include numerous institutional programs and services, but a common thread woven through each area (and each MSU student's educational experience) is academic advising. Determining who oversees advising, however, requires more than a review of the university's organizational chart (MSU, 2013c).

Academic Advising at Missouri State University

Advising begins at MSU when prospective students and their families visit to learn about academic programs of interest. Early advising also occurs at local and regional events geared toward student recruitment. Once admitted to MSU and before beginning classes, traditional students with less than 24 transfer hours (credits earned after high school) participate in a two-day orientation. The program includes an extensive academic advising component that covers general education, opportunities for first-year college students, and the rationale for students establishing positive relationships with their assigned academic advisors. Transfer students are invited to attend a similar orientation and are then advised in advisement centers or individual academic departments.

Academic advising is required for MSU students at least once a semester prior to course registration until they have completed 75 credit hours. Students with undeclared majors are advised by professional advisors in an advisement center. Once students declare majors, they are advised by faculty members or professional advisors in academic colleges or departments. At first glance, this advising system appears to seamlessly cover bases for all students; however, very little is known at MSU about the actual impact of advising on student higher education experiences. This lack of understanding (and data) is not unique to MSU. In fact, even though academic advising is commonly assumed to contribute to college student success and retention, Campbell and Nutt (2008) suggested that this case is not explicitly supported in existing literature. Additionally, the American College Testing (ACT) program and the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) indicated that many higher education institutions do not capitalize on the potential of academic advising to promote student success (Habley, 2004; NACADA, 2004). How can an institution like MSU address the challenge of advising assessment in such a decentralized structure?

MSU Academic Advising Council

In November 2008, MSU's Provost displayed interest in more clearly understanding the relationship between advising and student success by establishing the Academic Advising Council (AAC). Provost-appointed AAC membership includes advisement coordinators, directors of programs with advising components, faculty advisors, and professional advisors. These individuals represent all MSU colleges as well as campus advisement centers serving specific populations (i.e., undecided, business, psychology, and education majors). The Provost charged the group to evaluate

administration and delivery of advising to all MSU students, make recommendations for improvements, identify and encourage successful advising practices, and enhance consistency and quality of the MSU advising system.

The AAC has since demonstrated leadership across multiple aspects of MSU advising practice. In 2008, charter members composed a mission statement for campus academic advising (see Appendix A) and, based on CAS recommendations (2003), they identified best practices for individual advisors, followed by communicating expectations to students through a “Be Advised” document (see Appendix C). These materials have been distributed across campus through multiple methods and are now core components of MSU advisor training, recognized by NACADA as one of the nation’s exemplary advisor training programs (Voller, Miller, & Neste, 2010).

In 2009, the AAC began evaluation efforts by conducting an advising satisfaction survey. Although understanding student satisfaction with advising is important and results were incorporated to guide improvement of the advising process (e.g., training advisors to inform students about co-curricular engagement opportunities like internships), AAC membership agreed that satisfaction surveys could not be the sole data source applied to evaluation and enhancement of MSU advising. AAC members determined that these aspects of the group’s charge could best be met through implementation of a systematic, consistent assessment process investigating both advising delivery and student outcomes. In 2010 and again in 2011, the AAC elected one of the present researchers (a standing member) to chair the AAC and lead the group’s efforts to meet evaluative elements of its charge. This study analyzed AAC artifacts (i.e., mission statement, best practices, and survey data) to investigate MSU’s advising

program theory and impact, and to provide recommendations to enhance advising and its assessment at MSU.

Design for the Study

This study addressed research questions through a program theory and impact evaluation (Rossi et al., 2004). The approach was initially applied to identify and articulate MSU's advising program theory—the operational plan through which desired outcomes are logically connected with a program's activities (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; Rossi et al.). The study was designed as a mixed method, causal comparative, cross-sectional inquiry into MSU's academic advising program theory and outcomes (Creswell, 2009; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Rossi et al., 2004; Salkind, 2010).

Qualitative typological analyses were applied to extrapolate program theory from existing documents to address RQ1. RQ2 was addressed through mixed methods (i.e., statistical and typological) analyses of archival data from the AAC's 2012-2013 assessment effort (Field, 2009; Hatch, 2002). MSU requires advising for all undergraduate students until at least 75 credit hours have been completed; therefore, a true experimental design with a control group of MSU students who have not been advised was not feasible. A causal-comparative (i.e., *ex post facto*) design allowed for exploration of relationships between independent and dependent variables even though advising and its assessment had already occurred (Salkin, 2010). RQ3 was addressed based on findings from RQ1 and RQ2.

Participants and Sample

Participants ($N = 1172$) consisted of a cross-section of MSU freshmen and seniors at MSU who completed advising surveys between September 2012 and May 2013. The

AAC believed that an initial advising assessment effort would likely be most effective in settings where student attendance was already required, thus first-year seminar classes and senior exit exam administrations were targeted as desired assessment venues. As large, randomly selected samples typically reduce sampling errors (Fink, 2009), the AAC aimed to acquire samples that represented at least 20% of the students from each identified freshman and senior population.

Freshmen completed surveys during first-year seminar class periods from September through November of the fall 2012 semester. Simple random cluster sampling (Fink, 2009) was employed to select and survey 22 of 89 sections of the seminar required of all incoming freshmen (and to select and survey two from 15 sections of the required Honors College first-year seminar). The freshman student response rate was 75% ($n = 501$) of 667 students enrolled in the sampled first-year seminar sections, and the selected sample represented 20% of 2465 students enrolled in all fall 2012 first-year seminar courses. This sample size is estimated to provide a 3.91% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Senior participants ($n = 671$) completed the advising survey during the University Exit Exam which is required of all graduating seniors and may be taken when convenient after students complete 90 credit hours. Senior surveys ($n = 675$) accompanied exam administrations from February through May of the spring 2013 semester, with group sizes of 30 to 227 students, until all but four forms had been distributed. The senior survey response rate was 100% as it was distributed for completion to students who actually attended their registered test administrations. Of 1756 students who registered

for the spring 2013 exit exam, 38% completed the survey. This sample size is estimated to provide a 2.97% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained through review of existing documents and the archived set of advising survey responses. Initial qualitative data were collected through review of MSU's advising mission statement, advisor best practices, and the "Be Advised" document intended to communicate advisor expectations to students. A document analysis guide based on this study's conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) was created and incorporated to determine alignment of each document's elements with advising literature and to identify MSU's advising program theory (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz et al., 2010; Kuh et al., 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins et al., 2004; Rossi et al., 2004; Wentzel et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Qualitative and quantitative archival data collected from MSU's 2012-2013 advising surveys were also analyzed in the present study. The AAC designed the surveys to align with the institution's advising mission statement. As such, responses were expected to provide key insights into the relationship between MSU's advising program theory and student outcomes (e.g., GPA). Because archival data without student identifiers were proposed for intended analyses, IRB approval was granted through MSU and the University of Missouri to conduct this study without further review. Participant confidentiality was assured as the surveys collected no student names or other identifiers.

Freshman Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 14-item instrument in alignment with the MSU advising mission statement to collect information

from freshmen about their expectations and experiences related to MSU advising (e.g., overall experience, personal responsibility, advisor support, types of expected assistance). Item formats included use of a five point Likert type scale, multiple response selection, and short answer for collecting qualitative and GPA data. The survey also requested demographic information (e.g., Honors College involvement, athletic participation, race, ethnicity, sex, and academic college in the university). A pilot assessment was not conducted; however, AAC members worked through multiple iterations of the instrument before approving its final form.

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 15-item instrument to mirror the freshman survey in question format and demographic data collection. However, the senior survey focused on actual advising experiences instead of expectations, and an item was added to identify transfer student status. The pilot sample ($n = 23$) was too small for robust reliability analyses (Field, 2009), however, results suggested acceptable item reliability.

Data Analysis

Mixed methods data analyses were undertaken in three steps to address this study's research questions. To address RQ1, the first step included a qualitative typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) of data collected from documents reviewed to investigate MSU's advising program theory. The second step included multiple quantitative analyses of ordinal and interval survey data, as well as GPA, to address RQ2 (Field, 2009). Quantitative data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) through crosstabs with chi square tests of independence, analyses of variance, independent samples t -tests, and multiple regression with significance levels of

$p < .05$. The third step included typological analyses of open ended survey responses to also address RQ2. Typological analyses in steps one and three were conducted in alignment with the conceptual framework guiding the present study (Lowenstein, 2005), and trustworthiness of data was further validated through triangulation with survey results and existing literature (Patton, 1999). Findings from RQ1 and RQ2 informed findings for RQ3 (i.e., empirically based recommendations for enhancing future advising assessment at MSU).

SECTION TWO:
EVALUATION FINDINGS

Introduction

This study explored MSU's advising program theory and impact and made recommendations based on findings to enhance institutional advising practice. Findings for the first two research questions are covered in Section Two. Recommendations for future advising practice and assessment are addressed in Section Three.

Addressing RQ1: MSU's Advising Program Theory

Review and typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) of AAC-created documents revealed insights into MSU's advising program theory (i.e., strategies and tactics identified by MSU's advising system to achieve measurable goals and objectives, Rossi et al., 2004) to address the first research question:

RQ1: How can MSU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?

The theory underlying MSU's advising mission and practice is aligned with current literature (e.g., Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013). However, program theory articulation is implicit and does not include specific goals and learning objectives for students or advisors. As such, even though organizational and service utilization plans are embedded in MSU's advising program structure, it is not clear what outcomes are expected of advisors or students in the venues where advising takes place.

MSU's Advising Mission Statement

MSU's advising mission statement (see Appendix A) was typologically analyzed against conceptual and operational elements of Lowenstein's (2005) theory of advising as teaching, while including an element of advisor support that is implied but not expressly identified within the conceptual framework. Factors identified by Young-Jones et al.

(2013) that link advising to GPA (and other variables influencing GPA) align with Lowenstein’s work, and each element of the MSU advising mission statement corresponds to conceptual and operational constructs identified in the literature (see Figure 1). As a starting point for exploring articulation of MSU’s advising program theory, it is important to note that each element of the mission is supported by advising literature.

Conceptual (Lowenstein, 2005)	Operational (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	From Missouri State University Advising Mission Statement
Find/create logic in one’s education	Student Self-Efficacy	Student self-reliant problem solving (<i>is encouraged by advisors</i>)
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner	Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability	<i>(Advisors provide)</i> Information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities
Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built	Student Responsibility	Student participation required in the decision-making process
Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned	Student Study Skills	Students become lifelong learners
(No comparable element)	Perceived Support	<i>(Advisors)</i> Support students as they seek the best possible education at MSU

Figure 1. MSU Advising Mission Statement Aligned with Literature.

Advisor Best Practices

Analyses of best practices for MSU advisors a (see Appendix B) revealed information about MSU's advising program theory. The "Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University" document identifies practices aligned with national advising standards (CAS, 2003) and related literature (see Figure 2). While suggesting activities through which advisors may incorporate best practices, neither measurable goals nor advisor or student learning outcomes are identified. However, this document is an important source of information for identifying potentially desirable outcomes of MSU advising. Linking departmental advisor outcomes (e.g., measures of advisor accountability and effectiveness) with desired student learning outcomes is an area of needed research (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; NACADA, 2008; Padak & Kuhn, 2009; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Research Constructs (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	From Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University
Find/create logic in one's education	<i>[Intended to develop]</i> Student Self-Efficacy	<p>5. Adopt a developmental approach to help advisees become independent learners and self-reliant problem solvers.</p> <p>Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster development of advisees' decision making skills • Use an academic advising syllabus • Coach students on appropriate ways to advocate for themselves
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner	Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability	<p>3. Provide accurate and timely information about the University and its programs.</p> <p>Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know department and University requirements • Know department and University deadlines • Communicate pertinent information to advisees or selected groups • Know and be able to refer students to appropriate University resources as appropriate to students' needs • Know about and be able to refer students to appropriate web sites for specialized information • Know about and be able to recommend to students appropriate organizations for their professional development (e.g., departmental student professional organizations, etc.) <p>4. For advisors who work with prospective or transfer students, facilitate transferring from other institutions to Missouri State. All advisors assist students in transferring from Missouri State to other institutions when that is in the best interest of the student.</p> <p>Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to use the Missouri State transfer equivalencies web link • Develop and maintain relationships with appropriate individuals at transfer institutions • Be willing to work with prospective freshman and transfer students prior to Missouri State enrollment

Figure 2. MSU's Best Practices for Advisors Aligned with Literature.

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Research Constructs (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	From Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner (Lowenstein, 2005)	Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability	<p>7. Maintain a high degree of professionalism. Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain posted office hours • Keep advising appointments • Keep up to date on changing departmental and University requirements • Prepare for advising appointments and document advising sessions in “Advising Notes” • Support University requirements and programs (e.g., general education) • Maintain a positive attitude regarding department and University colleagues and programs • Maintain confidentiality as possible • Consult with and make appropriate referrals to University personnel when advisee needs extend beyond professional experience and training <p>8. Engage in personal growth and development. Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attain and maintain Master Advisor status • Regularly attend training and education related to academic advisement (e.g., Academic Advisor Forums) • Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the Missouri Academic Advising Association (MACADA) • Keep up-to-date on current advising techniques and strategies • Attend appropriate discipline-specific professional development opportunities related to student advising, retention, and success

Figure 2 (cont'd). MSU's Best Practices for Advisors Aligned with Literature.

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Research Constructs (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	From Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University
Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built	Student Responsibility	(See <i>Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You</i>)
Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned	Student Study Skills	(Not addressed through this document; see qualitative survey feedback)
(No comparable element)	[To foster] Perceived Support	<p>1. Maintain regular contact with all advisees. Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email advisees or selected groups • Post advising information on a web site • Schedule regular meetings with all advisees (once a semester, minimum) • Schedule frequent meetings with advisees who are having academic difficulties <p>2. Establish positive relationships with all advisees. Examples of methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize advisees and be able to call them by name • Educate students about advisor and advisee roles and responsibilities • Maintain up-to-date advising notes • Address the needs of diverse students (e.g., nontraditional, international) • Show a personal interest in students' lives

Figure 2 (cont'd). MSU's Best Practices for Advisors Aligned with Literature.

Advisor Expectations of Students

In addition to analyzing documents intended to guide advising practice, “Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You” (see Appendix C) was analyzed to explore how advisor expectations of students could illuminate MSU’s advising program theory. Elements of this document align with related literature, as shown in Figure 3, and point to measurable assessment outcomes. For instance, while finding or creating logic in one’s education is a conceptual phenomenon (Lowenstein, 2005), and student self-efficacy (Young-Jones et al., 2013) is a variable requiring an operational definition for measurement, preparing for advisement meetings, producing a list of questions or a degree audit, and demonstrating knowledge of program requirements and course prerequisites are potentially measurable student learning outcomes of advising. As another example, encouraging students to appreciate an advisor’s multiple duties and working with his or her schedule are guidelines expected to point students toward developing mutual respect that characterizes supportive advising relationships. While the connection between practices and expected outcomes is clearer in this document than in the mission statement or best practice documents, program theory is still not explicitly articulated in a manner that facilitates outcome measurement.

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Research Construct (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	From Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You
Find/create logic in one's education	Student Self-Efficacy	- Prepare for meetings with your advisor; bring a list of questions, a current degree audit, and ideas about class choices. Check program requirements and class prerequisites, too.
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner	Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability	- Meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your long-term and short-term goals and evaluate your academic progress.
Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built	Student Responsibility	- Be punctual for appointments and contact your advisor in advance of any necessary schedule changes. - Communicate honestly with your advisor about information he or she may need to know about you in order to help you effectively; this includes information about significant changes that can affect your academic progress and goals, like a job change or new choice of a major. - Accept responsibility for the decisions and actions (or inactions) you take that affect your educational progress.
Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned	Student Study Skills	- Seek help from your advisor when you need it, so any problems you face don't become overwhelming.
(No comparable element)	Perceived Support	- Appreciate your advisor's multiple duties--which can include teaching, committee work and research activities--and be prepared to work with his or her schedule, too.

Figure 3. Advisor Expectations of MSU Students Aligned with Literature.

Addressing RQ2: MSU's Advising Program Impact

Impact evaluation is intended to answer questions about program outcomes (Rossi et al., 2004). This phase of MSU's advising program evaluation employed multiple quantitative analyses of survey data (Field, 2009), as well as qualitative typological analyses (Hatch, 2002) of open ended advising survey responses. The following research question was used to guide data analyses and interpretations:

RQ2: What can be learned about MSU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?

To begin, descriptive summaries (see Appendices J and K) are provided for total freshman ($n = 500$) and senior ($n = 645$) samples, then for freshmen and seniors by college. Reports of quantitative analyses including crosstabs with chi square tests of independence, analyses of variance, t -tests, and multiple regression, are followed by results of qualitative typological analyses of open-ended survey responses.

Descriptive Summaries

Descriptive information includes frequencies and percentages for each sample by sex, race, honors status, athletic status, transfer student status (in the senior sample), and answers to each advising item on the related survey. Information for students who reported having majors in more than one college appears in a separate column, and results for students in that category are not included in the columns of each table dedicated to specific colleges. Information is also summarized for students with undecided and individualized majors, as well as for students in the Honors College. Qualitative feedback is provided by college for open-ended survey responses with names of individuals, programs, and departments redacted.

General demographic summaries are provided for freshman ($n = 500$) and senior ($n = 645$) samples. The freshman sample consisted primarily of White (85.4%) female (60.2%) students with 10.6% reporting Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. The senior sample was comprised of mostly White (86.2%) female (59.5%) students, 3.3% of whom reported Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

When asked about taking personal responsibility for academic planning, most students reported that they would or did take the lead role in decision making with input from their advisor (freshmen = 67.2%; seniors = 62.3%), followed by students partnering 50/50 with their advisor (freshmen = 24.4%; seniors = 23.4%). Differences were visible between freshman expectations and senior experiences related to taking personal responsibility for goals following college graduation. Among freshmen, 66% expected to take the lead role with input from the advisor, while 45.9% of seniors did so. Only 17% of freshmen reported the expectation of making all decisions in this area, whereas 45.4% of seniors reported making all related decisions.

When asked to rate their overall experience with MSU advising, most students reported it as extremely positive or positive (freshmen = 75.6%; seniors = 75.8%). Most freshmen (91.2%) reported expecting to meet with their advisor occasionally or at least once a year after completing 75 credit hours, and 85.1% of seniors met with advisors at least once a year after that time. More freshmen (89%) reported expecting advisors to provide information about career-related options than seniors who reported actually receiving such information (43.6%), and the same pattern was visible when students reported expectations (freshmen = 50.8%) and experiences (seniors = 21.7%) of receiving information about opportunities for cocurricular involvement. Finally, 93.8% of

freshmen reported expecting advisors to support them in seeking the best possible education at MSU, whereas 78% of seniors reported experiencing such support.

Freshman Expectations and Senior Experiences of MSU Advising

Chi square tests of independence were calculated to compare the frequency of freshman expectations to senior experiences of advising assistance in specific areas.

Assumptions for acceptable cell counts were met for all chi-square analyses. Significant interactions were found in six areas. These included information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines, $\chi^2(1) = 9.61, p = .002$, referrals to campus resources, $\chi^2(1) = 38.24, p < .001$, career related options, $\chi^2(1) = 250.58, p < .001$, study habits and time management, $\chi^2(1) = 55.30, p < .001$, opportunities for involvement, $\chi^2(1) = 94.75, p < .001$ (see Figure 4). Odds ratios further highlight differences between freshman expectations and senior experiences of advising. Freshmen were 1.46 times more likely to expect information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines, 2.29 times more likely to expect referrals to campus resources, 10.48 times more likely to expect advisors to provide career related options, 3.35 times more likely to expect advisor assistance with study habits and time management, and 3.43 times more likely to expect advisement related to opportunities for involvement than seniors were to report receiving such assistance. No significant proportional differences were revealed between freshman expectations and senior experiences of advising assistance related to major and minor requirements $\chi^2(1) = .71, p = .398$, or general education requirements, $\chi^2(1) = .01, p = .937$.

Expected (FR) and Reported (SR) Advising Help	Class	Count	Yes	No
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	FR	Actual	217	283
		Expected	191.7	308.3
	SR	Actual	222	423
		Expected	247.3	397.7
Major and minor requirements	FR	Actual	472	28
		Expected	468.6	31.4
	SR	Actual	601	44
		Expected	604.4	40.6
Referrals to campus resources	FR	Actual	181	319
		Expected	134.9	365.1
	SR	Actual	128	517
		Expected	174.1	470.9
General education requirements	FR	Actual	312	188
		Expected	311.4	188.6
	SR	Actual	401	244
		Expected	401.6	243.4
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	FR	Actual	445	55
		Expected	317	183
	SR	Actual	281	364
		Expected	409	236
Study habits and time management	FR	Actual	131	369
		Expected	84.3	415.7
	SR	Actual	62	583
		Expected	108.7	536.3
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	FR	Actual	254	246
		Expected	176	324
	SR	Actual	149	496
		Expected	227	418

Figure 4. Cell Counts for Freshman Expectations and Senior Experiences of Information Provided by Advisors.

Chi square tests of independence also revealed significant differences in freshman expectations and senior experiences in relation to continued advisement after completion of 75 credit hours, $\chi^2(1) = 40.86, p < .001$. Significantly fewer than expected freshmen reported no plan to meet with advisors after completion of 75 hours, whereas a higher

than expected proportion of seniors did not meet with advisors after completing 75 credit hours. The same pattern held true for freshman expectations compared to senior experiences of meeting with advisors only once per year after 75 hours (see Figure 5).

Expected (FR) and Reported (SR) Advising Frequency After 75 Hours	Class	Count	
		Actual	Expected
Never	FR	Actual	10
		Expected	27.5
	SR	Actual	53
		Expected	35.5
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arise/arose)	FR	Actual	414
		Expected	380.2
	SR	Actual	456
		Expected	489.8
About once a year	FR	Actual	42
		Expected	59
	SR	Actual	93
		Expected	76
Once as a senior for a final degree check	FR	Actual	15
		Expected	20.1
	SR	Actual	31
		Expected	25.9
Communicate(d) via email without meeting in person	FR	Actual	19
		Expected	13.1
	SR	Actual	11
		Expected	16.9

Figure 5. Cell Counts for Freshman Expectations and Senior Experiences of Advising Frequency After 75 Hours.

Exploring Senior GPA by Different Amounts of MSU Advising

Between subjects analysis of variance (2x2 ANOVA) was incorporated to explore the relationship between different amounts of MSU advising and senior GPA. Mediating variables included whether or not seniors met for face-to-face advising after 75 credit hours and whether or not they self-identified as transfer students (i.e., 24 or more credits completed at institutions other than MSU but not necessarily after high school), with

GPA as the dependent variable. For this analysis, 20% of the largest group was randomly selected to minimize problematic differences in group size, resulting in a reduced sample of senior cases ($n = 191$). Data were screened for homogeneity and normality assumptions, and no problems were identified. Analyses yielded no main effects on GPA for face-to-face advising after 75 hours, $F(1,187) = 3.09$, $p = .081$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$ or for transfer status, $F(1,187) = .04$, $p = .852$, partial $\eta^2 < .001$, and no significant interaction effect, $F(1,187) = 1.19$, $p = .277$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. This indicates no significant difference in GPA between students who continued with face-to-face advising after 75 hours ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .41$) and their peers ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .40$) or between transfer ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .37$) and non-transfer students ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .43$). Collection of student identification numbers in future assessments would allow for more precise distinctions to be drawn based on credits completed at MSU or other colleges (e.g., distinguishing between dual enrollment in high school and transfer credits earned following high school graduation).

Relationships between Advising, Personal Responsibility, and Senior GPA

Subscales were created for advisor information, advisor support, and personal responsibility to begin identifying variables potentially related to senior GPA. Each new variable resulted from combining related survey items. One-way analyses of variance and independent samples t -tests were applied to investigate group differences in senior GPA based on advisor information, advisor support, and personal responsibility. Finally, multiple regression analysis was applied to explore GPA variance predicted by these three variables.

Advisor information. The advisor information variable was created based on results of independent samples t -tests comparing group GPA differences by types of

information received. Significant GPA differences were observed for groups who received information from advisors about major and minor requirements ($n = 601$, $M = 3.35$, $SD = .43$) compared to students who did not receive this information ($n = 44$, $M = 3.16$, $SD = .42$), $t(643) = 2.87$, $p = .004$. GPA also differed between students who received information about career related options such as internships, work experience, and graduate school preparation ($n = 281$, $M = 3.39$, $SD = .41$) compared to students who did not receive this information ($n = 364$, $M = 3.29$, $SD = .44$), $t(643) = 2.79$, $p = .005$. Responses related to both types of assistance were combined to create the advisor information variable (1 = yes to only one or neither help, and 2 = yes to both helps). An independent samples t -test revealed that students who received both types of information from advisors ($n = 269$) reported significantly higher GPA ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .41$) than students who received only one or neither type of information from advisors ($n = 376$, $M = 3.29$, $SD = .44$), $t(604.54) = -3.28$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. This means that advisor provision of information about majors, minors, and career related options accounted for 2% of GPA variance.

Advisor support. The advisor support variable was created by averaging responses on two correlated ($r = .64$, $p < .001$) Likert type senior survey items: “How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU)?” (5 = extremely positive, and 1 = extremely negative); and, “Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?” (5 = absolutely, and 1 = not at all). Ordinal categories for the new advisor support variable included (1) neutral to poor support ($n = 188$), (2) moderate support ($n = 182$), (3) high support ($n = 146$), and (4) highest support ($n = 119$). One-way ANOVA

was conducted to determine the amount of GPA variance explained by advisor support. One case was removed for a missing data point. The overall ANOVA was significant, $F(3, 640) = 3.24, p = .022$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, with advisor support accounting for 2% of GPA variance. GPA increased in a linear fashion with increasing advisor support, however, post hoc analyses using a Bonferroni correction only indicated significant GPA differences between students who reported highest advisor support ($M = 3.41, SD = .39$) and those who reported neutral to poor support ($M = 3.27, SD = .45, p = .021$).

Student responsibility. The student responsibility variable was created by averaging responses on two similar items from the senior survey: “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?” Responses included, (a) I made all decisions without input from an academic advisor; (b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor; (c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor; (d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input; and (e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me. Due to problematic group size differences, categories were collapsed to code the new student responsibility variable as follows: (1) Advisor responsible for at least half of decision making ($n = 156$); (2) Student took lead role in decision making with input from advisor ($n = 241$); and, (3) Student made all decisions without advisor input ($n = 238$).

One-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the amount of GPA variance explained by student responsibility. The overall ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 642) = 4.91, p = .008$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, indicating that student responsibility accounted for 2% of

GPA variance. Post hoc analyses using a Bonferroni correction revealed significant GPA differences only between students who reported that advisors made at least half of their academic and post-graduation planning decisions ($M = 3.25, SD = .42$) and students who took the lead role in decision making ($M = 3.39, SD = .45$), $p = .005$. GPA for students who made all decisions without advisor input ($M = 3.33, SD = .41$) fell between GPA for the other groups but was not significantly different from either group.

Advisor information, advisor support, and student responsibility. Finally, three variables were tested as predictors of senior GPA ($n = 645$) in a hierarchical multiple regression analysis: advisor provision of major and/or career related information, advisor support, and student responsibility for planning. Data screening revealed that assumptions were met for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, homogeneity, and homoscedasticity. Advisor information and advisor support were entered first into a hierarchical regression to account for advisor contribution to GPA. This model indicated (see Table 1) that advisor information and support significantly predict student GPA, $F(2, 642) = 8.23, p < .001, R^2 = .03$ (i.e., the model explained 3% of variance in student GPA). Advisor information was a stronger predictor of GPA, $b = .09, t(642) = 2.57, p = .010, pr^2 = .01$, which showed that students whose advisors provide major and career related information are likely to have higher GPAs. Advisor support also predicted GPA, $b = .04, t(642) = 2.43, p = .016, pr^2 = .01$; therefore, higher levels of advisor support were reported by students with higher GPAs.

Student responsibility for planning was added in a second step to examine if it enhanced the model's predictive value. As shown in Table 1, the addition of this variable

was significant, $F(4, 640) = 7.43, p < .001, R^2 = .04$, with the second model explaining an additional 1% of GPA variance. Participants who reported that their advisors took responsibility for at least half of their academic and post-graduation planning reported lower GPAs than participants who made all decisions on their own, $b = -.13, t(640) = -2.91, p = .004, pr^2 = .01$, whereas students who took the lead role in decision making in collaboration with advisors did not report significantly different GPAs than students who made all of their own decisions, $b = .02, t(640) = .43, p = .668, pr^2 < .001$. Thus, greater student responsibility for planning is a predictor of higher GPA.

Table 1

Hierarchical multiple regression of GPA as a function of advisor information, advisor support, and student responsibility

Variable	B	SE B	β	Sig.
Step 1				
Advisor info	.089	.035	.103	.010
Advisor support	.038	.016	.097	.016
(Constant)	3.117	.056	—	<.001
Step 2				
Advisor info	.098	.035	.113	.005
Advisor support	.045	.016	.115	.006
Advisor resp.	-.130	.045	-.131	.004
Student resp.	.017	.040	.019	.668
(Constant)	3.117	.056	—	<.001

Note. $n = 644$.

Using the second model's regression equation, the best case scenario (i.e., high advisor information, highest advisor support, and high student responsibility) predicts a 3.51 GPA, and the worst case scenario (i.e., low advisor information, low advisor support, and low student responsibility) predicts a 3.13 GPA. Taking into consideration the standard errors of the estimate, the model predicts with 95% confidence that minimum GPAs will fall between 3.06 and 3.18, while the range of maximum GPAs will be 3.40 to 3.62. These GPAs are not substantially different because the model explains only 4% of overall GPA variance. However, when considering GPA as an outcome variable, it is important to note the restricted GPA range of 2.00 to 4.00 for students to continue their studies at MSU. When such a narrow range is considered, a 4% increase in GPA related to academic advising is meaningful.

Qualitative Aspects of Advising as Teaching

Open ended survey responses were typologically analyzed (Hatch, 2002) to explore freshman expectations and senior experiences of academic advising at MSU. Students were asked to explain their responses to questions about satisfaction with their overall advising experience, expected and experienced advisor support, and any additional thoughts about MSU advising. Lowenstein's (2005) conceptual framework of advising as teaching was applied to these qualitative data to seek insight into how students' responses could inform empirically supported efforts to enhance MSU's advising program. As with current literature (Barnes et al., 2010; Baxter Magolda, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; Bitz, 2010; Hester, 2008; Simmons, 2008; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008), substantial feedback was aligned with operationalized constructs of advisor accountability, advisor empowerment, and perceived support. Responses provided less

insight into student responsibility, student self-efficacy, and student study skills (Young-Jones et al., 2013). This is not surprising as open-ended feedback was sought about expectations and experiences with MSU advising rather than students' contributions to the process.

Themes related to advisor accountability. Qualitative feedback related to advisor accountability (i.e., advisor professionalism, preparation, and availability, Young-Jones et al., 2013) was extracted from 56 related freshman comments. Comments were coded as positive, negative, or mixed/neutral then analyzed to identify themes that emerged in relation to professionalism, availability, and knowledge demonstrated by an advisor (Barnes et al., 2010; Bloom et al, 2007; Lerstrom, 2008). For freshmen, 21.4% of comments were positive, 26.8% were mixed or neutral, and 51.8% were negative.

Positive freshman comments referred to advisors as “very efficient at getting me in for an appointment,” “easy to contact,” and “flexible with time [appointments].” A sense of security appeared related to student perceptions of an advisor’s knowledge (e.g., “Any questions that I have I know can be answered by my advisor,” and “made me feel secure in my choice of my major”). Some negative comments related to inconsistencies or inadequacies in advising knowledge (e.g., “At Soar, my leader told me the classes I should take, when I met with my advisor, She said I should be taking other classes,” “I came out with more questions than [when] I went in,” “signed me up for a couple of the wrong classes,” and “couldn’t answer the questions I had”). Neutral comments were neither positive nor negative (e.g., “Part of their job description is to do this”). Mixed comments included positive and negative elements (e.g., “I have found the advisor to be knowledgeable, but scheduling appointments has proved somewhat of a hassle,” and “I

didn't get to talk long it felt really rushed and similar to an interview but my advisor was very nice and eager to help"). In sum, freshman comments revealed that they expect advisors to be readily available to provide them with correct answers to their questions. Student expectations are illuminated here, but this study did not aim to measure the extent to which advisors met those expectations.

Although the senior sample ($n = 645$) was only larger than the freshman sample by 145 students, more than twice as many seniors than freshmen provided feedback related to advisor accountability. Analysis of 131 comments revealed that 35.9% were positive, 44.3% were negative, and 19.8% were neutral or mixed. Themes related to an advisor's demonstrated knowledge, professionalism, and availability emerged as with the freshman sample. However, senior comments revealed a new theme related to their desire for a supportive and consistent advising relationship similar to the interactions described by Wiseman and Messitt (2010) as promoting student learning.

Comments revealed substantial variance between seniors' experiences of advisor knowledge, professionalism, and availability. For example, one student said, "At my last school, I basically had to teach the advisors what the forms meant. Advisors at MSU have a clear understanding of what classes need to be taken. They also know who to ask if they have questions." Others shared that their advisor "was always on the ball and prepared for any questions" and that "information that was given was correct and helpful." Negative comments referred to advisors who "knew nothing about my degree," "told me to google jobs," and "didn't know what I needed to graduate," with one student reporting "I did not graduate on time because of my advisor." Variance was also apparent in comments applauding advisor availability (e.g., emails were always responded to in a

timely manner,” “always available,” and “was in his office when he said he would be”) and describing deficiencies in this area (“I showed up on time for meetings and they were consistently late,” “takes weeks sometimes months to get an appointment,” “was very busy and getting a meeting was difficult,” and “it was hard to find a meeting time and this became very frustrating since I am paying so much”). One student indicated availability of only two advisors for the degree – “one who didn’t know much and one who wasn’t helpful,” while other students suggested that MSU should “educate staff to the fullest” and that “advisors should be held to a higher standard of accountability.”

Senior comments in relation to advisor accountability revealed a theme of support desired from relationships wherein students feel valued by advisors. Positive comments praised advisors for their support (e.g., “always made time for me,” “extremely approachable,” “did his best so I could be my best,” and “doors were always open to me and I felt like they were invested”). Other students described their advisor as someone who “just asked my class choices,” “wasn’t very supportive of me,” “didn’t want to help with anything,” “does not even know my name,” “was rude and unhelpful,” and “advised way too many students to actually personalize any help.” Student comments also provided insight into their desire to be valued as a priority to advisors (e.g., “the help was there when I wanted it, but I felt like I was being an inconvenience,” “[MSU should have] dedicated advisors – people who actually enjoy the job and don’t make you feel like you’re burdening them,” and “there are those advisors who genuinely care, but you can tell that others really feel that it’s an inconvenience”).

Finally, changing advisors emerged as an important theme related to senior views of advisor accountability. Among negative comments and negative aspects of mixed

comments, changing advisors was sometimes viewed disparagingly (e.g., “I never changed majors, yet I had 3 different advisors,” “they kept switching who my advisor was” “pass[ed] me around” “I had 3 advisors in 4 years”). Other students seemed to appreciate the support available through the opportunity to change advisors (e.g., “had several advisers... my first one dropped the ball on some registration stuff, but the rest have been fine,” “my last one was great, but I only had him for a semester,” “my first advisor wouldn’t give me the time of day, but once I switched it was great,” “I wish there had been more than one advisor,” and “the advisor I had previously did NOT know anything about graduating or career paths to take”). As with freshmen, seniors expected advisors to be professional, available, and knowledgeable, and senior comments suggested that consistency in advisor assignment is important to students unless advising is not good. In these cases students appreciated the opportunity to change advisors.

Themes related to advisor empowerment. Qualitative feedback related to advisor empowerment (i.e., helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful referrals, Young-Jones et al., 2013) was culled from 173 related freshman comments which were coded as positive, negative, or mixed/neutral. Comments were then analyzed to identify recurring themes which emerged primarily in relation to advisor helpfulness and providing the expected extent and types of help. For freshmen, 75.1% of comments were positive, 20.8% were mixed or neutral, and 4% were negative.

Neutral freshmen comments were stated in terms of expectations (e.g., “[advisors] should try their best to help me seek the best options,” and “they should be supportive of your best opportunities”), while negative and positive comments alluded to actual

experiences. Negative feedback in relation to advisor empowerment focused on expectations of more in-depth advising information or assistance than was received (e.g., “advisors have only enrolled me in classes and haven’t really stepped in to help when I’m in need of assistance academically,” “could have used a little more explanation in the classes I was taking,” and “I felt like they didn’t provide a lot of input from their experience when I made my schedule”). However, overwhelmingly positive feedback was provided by freshmen about advisor helpfulness (e.g., “I haven’t had a bad experience and I don’t think I will,” and “my academic advisor has been very helpful and I’m very happy to have one”). Other comments described advisors as “always telling us about campus resources and getting us involved” and providing “good advice and insight for continuation of my education.”

Senior feedback related to advisor empowerment (160 comments) was also primarily positive (60.6%) with 20% neutral or mixed comments, and 19.4% coded as negative. The same themes emerged for seniors as with freshmen in relation to various aspects of advisor helpfulness. Students’ perceptions of unhelpfulness, though not the norm, were communicated by describing advisors as “discouraging for graduate school” or not “helpful with my needs, and treated me as an imbecile” or “never really provided help just sent me to the computer [or MSU website].” Some students wished that advisors had been more “proactive” by sending “reminder emails to enroll” or providing more “information about various careers” or course sequencing related to general education and graduate school preparation. Finally, several students reported wishing to be encouraged toward specific activities by their advisors (e.g., “to take more

credits/more difficult options to prepare me better,” “to take more hands on classes,” and “more info on internships”).

Positive comments from seniors praised advisors as “helpful with any questions I had, even when switching majors/minors” and providing “guidance in my career path [that] exceeded my expectations.” Students also expressed gratitude for advisors as “part of the reason I have been so successful at MSU,” with one student stating, “Her attitude of complete care for students is one I have not seen in all my 55 years of living.” Other students valued advisors’ helpfulness in providing information beyond class selections and schedule approvals (e.g., “from adding a degree to study abroad,” “even in the job search she has kept me encouraged,” “helped me decide an area of focus for a graduate program and helped me decide where to apply,” and “helped me find an internship”). For seniors, advisor empowerment seemed to describe assistance with planning beyond satisfaction of specific course requirements and toward enhanced student motivation in pursuit of future goals (Burt et al., 2013; Demetriou, 2011).

Advisor accountability, empowerment, and student learning. Lowenstein (2005) suggested that advisors teach students to view seemingly disconnected pieces of the curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner. Student comments related to advisor accountability and advisor empowerment suggest that MSU advisors can indeed teach students to establish important curricular connections. Advisors need to be approachable and accessible in order to facilitate such learning opportunities, and students will trust advisors who provide them with correct and helpful information.

Through the advising relationship, students can enhance their understanding of how curricular elements are related. For example, through a “welcoming” experience at

SOAR, one student summarized aspects of several freshman responses by sharing that “the whole scary college process was broken down and made simple and less intimidating.” Some seniors wished that advisors had encouraged them toward more high impact learning activities, while one student encapsulated the primarily positive related comments by highlighting an advisor who was “excellent at assessing how to help me achieve my goals.” These comments support the operationalization of Lowenstein’s theory and align with current advising literature related to the role advisors play in student engagement, motivation, and learning (Habley, 2004; Katz et al., 2010; Lotkowski et al., 2004; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010). However, specific goals and outcomes related to advisor accountability and empowerment are lacking from MSU’s advising program theory (Rossi et al, 2004). In other words, it is not clear what MSU expects its advisors to know or how accessible or helpful they need to be.

Themes related to student responsibility. Open-ended survey responses were typologically analyzed (Hatch, 2002) to explore insights related to student responsibility (i.e., student contributions to the advising process, Young-Jones et al., 2013). Though the current study did not evaluate specific student actions, 12 freshman comments provided insight into a theme loosely related to students’ views of their role versus the advisor’s role in advising. Students who “have not used [advising] fully” or ‘to full advantage’ still know “advising is there when [they] need it.” Some freshmen “have a plan... but will consider what [an] academic advisor has to say” or report that they “need to allow someone else’s input and perhaps rely on them more.”

Senior feedback (23 comments) further illuminated the theme related to allocation of responsibility within the advising relationship (e.g., “I take matters into my own

hands,” “I felt like I did all the research needed on societies and things on campus relevant to pre-med track,” and “students should be able to figure it out on their own”). In one instance, a student said, “Sometimes I would ask for her help and she would explain how instead of just telling me.” Another student indicated that the “advisor was helpful, but could have provided a step by step plan” and another stated, “I didn’t have any issues with my advisor, but I was always prepared. I know several people that had their grad date pushed back because he didn’t have his stuff together.” Advisors can teach students to expect more from themselves as contributing members of the university community (Tinto, 2006) while supporting them in planning and decision making (Firmin & MacKillop, 2008; Hurt & Barro, 2006). The appropriate balance between helpfulness and fostering student responsibility needs to be further explored.

Lowenstein (2005) said that advisors teach students to base educational choices on a developing sense of the conceptual structure they build through pursuit of educational goals. While comments from the present study offer insight into students’ views of their role in the advising process, communicating responsible actions that advisors should expect of students (see Appendix C), identifying the point by which students should demonstrate those actions, and creating conditions that facilitate those actions (Kuh et al., 2005) are institutional responsibilities. Once these elements of MSU’s advising program theory (Rossi et al., 2004) are in place, the construct of student responsibility may be more directly linked with measurable advising outcomes to enhance MSU advising assessment.

Themes related to student self-efficacy. Qualitative survey feedback was typologically analyzed (Hatch, 2002) through this study’s conceptual framework to

explore students' perceptions related to self-efficacy (i.e., beliefs regarding their capacity for college success, Young-Jones et al., 2013). Freshman comments ($n = 15$) revealed a theme related to a lack of clarity about the advising process. For example, one student revealed "I just wasn't too informed so [SOAR advising] wasn't that productive," and another stated, "When my advisor was talking to me, I felt like I didn't know half the things he was talking about." Further referencing SOAR advising, students described it as "amazing" and "a great experience" while indicating residual confusion about scheduling and registration. Other students indicated inadequate knowledge related to contacting an advisor (e.g., "I don't even know who my assigned advisor is. I never received any information on this and do not know where to find it," and "I haven't had a chance to meet w/my advisor yet. I am confused about how to go about that"). Two positive comments were related to student self-efficacy (i.e., "I was really nervous about college before soar but I had wonderful soar leaders and loved the whole program," and "I really appreciate the advisors' work because they have informed me on how to do well in school"). The positive and negative feedback from freshmen echoes studies demonstrating that advising can cultivate self-efficacy and foster reflection, planning, and self-authorship that function to transform students' goals into successes (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2009; Gore, 2006; Simmons, 2008).

Only 17 senior comments related to self-efficacy which is not surprising since survey items did not directly inquire about this construct. Negative comments were shared by a student who "worried I wouldn't graduate on time due to poor advising," and another who stated, "I believe you should not have to meet with your advisor after freshmen year." However, the majority (52.9%) of senior comments relating advising to

self-efficacy were positive. Students reported learning “a lot of things” from advisors (e.g., “what I can accomplish,” and “knowledge that is necessary and useful to me”). One student said, “The staff was helpful and I felt like I could be successful and finish my degree,” a comment similar to that of another student who reported, “I enjoyed my advising appointments and felt better when I left knowing I was on track.”

Lowenstein (2005) suggested that advisors teach students to find or create logic in their education. Student feedback in this study suggests that MSU freshmen may need to learn why it is important to meet collective degree requirements—in other words, why specific courses (and even advisement) are required elements of the educational journey. Advisors are uniquely situated to show students the importance of such learning. They can help freshmen understand the logic behind the proverbial hoops they must jump through, and they can promote development of the self-efficacy students need to create a personal logic underlying and motivating their future decision-making (Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006). Senior comments suggested that learning resulting from advising is linked to confidence about meeting their educational goals. Without an explicit program theory, it is not clear which aspects of advising are expected to facilitate development of student self-efficacy, and it is unclear how self-efficacy translates into measurable outcomes MSU may desire (e.g., retention or graduation rates).

Themes related to student study skills. In their definition of study skills, Young-Jones et al. (2013) included time and grade management, skills related to learning course content, the abilities to concentrate and prepare for exams, adequate motivation and sleep, and contacting an advisor for assistance. Qualitative data relating such skills with advising in the present study included two freshman comments and 17 senior

comments. One freshman stated, “I have problems myself, keeping meetings with my academic advisor,” while another reported the intention to continue with advising even after it is no longer required to “keep up with my grades and opportunities with my major.” While related freshman feedback was limited, students identified not keeping meetings as problematic and continued meetings as beneficial. Senior comments shed additional light on study skills in relation to advising. Whereas some students did not view advising as essential to their academic success (e.g., “you tried but I never used it,” and “after my sophomore year was unneeded”), others identified advising as a “great resource” or tool to help “keep them on track” (e.g., with “grades & GPA management”). One student reported that learning provided through advising “allowed me to know what [was] needed for graduation,” and another added that “my advisor was an important part of my experience.”

Literature supports that advising is related to skill development that contributes to academic success (Robbins et al., 2004), though measurement of such skills was not attempted by the present study. Lowenstein (2005) asserted that advisors teach students to continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to previous learning, and measuring what students learn from advising across their time at MSU can demonstrate progressive development of these skills as operationalized by Young-Jones et al. (2013). This learning is essential to students knowing what courses are needed to meet their goals, engaging with the curriculum of specific courses, and mastering the content of multiple courses in a manner that aligns a completed major with successful career-related outcomes. In essence, advisors can help students learn to learn—a set of skills that will benefit students in college and beyond.

Themes related to perceived advisor support. The final review of qualitative survey data sought insight into possible links between advising and perceived support (e.g., a student's relational and stress management resources, Young-Jones et al., 2013). A theme began to emerge from freshman comments ($n = 13$) about expectations of the advising relationship. Three students commented positively on relational aspects of their advising interactions (e.g., "I really enjoy my advisor and get along with him," "the advisors [at MSU] seem to care much more about you [than at other colleges]," and "My advisor has been extremely helpful and nice. She has even tried to get to know me, and I feel very comfortable with her"). However, seven freshmen comments indicated mixed or negative perceptions related to advisor support. One student stated that "some people care more than others," another said "it's very intimidating to talk to my advisor," and another said, "she is so busy that I feel that I am just a time slot to her." Other comments suggested a lack of relational support through advising (e.g., "my advisor was not very friendly towards me at the majors fair," "said I couldn't [take a certain math class] because she thought it would be too hard for me; basically calling me stupid," and "I did not feel very encouraged, but we got everything done that we needed to"). From these limited related comments, it appears that freshmen may have held higher expectations of relational support than they initially experienced from advisors.

An increase to 89 comments from seniors in relation to perceived advisor support was substantial and further developed a theme related to the importance students place on developing meaningful advising relationships. Positive comments comprised 42.7% of this feedback, 22.5% were mixed or neutral, and 34.9% were negative. As with comments regarding advisor accountability, several seniors expressed frustration related

to changing advisors (e.g., “I would have liked my academic advisor to have been the same throughout my college career,” “I did not like that I had 3 different advisors during my college career,” and “Have one permanent advisor- don’t switch them up on students”). Such comments suggest a possible contrast between students’ views of advising as a relationship and institutional views of advising as a process. In addition to desiring more consistency in advisor assignments, negative comments from seniors described advisors who were “not great listeners,” who view advising as “more of a job,” who “spoke to me in a way that made me uncomfortable,” and who “made me want to drop out or switch schools.” While negative perceptions did not comprise the majority of related senior comments, links between student perceptions of advisor support and retention are important institutional considerations. Multiple mixed comments included negative comments about advising that improved in a different setting (e.g., before or after major declaration) to result in an overall positive advising experience.

The majority of senior comments positively related advising to perceived support. For example, students praised advisors who were “always willing to listen,” “were extremely supportive, motivating, and understanding,” and “even remembered me after I took a long break from school.” The theme of advising as a relationship further developed through senior comments describing the most positive interactions as those that scaffold learning while supporting student goal attainment and overall wellbeing (e.g., “truly cares about you and future goals,” “helped guide me through tough decisions regarding my academics,” “always had my interest and goals at the core of her advising,” “do everything they can to help you graduate,” and “truly cared about me and my education”). Finally, the development of meaningful advising relationships was

described as progressing across a student's time at MSU and beyond (e.g., "major advisor was much more focused on us each individually and got to know us and I enjoyed that," "became friends with my advisor and will continue to be in contact when I leave," and "I had a great advisor and hope to stay in contact with him").

Lowenstein's (2005) framework for advising as teaching does not include perceived support, but increasingly, advising literature highlights its important contribution to student success (Burt et al., 2013; Jones, 2008; Wentzel et al., 2010; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Comments from MSU's students in the present study suggest that optimal advising relationships support student learning, goal attainment, and overall wellbeing (Davidson & Beck, 2006; McClellan, 2005). Freshmen may not enter MSU with such expectations, but by the time they graduate, seniors grow to appreciate the relational and academic support provided by advisors. To enhance future advising practice and related student outcomes, findings suggest an institutional focus on fostering development of advising relationships that students perceive as supportive.

Summary: MSU's Advising Program Impact

What can be learned about MSU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data? Quantitative (Field, 2009) and qualitative (Hatch, 2002) analyses addressed RQ2, producing statistically significant findings and revealing themes that elucidate Lowenstein's conceptualization of advising as teaching through exploring students' experiences of advising. Descriptive summaries were provided for freshman and senior samples for demographic and advising-related items. Significant differences were revealed and explained between freshman expectations and senior experiences of advising. No significant results emerged for analyses exploring relationships between

senior GPA and different amounts of MSU advising. However, advisor information, advisor support, and students' levels of personal responsibility were revealed as significant predictors of senior GPA. Finally, themes emerged from typological analyses of students' comments that supported quantitative analyses and aligned with advising literature.

SECTION THREE:
ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Advancing advising assessment requires attention to student and advisor outcomes (Kelley, 2008; Robbins, 2011). For clarification, student learning outcomes (e.g., self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) can be distinguished from advisor outcomes related to process and delivery (e.g., advisor accountability and empowerment). NACADA (2004) recommended as a core value that advising processes be shaped by understanding of institutional and student expectations. This study demonstrates how student expectations are addressed by MSU's advising program and highlights how these findings align with institutional expectations broadly defined in MSU's advising mission statement and identified advising best practices. Findings also bring attention to deficiencies in advising outcome measurement and recommendations for addressing them in response to the study's final research question:

RQ3: How can MSU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?

Addressing RQ3: Improving Assessment and Evaluation Practices

The move toward performance based postsecondary educational funding is not surprising, nor is the pressure for institutions to address accountability demands by assessing program contributions toward desired outcomes (McLendon et al., 2005). How can higher education institutions incorporate empirically supported constructs from the literature into assessment of measurable outcomes to enhance advising practice? The present study began to answer this question by investigating program theory and impact (Rossi et al., 2004) of academic advising at MSU. The institution's advising mission statement and identified best practices align with Lowenstein's (2005) theory of advising

as teaching while also aligning with operationalization of related constructs in recent literature (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Typological analyses of open ended survey feedback provided further insight into how MSU's advising program aligns with variables that have empirically linked advising with students' academic success.

For MSU, an important contribution of this study will be to help the university identify and map measurable advising outcomes that align with its advising program theory and that are supported by existing literature as proven contributors to student and institutional goal attainment. Through exploration of its advising program theory, literature related to advising assessment, and MSU's existing advising assessment data, this study evaluated MSU's advising program theory and current assessment data to inform recommendations to advance MSU's advising assessment efforts. Purposefully communicating these findings to guide campus wide identification of desired advising outcomes will help to shape learning expectations of students and the institution in relation to advising and its future assessment.

Assessing a Decentralized Advising Program

How can MSU address the challenge of assessing its decentralized advising program? The Provost charged the AAC to evaluate administration and delivery of advising to all MSU students, make recommendations for improvements, identify and encourage successful advising practices, and enhance consistency and quality of the MSU advising system. Disseminating results from the AAC's 2012-2013 assessment project is a great start; however, surveys provide a limited perspective of the actual scope of MSU's advising and related outcomes. Measuring short and long term results of the daily work of advising and student contributions to the process will require coordinated,

collaborative, sustained effort that includes support from people in positions of power and buy-in from employees on the advising front lines (Beer et al., 1990; Bolman & Deal, 2008). Emerging literature on advising assessment suggests that in addition to surveys, institutions may consider incorporating focus groups, rubrics, institutional data, and national tools into a comprehensive assessment plan (Robbins & Zarges, 2011) and that incorporating these activities as much as possible into normal work flow will produce optimal results (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Program evaluation is recommended as an effective approach to advising assessment and program improvement; however, many advising systems do not clearly articulate program theories, objectives, and intended outcomes, making impact assessment challenging at best (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; Habley, 2005; Sams et al., 2003). This is true of MSU which is not surprising as sorting through empirical studies and unique aspects of organizational structure to articulate desired advising outcomes is a daunting task. While challenging, embedding advising assessment into program planning, implementation, and evaluation can ultimately allow MSU's faculty and professional advisors to view their work as the context wherein students' goals are connected to institutional mission in meaningful and measurable ways (Kelley, 2008).

Building on an Empirically Established Foundation

Learning outcomes are expected to result from educational programs, making Lowenstein's (2005) advising-as-teaching framework relevant for guiding measurement of advising impact. Lowenstein suggested that effective advising teaches students to find or create logic in their education, view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense, base educational choices on developing a sense of an

overall edifice being self-built, and continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned. Lowenstein's conceptual framework aligns with empirically identified factors linking advising to measurable student and advisor outcomes (Young-Jones et al., 2013)—specifically, advisor empowerment, advisor accountability, student self-efficacy, student responsibility, student study skills, and perceived support. MSU's implicit program theory (derived from the advising mission statement and best practices) and themes identified through student feedback suggest potentially measurable outcomes (see Appendix I).

The suggestions in Appendix I were compiled by the principal investigator who incorporated previous AAC work, advising assessment literature, and findings from this study. Elements were organized to demonstrate how MSU's advising program theory is grounded in the literature. Program objectives were drafted through document review and qualitative analyses in the present study. These objectives aim for advisors to:

- Use a developmental advising approach to teach students to become independent learners and problem solvers.
- Maintain accountability through demonstrating that they are professional, available, and knowledgeable.
- Empower students through being helpful and providing needed information.
- Foster development of student responsibility for decision making.
- Teach students the skills to become lifelong learners.
- Maintain positive relationships and regular contact with advisees.

Program objectives for students aim for them to:

- Develop as independent learners by being prepared for advising.

- Take responsibility for decision making related to academic advising.
- Seek help from advisors to develop problem-solving skills that will promote success in college and beyond.
- Contribute to positive advising relationships by demonstrating understanding of advisors' schedule limitations.

Thirty-four advisor [process and delivery] outcomes and 28 student learning outcomes were identified to align with these objectives, and preliminary mapping was provided for the first five advisor outcomes and the first 12 student outcomes. For the mapped advisor outcomes, examples were provided regarding where processes will occur, and for mapped student outcomes, examples were provided with regard to where (and by when) certain learning is expected to occur. Suggestions were also provided for mapped outcomes regarding from whom evidence could be gathered, where and how evidence could be gathered, and expected levels of performance. While these objectives and outcomes are grounded in MSU's advising program theory and findings, mapping examples resulted from one researcher's experience with advising. It is important to note that effective implementation of an advising assessment process will require time and ideas contributed from multiple stakeholders (Robbins & Zarges, 2011). The suggestions provided in this section and Appendix I provide an empirical foundation upon which MSU can invite key stakeholders to map remaining (and additional) outcomes to construct a comprehensive advising assessment plan.

Acting on Recommendations

To implement this study's recommendations, a taskforce of invested stakeholders could be assembled to expand these materials into a campus wide advising assessment

plan. This group would ideally be comprised of faculty, staff, and student representatives from all MSU programs with advising components, as well as an appropriate representative from Computer Services. The AAC has worked to bring advising assessment into clearer focus at MSU, but with evaluation of advising as only one of its charges, the group may lack adequate human resources to develop a sustainable advising assessment process. Key individuals across campus with personal and programmatic interests in advising assessment need to be recruited to embed advising assessment into multiple programs. MSU's advising program is decentralized to the point that a true picture of its effectiveness will require contributions from numerous programs employing multiple measures of how their components of the university's advising system function.

Careful dissemination of the recommendations provided here could result in taskforce members viewing the materials as helpful tools for guiding their work. It would be important for these individuals to view such participation as an opportunity to celebrate accomplishments rather than as a mandate to do just one more type of assessment. For example, faculty advisors who include this type of documentation in tenure and promotion dossiers could provide strong evidence that they are educating students in and outside of class (Burt et al., 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) theory and the outcomes tied to it through this study support the claim that advising is teaching with measurable learning outcomes. To expand this study's recommendations into a comprehensive assessment program, taskforce members would need to map how advising processes in their programs contribute to these empirically established advisor and student learning outcomes. This would require identifying points of student contact and

types of services provided by programs as well as expected levels of performance and the types of evidence available to demonstrate their attainment.

Ideally, support would be available for programs or departments wishing to incorporate these recommendations into their overall assessment plans, including the human resources required to create rubrics, conduct student (and possibly faculty) focus groups, and program computerized data collection. For example, in the advising notes screen, a rubric could be added with four options to identify a student's demonstrated ability to run a degree audit (e.g., 4-produced audit, 3-knew where to run audit, 2-knew audits existed but not how to run one, 1-asked what a degree audit is). While time would be required up front to write code, advisors might be more likely to check an on-screen box for each student they advise than to complete an assessment rubric on paper or in a file accessed outside of the Banner screens open during student appointments. Only certain phrases in the existing code would need to be changed as emphasis shifted to measurement of different outcomes in new assessment cycles.

If one outcome were investigated each semester (or year) in this fashion, and reports were available by student identification number, advising assessment between accreditation cycles could be more readily linked to retention and graduation rates. Data for one outcome would not be very telling, but after five to seven years of measuring multiple outcomes, data analyses and effective reporting of results would reveal trends to inform data-driven enhancement of MSU advising. Such recommendations for implementation of an assessment plan quickly extend beyond the scope of this study. However, the carefully planned and timely dissemination of these recommendations, accompanied by adequate support to incorporate them, can foster a sense of involvement,

pride, and ownership among the many MSU employees who advise students—motivating them to embrace assessment as an avenue to celebrate achievements and improve advising practice.

Summary

The present study incorporated empirically supported constructs from the literature into evaluation of MSU's advising program theory and impact. NACADA (2004) recommended as a core value that advising processes be shaped by understanding of institutional and student expectations. Results of this study demonstrated how student expectations are addressed by MSU's advising program and highlighted how these findings align with institutional expectations broadly defined in MSU's advising mission statement and identified advising best practices.

Findings also revealed deficiencies in advising outcome measurement and recommendations for addressing them. Program objectives were derived from the study's findings, followed by identification of advisor and student learning outcomes with preliminary maps suggesting where such learning or advising may occur, by when, at what expected levels of performance, and identifying the type of evidence to be collected and who will collect it. Though solidly grounded in the literature and data on MSU's advising program theory and impact, the plan is only a foundation upon which a comprehensive advising assessment plan may be constructed. The following key points summarize recommendations for MSU's Provost and Associate Provosts to consider with regard to future advising assessment efforts:

- Share the executive and data summaries of this study with college deans and program directors, make the full report available to them, and encourage their receptivity to working with the taskforce recommended below.
- Appoint an advising assessment taskforce comprised of faculty, staff, and students with an interest in advising assessment, including at least one representative from Computer Services.
- Charge the taskforce to collaborate with AAC's Assessment Subcommittee to implement the following recommendations across campus programs with advising components (Beer et al., 1990; Robbins & Zarges, 2011), and as feasible, support group members with stipends or release time toward this effort.
 - Review and expand the preliminary assessment plan (see Appendix I) resulting from this study to create a comprehensive advising assessment plan for MSU. This will require mapping existing outcomes and adding new outcomes identified by programs and offices across campus.
 - Create rubrics to assess specific outcomes, conduct focus groups, and program computerized data collection tied to screens frequently accessed by advisors and students through My Missouri State. Investigate how such assessment tools can best be embedded into normal work flow (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Robbins & Zarges, 2011).
 - Collaborate with the MSU Assessment Office and AAC Assessment Subcommittee to develop a five-year plan to evaluate one outcome each year, including plans for dissemination of findings (i.e., to whom, how). Once a specific plan and data collection tools are in place, the AAC will

have access to a consistent influx of data upon which to base future recommendations for enhancing MSU advising (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010).

In conclusion, qualitative and quantitative analyses in the present study revealed that MSU's advising practices are empirically grounded and producing desirable results. Findings of this study highlighted practices of programs and individuals that can be celebrated while providing insights to guide improvement of MSU's future practice of advising and its assessment.

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Appendix A

Missouri State University Advising Mission Statement

Academic advisors at Missouri State University provide academic and professional guidance as students develop meaningful educational plans in pursuit of their life goals. Advisors provide students with information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities. They require student participation in the decision-making process, help students become lifelong learners, and encourage self-reliant problem solving through exploration of students' own interests and values. Advisors support students as they seek the best possible education at Missouri State University.

Appendix B

Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University

Consistent with the mission of the University, academic advisors who use best practices help develop students who are academically prepared and able to take their positions as citizens contributing to the common good. Moreover, excellent academic advising helps provide a positive student experience and enhances the University's retention efforts.

The bullet points below each of the numbered "best practices" are examples of how advisors might carry out that practice.

1. Maintain regular contact with all advisees.

Examples of methods:

- Email advisees or selected groups
- Post advising information on a web site
- Schedule regular meetings with all advisees (once a semester, minimum)
- Schedule frequent meetings with advisees who are having academic difficulties

2. Establish positive relationships with all advisees.

Examples of methods:

- Recognize advisees and be able to call them by name
- Educate students about advisor and advisee roles and responsibilities
- Maintain up-to-date advising notes
- Address the needs of diverse students (e.g., nontraditional, international)
- Show a personal interest in students' lives

3. Provide accurate and timely information about the University and its programs.

Examples of methods:

- Know department and University requirements
- Know department and University deadlines
- Communicate pertinent information to advisees or selected groups
- Know and be able to refer students to appropriate University resources as appropriate to students' needs
- Know about and be able to refer students to appropriate web sites for specialized information
- Know about and be able to recommend to students appropriate organizations for their professional development (e.g., departmental student professional organizations, etc.)

4. For advisors who work with prospective or transfer students, facilitate transferring from other institutions to Missouri State. All advisors assist students in transferring from Missouri State to other institutions when that is in the best interest of the student.

Examples of methods:

- Know how to use the Missouri State transfer equivalencies web link

- Develop and maintain relationships with appropriate individuals at transfer institutions
- Be willing to work with prospective freshman and transfer students prior to Missouri State enrollment

5. Adopt a developmental approach to help advisees become independent learners and self-reliant problem solvers.

Examples of methods:

- Foster development of advisees' decision making skills
- Use an academic advising syllabus
- Coach students on appropriate ways to advocate for themselves

6. Enhance advisees' understanding of and support for the University's public affairs mission.

Examples of methods:

- Encourage appreciation for diversity within the University environment
- Promote study away opportunities
- Promote civic engagement through involvement in CASL, internships, and cooperative learning
- Email advisees regularly about relevant events, lectures, and activities that promote the public affairs mission

7. Maintain a high degree of professionalism.

Examples of methods:

- Maintain posted office hours
- Keep advising appointments
- Keep up to date on changing departmental and University requirements
- Prepare for advising appointments and document advising sessions in "Advising Notes"
- Support University requirements and programs (e.g., general education)
- Maintain a positive attitude regarding department and University colleagues and programs
- Maintain confidentiality as possible
- Consult with and make appropriate referrals to University personnel when advisee needs extend beyond professional experience and training

8. Engage in personal growth and development.

Examples of methods:

- Attain and maintain Master Advisor status
- Regularly attend training and education related to academic advisement (e.g., Academic Advisor Forums)
- Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the Missouri Academic Advising Association (MACADA)
- Keep up-to-date on current advising techniques and strategies
- Attend appropriate discipline-specific professional development opportunities related to student advising, retention, and success

Appendix C

Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You

Academic Advisors at Missouri State are committed to helping you meet your educational goals, and we want you to use available resources to help you succeed in college and beyond. These guidelines for working with your academic advisor will assist you with completing your degree and in planning for your future:

- Meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your long-term and short-term goals and evaluate your academic progress.
- Prepare for meetings with your advisor; bring a list of questions, a current degree audit, and ideas about class choices. Check program requirements and class prerequisites, too.
- Be punctual for appointments and contact your advisor in advance of any necessary schedule changes.
- Seek help from your advisor when you need it, so any problems you face don't become overwhelming.
- Communicate honestly with your advisor about information he or she may need to know about you in order to help you effectively; this includes information about significant changes that can affect your academic progress and goals, like a job change or new choice of a major.
- Appreciate your advisor's multiple duties--which can include teaching, committee work and research activities--and be prepared to work with his or her schedule, too.
- Accept responsibility for the decisions and actions (or inactions) you take that affect your educational progress.

Appendix D

Freshman Academic Advising Questionnaire

1. So far, how would you rate your overall experience with academic advising (e.g., SOAR) at Missouri State University (MSU)?

- a) Extremely positive
- b) Positive
- c) Neutral
- d) Negative
- e) Extremely negative

Please explain:

2. After you complete 75 credit hours you are no longer required to meet with your academic advisor before registration. How often do you expect to meet with your advisor after that point?

- a) Never
- b) Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arise)
- c) About once a year
- d) Once as a senior for a final degree check
- e) We will communicate via email without meeting in person.

3. During your experience at MSU, in which of the following areas do you expect to receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please check all that apply):

- a) Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines
- b) Requirements for your major and minor
- c) Referrals to campus resources
- d) General education requirements
- e) Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)
- f) Study habits and time management
- g) Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)
- h) Other (please specify)

Please specify "Other" response:

4. How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your academic planning?

- a) I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.
 - *If you do not know, please leave this question blank.*

5. **How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your goals following college graduation?**
- a) I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
 - b) I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
 - c) I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.
 - d) My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.
 - e) My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.
 - *If you do not know, please leave this question blank.*

6. **Do you expect your academic advisor to support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?**

- a) Absolutely
- b) Yes
- c) Somewhat
- d) No
- e) Not at all

Please explain (*optional*):

7. **Please share additional thoughts about your advising experience or related expectations at MSU.**

8. **I am a student in the Honors College.**

- a) No
- b) Yes

9. **I am a Missouri State University athlete.**

- a) No
- b) Yes

10. **Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

- a) No
- b) Yes

11. **What is your expected first-semester GPA?**

12. **MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My sex is:**

- Male Transgender Male Prefer not to say
 Female Transgender Female

13. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My race is:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black, African-American | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian, AK Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other race |

14. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – What is the MSU College, School, or Program of your declared major(s)?

- I have not declared a major.*
- Individualized Major*
- School of Agriculture
- College of Arts & Letters
(e.g., ART, COM, DAN, DES, ENG, Foreign Language, JRN, MED, MUS, THE)
- College of Business
(e.g., ACC, BUS, CIS, FID, FIN, MGT, MKT, TCM)
- College of Education
(e.g., CFD, ECE, EEM, ELE, Middle School EDU, SPE)
- College of Health & Human Services
(e.g., ATC, BMS, CSD, GER, KIN, NUR, PSY, REC, SWK)
- College of Humanities & Public Affairs
(e.g., ANT, CRM, ECO, HST, MIL, PHI, PLS, REL, SOC)
- College of Natural & Applied Sciences
(e.g., AST, BIO, CHM, CSC, ENG, GLG, GRY, HRA, MAT, MTH, PHY, PLN)
- Global Studies*

Appendix E

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire

1. **How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU)?**

- a) Extremely positive
- b) Positive
- c) Neutral
- d) Negative
- e) Extremely negative

Please explain:

2. **How often did you continue to meet with an academic advisor after you completed 75 hours and were no longer required to receive an advisor release to register for classes?**

- a) Never
- b) Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arose)
- c) About once a year
- d) Once as a senior for a final degree check
- e) We communicated via email but did not meet in person.

3. **At MSU, in which areas did you receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Mark all that apply):**

- a) Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines
- b) Requirements for your major and minor
- c) Referrals to campus resources
- d) General education requirements
- e) Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)
- f) Study habits and time management
- g) Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)
- h) Other (please specify)

Please specify "Other" response:

4. **How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?**

- a) I made all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me.

5. **How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?**

- a) I made all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me.

6. **Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?**

- a) Absolutely
- b) Yes
- c) Somewhat
- d) No
- e) Not at all

Please explain (*optional*)

7. **Please share any additional thoughts related to your academic advising experience at MSU.**

8. **Please select the option that best describes you:**

- a) I earned all of my college credits at MSU.
- b) I transferred 23 or fewer hours to MSU from another college.
- c) I transferred 24 or more hours to MSU from another college.
- d) Other (please explain)

Please explain "Other" response:

9. **I am a student in the Honors College.**

- c) No
- d) Yes

10. **I am a Missouri State University athlete.**

- c) No
- d) Yes

11. **Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

- c) No
- d) Yes

12. **What is your cumulative MSU GPA?**

13. **MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My sex is:**

- Male
- Transgender Male
- Prefer not to say
- Female
- Transgender Female

14. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My race is:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black, African-American | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian, AK Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other race |

15. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – What is the MSU College, School, or Program of your declared major(s)?

- I have not declared a major.*
- Individualized Major*
- School of Agriculture
- College of Arts & Letters
(e.g., ART, COM, DAN, DES, ENG, Foreign Language, JRN, MED, MUS, THE)
- College of Business
(e.g., ACC, BUS, CIS, FID, FIN, MGT, MKT, TCM)
- College of Education
(e.g., CFD, ECE, EEM, ELE, Middle School EDU, SPE)
- College of Health & Human Services
(e.g., ATC, BMS, CSD, GER, KIN, NUR, PSY, REC, SWK)
- College of Humanities & Public Affairs
(e.g., ANT, CRM, ECO, HST, MIL, PHI, PLS, REL, SOC)
- College of Natural & Applied Sciences
(e.g., AST, BIO, CHM, CSC, ENG, GLG, GRY, HRA, MAT, MTH, PHY, PLN)
- Global Studies*

Appendix F

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire Pilot Report (compiled by MSU Assessment Research Coordinator in June 2012)

Since this is a small sample ($n = 23$), it is difficult to tell if the items are working as they should. It is ideal for all answer options to be selected to show that they are relevant to the question and the population. This sample did not use all answer options except for on Item 3 (choose all that apply). In a larger and broader sample, it is possible that all options could be utilized.

After running correlations on items 1, 2, and 4-6, two relationships produced a significant result. Not surprisingly, students gave similar ratings on the first item, “How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University?” and on Item 6, “Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?” ($\alpha = .81, p \leq 0.001$). The only other really plausible correlation one should expect is between Items 4 and 5: “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?” The positive correlation between these items was marginally significant ($\alpha = .37, p \leq 0.1$). Since the remaining items are not directly related to one another, one should not expect them to be significantly correlated with each other. This was the case according to these tests which suggests that the items are all working as they should.

Appendix G

2012 Freshman Advising Survey Summary

FALL 2012 FRESHMAN ADVISING SURVEY SUMMARY (*n* = 500)

Demographic Information

OVERALL – All freshmen

HON – Honors College

AGRI – School of Agriculture

COAL – College of Arts and Letters

COB – College of Business

COE – College of Education

CHHS – College of Health and Human Services

CHPA – College of Humanities and Public Affairs

CNAS – College of Natural and Applied Sciences

UND – Undeclared majors

IND – Individualized majors

>1 College – More than one college marked

SEX: (*Mark any that apply*)

	SEX		OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Male	180	36.0	34	33.3	2	40.0	17	37.0	41	58.6	4	11.1		
Female	301	60.2	63	61.8	3	60.0	27	58.7	29	41.4	32	88.9		
Transgender male	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Transgender female	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Prefer not to say	1	0.2	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Missing response	18	3.6	4	3.9	0	0.0	2	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0		

	SEX		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		<1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Male	24	21.6	15	65.2	17	50.0	49	35.8	4	100.0	5	33.3		
Female	86	77.5	8	34.8	17	50.0	87	63.5	0	0.0	10	66.7		
Transgender male	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Transgender female	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Prefer not to say	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0		

RACE AND ETHNICITY:

RACE and ETHNICITY	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White	427	85.4	92	90.2	4	80.0	42	91.3	60	85.7	34	94.4
Black, African American	25	5.0	2	2.0	0	0.0	2	4.3	3	4.3	0	0.0
American Indian, AK Native	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian Indian	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Chinese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Filipino	2	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Japanese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Korean	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.8
Vietnamese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Asian	2	0.4	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Samoan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Some other race	11	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.3	0	0.0
More than one race	14	2.8	5	4.9	0	0.0	2	4.3	2	2.9	1	2.8
Missing response	16	3.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	53	10.6	32	31.4	0	0.0	2	4.3	11	15.7	2	5.6

RACE and ETHNICITY	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		<1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White	100	90.1	23	100.0	28	82.4	118	86.1	3	75.0	12	80.0
Black, African American	7	6.3	0	0.0	1	2.9	10	7.3	0	0.0	1	6.7
American Indian, AK Native	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian Indian	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Chinese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Filipino	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Japanese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Korean	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Vietnamese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Samoan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Some other race	1	0.9	0	0.0	3	8.8	4	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
More than one race	2	1.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.9	1	25.0	2	13.3
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	9	8.1	0	0.0	5	14.7	20	14.6	0	0.0	3	20.0

HONORS:

HONORS	OVERALL		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	102	20.4	2	40.0	13	28.3	15	21.4	4	11.1
No	395	79.0	2	40.0	32	69.6	55	78.6	32	88.9
Missing response	3	0.6	1	20.0	1	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	500	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

HONORS	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	17	15.3	7	30.4	14	41.2	24	17.5	0	0.0	2	13.3
No	94	84.7	16	69.6	20	58.8	113	82.5	4	100.0	13	86.7
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

Advising Items

1. So far, how would you rate your overall experience with academic advising (e.g., SOAR) at Missouri State University (MSU)?

ADV EXPERIENCE	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Extremely Positive	124	24.8	31	30.4	2	40.0	13	28.3	18	25.7	9	25.0
Positive	254	50.8	49	48.0	1	20.0	22	47.8	43	61.4	20	55.6
Neutral	104	20.8	18	17.6	1	20.0	10	21.7	7	10.0	5	13.9
Negative	18	3.6	4	3.9	1	20.0	1	2.2	2	2.9	2	5.6
Extremely Negative	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

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ADV EXPERIENCE	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Extremely Positive	28	25.2	8	34.8	8	23.5	28	20.4	0	0.0	4	26.7
Positive	48	43.2	8	34.8	12	35.3	79	57.7	3	75.0	8	53.3
Neutral	31	27.9	5	21.7	14	41.2	25	18.2	1	25.0	2	13.3
Negative	4	3.6	2	8.7	0	0.0	5	3.6	0	0.0	1	6.7
Extremely Negative	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

Item 1 responses explained: (***) replaces advisor or department names)

HON

- already met with my advisor for spring semester, very helpful
- Been helped, questions answered
- Everyone was really friendly and very helpful
- Good experience, but not the best because I felt like there were not enough leaders per student, so not enough 1 on 1 time.
- Haven't met them yet
- Haven't met with advisors yet
- He is very helpful and nice.
- I feel like while yes, my SOAR leaders were educated, they didn't take much time helping me construct a class schedule
- I had a pleasant experience. No problems. Pretty smooth and simple.
- I have had no problems.
- I have problems myself, keeping meetings with my academic advisor. He does not have a walk-in policy
- I haven't had any problems and everyone has been helpful
- I met with *** at soar. He fully explained all the requirements and helped me create an amazing schedule
- I met with them only for a short time.
- I really liked how the whole "scary" college process was broken down and made simple and less intimidating
- I was so scared going into SOAR but my SOAR leader made it all a very good experience
- I'm undeclared. I don't even know who my advisor is. I never received any information on this and do not know where to find it.
- I've only ever been to an advisor at SOAR
- It was fun! It got me more pumped up and prepared for college.
- My academic advisor was friendly, professional, helpful and fairly efficient at being able to set aside time for an appt.
- My academic advisor was great, but the SOAR leaders didn't know much and had outdated information
- My advisor is not from here and has a accent and I found it hard to communicate with her
- My advisor was extremely patient and friendly. She was willing to work past any issues I had and answered questions.
- My advisor was not very friendly towards me at the majors fair.
- My classes are challenging enough that I'm learning new material.
- My classes have worked out great.

- My leaders were extremely helpful in selecting my classes and providing insight for my first year.
- My soar advisors were helpful in figuring out my classes
- My SOAR leaders *** and *** were very helpful and inviting. Also, the advisor sent for our group (***, I think?) was helpful with my being undeclared.
- My SOAR leaders were extremely helpful while I was trying to figure out what classes I needed and wanted to take this first semester.
- Nothing has really happened yet
- Only called once
- Only had one or two meetings. Helpful, but I found my way on my own more often than not.
- Positive and made you feel welcome
- SOAR effectively prepared me for choosing classes during registration.
- Soar has been helpful when I have used ti but I haven't read information
- Soar registration was easy and the advisor made it quick and easy.
- SOAR was fun but my advisor didn't help a lot.
- Some crazy wait times, but overall helpful
- The experience would have been extremely positive, but I had to wait 2 hrs for my ***advisors approval, which seemed unnecessary
- very explicatory
- Very good overall and very helpful
- Very helpful nice/kind/willing etc?
- When I met to make first semester schedule, the advisors in the *** department were very helpful

AGRI

- He is very helpful and nice.
- I haven't really had any advising
- It was fun! It got me more pumped up and prepared for college.
- the advisement at SOAR was amazing. However, since then I feel extremely confused about the registration process.

COAL

- Being here in college has been a great experience for me so far. the only possible negative aspect I can really think of would be tests.

- Good experience, but not the best because I felt like there were not enough leaders per student, so not enough 1 on 1 time.
- I feel like I didn't have a good idea of the classes I was taking
- I felt that it was very informing and fun!
- I was in the wrong major, my advisor has already helped me a lot to get things sorted out and get where I need to be.
- I've only ever been to an advisor at SOAR
- My classes are challenging enough that I'm learning new material.
- My Soar advisor was able to get me into all the classes I wanted to take
- My SOAR leaders were very good at pointing me in the right direction.
- Nothing too impressive. Nothing too bad.
- Nothing has really happened yet
- Soar was a great experience, but I'm still confused on how to schedule for classes
- SOAR was helpful because I was able to easily register for my classes.
- They really put me on the right path to my degree
- very helpful in answering questions

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COB

- Everyone was friendly, and the transaction felt easier with this friendly advisor
- Haven't done much at all w/ it yet, but what I have done was good.
- Haven't had any problems
- I am very pleased with her, as she has already assisted me with many things.
- I have only met with her once and it was helpful
- I haven't had any problems and everyone has been helpful
- I haven't really visited my advisor yet. So far it's positive.
- I loved SOAR and my advisor; my SOAR leaders helped make it a fun and positive experience
- I was explained exactly what classes were expected and then made sure I was taking the right classes
- I would say it is perfect. But somehow I received credit for transferred hours already. In the process my transcript was lost and I have to pay to have a new one sent to MSU again.
- I've had all good experiences w/ the academic advising at Missouri State
- I've not seen my academic advisor since SOAR, and she was very helpful then on picking out classes. She was a big help with already having the classes I needed.

- learned a lot
- Love fraternity life, being a pledge. Loving the atmosphere and the downtime. Also classes aren't too hard so far.
- Loved Soar -I was really nervous about college before soar but I had wonderful soar leaders and loved the whole program
- She made sure I was taking necessary classes and helped with my schedule
- Soar has been helpful when I have used it but I haven't read information
- Soar registration was easy and the advisor made it quick and easy.
- SOAR was very informative. Overall everything has been stated very clearly as far as academics and academic events go.
- the advisors that I have met with have done a great job in getting me prepared for my 1st semester
- The experience would have been extremely positive, but I had to wait 2 hrs for my *** advisors approval, which seemed unnecessary
- The process was confusing and my advisor tried to help but I only got to meet with her once.
- The schedule given to me was not one I wanted Way to big of a work load.
- They helped set up a schedule and other things but it was fun and enjoyable.
- Too busy to be very effective.
- When I met to make first semester schedule, the advisors in the *** department were very helpful

COE

- All academic advisors have been incredibly helpful so far
- Enthusiastic leaders who were willing to help and give advice. It got me excited for school to start
- I felt like my advisors didn't know what they were doing. They were *** majors and I'm a music major. They actually signed me up for a couple of the wrong classes. I had to drop them and reenroll in the ones I needed. It sucked and I should have had music major advisors
- I have been helped greatly by SOAR and Registration frustration
- I haven't talked to my adviser yet
- I wish on the first day you spent more time getting to know all the RAs
- My advisor has assisted with picking out my classes
- My advisor really helped me decide what classes to take next semester
- My advisor was not very friendly towards me at the majors fair.
- Not very helpful. Couldn't answer the questions I had.

- So far, I have only met with an advisor at SOAR, and my experience was positive. The advisor answered questions I had and gave good advice and insight for continuation of my education.
- SOAR was good, haven't met with advisor
- Soar was the most helpful thing I've experienced so far!
- they have assisted me in signing up for classes and have so many resources for keeping updated with them

CHHS

- All of the SOAR leaders were very charismatic and helpful
- already met with my advisor for spring semester, very helpful
- At Soar, my leader told me the classes I should take, when I met with my advisor, She said I should be taking other classes.
- Been helped, questions answered
- Being away from home
- Felt repetitive and was kind of rushed through the process
- *** is my advisor. I like speaking with him and he is very helpful
- Good relaxed
- I already knew a lot about academics at MSU
- I could have used a little more explanation in the classes I was taking.
- I didn't feel like my advisor took much time to talk with me. I came out with more questions than I went in. She was also ten minutes late to the meeting after rescheduling
- I didn't like SOAR - only negative The meetings/ days were too long.
- I emailed my advisor weeks ago, but still have yet to get a reply.
- I expected more from MSU.
- I felt like they didn't provide a lot of input from their experience when I made my schedule and I regret some choices I had made.
- I had a good experience, but my schedule could've been made better
- I had a good time and the information was positive and helpful
- I had a pleasant experience. No problems. Pretty smooth and simple.
- I have had no issue with my advisor. He has been very helpful in getting me where I need to be.
- I have had no problems with my advising. They have always been helpful and nice.
- I have had some problems meeting with my academic advisor.

- I have only met with the advisor I had at SOAR and one was really nice and educated I just wasn't too informed so it wasn't that productive.
- I haven't seen my academic advisor.
- I haven't had much of an experience with the advisors
- I met with them only for a short time.
- I rate it as positive because the advisor was very nice and helpful, but was 15 minutes late for my appointment.
- I really enjoyed SOAR and have had a great experience so far with academic advising.
- I recently got a new advisor and I'm not sure if she really know all of the details that I needed to know to sign up for classes.
- I think it kept me not-confused
- I think the academic advising is good, but I have not used it fully.
- I wish I would have gotten more advice from my SOAR leader on my class load.
- I've had no negative experiences with academic advising so far
- it was well done
- My SOAR leaders were incredibly helpful and nice.
- My academic advisor was friendly, professional, helpful and fairly efficient at being able to set aside time for an appt.
- My academic advisor was great, but the SOAR leaders didn't know much and had outdated information
- My advisor has been very helpful and quick to respond
- My advisor is not from here and has a accent and I found it hard to communicate with her
- My classes have worked out great.
- Pretty well, except we just got one and I feel she didn't know everything she was talking about so I had to ask someone else
- SOAR helped a lot. They made it easy to understand and they were really friendly and helpful.
- SOAR was fun! :) *** is nice. :)
- Soar was great! The people there were very encouraging and helpful.
- SOAR was terrible, I felt like my group leaders just wanted to hang out and talk, and they didn't really explain anything. But I love my advisor! She is wonderful!
- SOAR wasn't the greatest experience for me, but I have enjoyed meeting with my advisor.
- The advisors have tried their best at answering all the questions I have, and have given me advice on how I can succeed best in school.
- The first time I met with my advisor I did not feel very encouraged, but we got everything done that we needed to.

- There were too many lectures. The first day should've ended after mock scheduling.
- They have been pretty good but sometimes have been unsure (S.O.A.R.) of something. Also my advisor is being changed in the middle of the semester. It's a bit annoying.
- They really give helpful information and answer questions to their fullest ability
- Very friendly! Also professional
- When I e-mailed my advisor she didn't answer all my questions. Also she told me to take a *** class even though I'm a *** major and everyone else took ***
- When I've asked for help it was given immediately

CHPA

- Everyone was really friendly and very helpful
- I haven't met with my advisor yet.
- I met with *** at soar. He fully explained all the requirements and helped me create an amazing schedule
- Just boring
- Positive and made you feel welcome
- SOAR effectively prepared me for choosing classes during registration.
- SOAR was not very helpful at all. My SOAR leaders couldn't answer my questions
- very explicatory
- very helpful and provided good input

CNAS

- Attended transformation
- Haven't met them yet
- I feel like academic advising is there when I need it, but self motivation and keeping informed have done well for me so far.
- I feel like while yes, my SOAR leaders were educated, they didn't take much time helping me construct a class schedule
- I got into all of the classes I needed to get into, but it was somewhat stressful and I got a lot of conflicting information
- I havent met w/ my advisor yet
- I met with my advisor and did not feel like she was able to listen to my needs or questions.
- My leaders were extremely helpful in selecting my classes and providing insight for my first year.
- My SOAR leaders were extremely helpful while I was trying to figure out what classes I needed and wanted to take this first semester.

- Only called once
- Only had one or two meetings. Helpful, but I found my way on my own more often than not.
- Some crazy wait times, but overall helpful
- The academic advising was good, and I enjoyed having someone there helping with classes and talking about them
- The advisor that I got, from the *** department, was helpful, but stubborn. I asked if I could take a certain math class and she said I couldn't because she thought it would be too hard for me; basically calling me stupid.
- They were very helpful in advising me what to do and what would be too much
- Very helpful nice/kind/willing etc?

UND

- Any questions that I have I know can be answered by my advisor
- Didn't meet with an academic advisor when I was making my schedule, student helped me make my schedule. When I went to see my advisor, he gave me a schedule that didn't allow me to complete my prerequisites in two years so I had to do it myself.
- Everyone has been very friendly
- Everyone that has helped me so far, has had an positive affect on me and they were really nice.
- Have not met with many but SOAR was pretty good.
- Haven't met with advisors yet
- Haven't used it to full advantage.
- I had a good experience at SOAR, and found it very helpful.
- I had a good time at soar and it was very helpful. Also my academic advisor has been very helpful and I'm very happy I have one.
- I had a welcoming experience w/ soar
- I had some trouble getting a schedule suitable for me, and the SOAR leaders tried all they could to make it reasonable
- I have problems myself, keeping meetings with my academic advisor. He does not have a walk-in policy
- I have received emails but not scheduled a meeting yet.
- I really liked how the whole "scary" college process was broken down and made simple and less intimidating
- I was put into an at home lab for my chemistry class and not told that it was a at home lab
- I was so scared going into SOAR but my SOAR leader made it all a very good experience
- I worked with a lady at SOAR and she was pretty helpful.

- I'm undeclared. I don't even know who my advisor is. I never received any information on this and do not know where to find it.
 - It was easy, but not completely stress free.
 - It's been great I've been helped a lot
 - Kinda cheesy, acted like we were little kids in summer camps. SOAR was [nothing else written]
 - MSU has so much to offer and I love all of the freedom that comes along w/it
 - My academic advisor is always telling us about campus resources and getting us involved and she is always really happy and willing to help.
 - My advisor was extremely patient and friendly. She was willing to work past any issues I had and answered questions.
 - My SOAR leaders *** and *** were very helpful and inviting. Also, the advisor sent for our group (***, I think?) was helpful with my being undeclared.
 - My SOAR leaders were very nice and full of helpful information
 - Only have experienced SOAR. Never have met w/ my advisor.
 - Soar did make me feel more comfortable and confident about my intergration into college
 - SOAR leaders were very helpful
 - SOAR was fun
 - SOAR was fun but my advisor didn't help a lot.
 - soar was so fun and extremely helpful. I'm even considering becoming a soar leader.
 - SOAR was, for lack of a better term, a pain in the ***.
 - the environment and student information makes being here worth while
 - The SOAR leaders were really helpful
 - Very good overall and very helpful
 - Well, overall my classes are very fun and entertaining, but in some of them, I just feel the need to either fall asleep or kick of my pants and start wiggling which, I assure you, is not a pretty sight. Disturbing, more than anything.
- IND**
- Could schedule better classes for students
 - Have some people care more than others
 - It was an excellent way to get to know all about MSU and the opportunities around campus. However, it was really long.

2. After you complete 75 credit hours you are no longer required to meet with your academic advisor before registration. How often do you expect to meet with your advisor after that point?

ADV AFTER 75 HRS	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Never	10	2.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arise)	414	82.8	86	84.3	5	100.0	39	84.8	58	82.9	32	88.9
About once a year	42	8.4	8	7.8	0	0.0	4	8.7	9	12.9	3	8.3
Once as a senior for a final degree check	15	3.0	4	3.9	0	0.0	1	2.2	2	2.9	0	0.0
We will communicate via email without meeting in person	19	3.8	3	2.9	0	0.0	2	4.3	1	1.4	1	2.8
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

2. (Continued) After you complete 75 credit hours you are no longer required to meet with your academic advisor before registration. How often do you expect to meet with your advisor after that point?

ADV AFTER 75 HRS	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Never	2	1.8	1	4.3	2	5.9	4	2.9	1	25.0	0	0.0
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arise)	94	84.7	19	82.6	29	85.3	105	76.6	3	75.0	15	100.0
About once a year	9	8.1	2	8.7	0	0.0	12	8.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Once as a senior for a final degree check	2	1.8	1	4.3	1	2.9	7	5.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
We will communicate via email without meeting in person	4	3.6	0	0.0	2	5.9	9	6.6	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

3. During your experience at MSU, in which of the following areas do you expect to receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please check all that apply)

EXPECTED INFO	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	217	43.4	52	51.0	4	80.0	20	43.5	33	47.1	12	33.3
Requirements for your major and minor	472	94.4	97	95.1	4	80.0	44	95.7	68	97.1	35	97.2
Referrals to campus resources	181	36.2	41	40.2	3	60.0	12	26.1	26	37.1	10	27.8
General education requirements	312	62.4	67	65.7	3	60.0	28	60.9	43	61.4	21	58.3
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	445	89.0	87	85.3	4	80.0	40	87.0	63	90.0	34	94.4
Study habits and time management	131	26.2	22	21.6	2	40.0	7	15.2	23	32.9	9	25.0
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	254	50.8	60	58.8	5	100.0	19	41.3	34	48.6	16	44.4
Other	16	3.2	5	4.9	0	0.0	1	2.2	1	1.4	1	2.8
Total	500	N/A	426	N/A	25	N/A	171	N/A	291	N/A	138	N/A

3. (Continued) During your experience at MSU, in which of the following areas do you expect to receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please check all that apply)

EXPECTED INFO	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	55	49.5	8	34.8	13	38.2	55	40.1	2	50.0	7	46.7
Requirements for your major and minor	106	95.5	23	100.0	33	97.1	123	89.8	4	100.0	15	100.0
Referrals to campus resources	45	40.5	6	26.1	9	26.5	54	39.4	2	50.0	7	46.7
General education requirements	70	63.1	14	60.9	15	44.1	95	69.3	4	100.0	10	66.7
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	100	90.1	20	87.0	29	85.3	122	89.1	4	100.0	14	93.3
Study habits and time management	29	26.1	5	21.7	9	26.5	32	23.4	3	75.0	5	33.3
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	56	50.5	15	65.2	15	44.1	71	51.8	4	100.0	9	60.0
Other	6	5.4	1	4.3	2	5.9	3	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	467	N/A	92	N/A	125	N/A	555	N/A	23	N/A	67	N/A

Item 2 “Other” responses explained:

HON

- pharmacy school requirements/suggestions
- When I need advice about class selection
- With student input: a class plan; which classes to take in each semester realistically considering degree goals

COB

- When I need advice about class selection

COE

- opportunities to work/volunteer w/things for my major

CHHS

- Deciding on what classes I could excell in
- With student input: a class plan; which classes to take in each semester realistically considering degree goals

183 **CNAS**

- pharmacy school requirements/suggestions

4. How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your academic planning?

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	10	2.0	2	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	336	67.2	60	58.8	4	80.0	33	71.7	52	74.3	17	47.2
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	122	24.4	33	32.4	1	20.0	10	21.7	16	22.9	15	41.7
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	22	4.4	5	4.9	0	0.0	2	4.3	1	1.4	3	8.3
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	10	2.0	2	2.0	0	0.0	1	2.2	0	0.0	1	2.8
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

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4. (Continued) How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your academic planning?

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	2	1.8	0	0.0	1	2.9	5	3.6	0	0.0	1	6.7
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	75	67.6	17	73.9	16	47.1	98	71.5	4	100.0	11	73.3
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	25	22.5	5	21.7	15	44.1	23	16.8	0	0.0	3	20.0
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	8	7.2	1	4.3	2	5.9	4	2.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	1	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	5.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

4. How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your goals following college graduation?

POST-GRADUATION RESPONSIBILITY	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	89	17.8	18	17.6	1	20.0	7	15.2	9	12.9	6	16.7
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	330	66.0	69	67.6	3	60.0	31	67.4	55	78.6	20	55.6
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	53	10.6	7	6.9	0	0.0	4	8.7	4	5.7	7	19.4
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	8	1.6	2	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.6
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.2	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	19	3.8	6	5.9	1	20.0	0	0.0	2	2.9	1	2.8
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

4. (Continued) How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your goals following college graduation?

POST-GRADUATION RESPONSIBILITY	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	26	23.4	4	17.4	6	17.6	23	16.8	0	0.0	2	13.3
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	67	60.4	17	73.9	18	52.9	93	67.9	3	75.0	11	73.3
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	14	12.6	1	4.3	6	17.6	13	9.5	1	25.0	2	13.3
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	3	2.7	0	0.0	1	2.9	2	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	1	0.9	1	4.3	3	8.8	6	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

6. Do you expect your academic advisor to support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?

EXPECTED SUPPORT	OVERALL		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Absolutely	362	72.4	67	65.7	4	80.0	26	56.5	54	77.1	31	86.1
Yes	107	21.4	26	25.5	1	20.0	14	30.4	11	15.7	4	11.1
Somewhat	22	4.4	5	4.9	0	0.0	4	8.7	4	5.7	0	0.0
No	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not at all	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	9	1.8	3	3.9	0	0.0	2	4.3	1	1.4	1	2.8
Total	500	100.0	102	100.0	5	100.0	46	100.0	70	100.0	36	100.0

EXPECTED SUPPORT	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Absolutely	88	79.3	11	47.8	25	73.5	97	70.8	3	75.0	10	66.7
Yes	18	16.2	10	43.5	7	20.6	32	23.4	1	25.0	5	33.3
Somewhat	4	3.6	2	8.7	1	2.9	7	5.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
No	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not at all	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	2.9	1	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	111	100.0	23	100.0	34	100.0	137	100.0	4	100.0	15	100.0

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Item 6 responses explained:

HON

- I don't want someone who will tell me I can't or won't. I know that I am capable of anything I set my mind to.
- I have already spoken to my advisor about my educational goals and requirements
- I hope my academic advisor wants me to thrive and flourish in an academic setting. Otherwise, what is the point?
- I think it's an advisors role to help navigate the best possible options for each student, but some students aren't very thoughtful of the future

- This should be a main purpose of advisement.
- Why wouldn't I?

AGRI

- I have had two advisors already. I feel as if some are "too busy" for an advisor

COAL

- I expect has to support me in selecting the best possible education for me, specifically. Even if it isn't ideal for others.
- I tend to control what I do in my life. I really do need to allow someone else's input and perhaps rely on them more.

COB

- I don't see why she wouldn't. She's here to make my experience and Missouri State the best it can be.
- I expect all faculty members to want the best for every student at MSU
- I know there is hundred of other kids my advisor has
- She is so busy that I feel that I am just a time slot to her
- Yes because I feel that that is there job

189 COE

- An advisor is supposed to help us/ guide us in the right direction, so that we may get the best education
- Goes without saying, I want someone with my best interest in mind
- I feel an advisor's role is to support.
- I would hope they want the best education possible and will help me receive that
- They're here to help us right?

CHHS

- He will help me plan for my future goals in pre-optometry
- I feel like I need guidance from a professional who has been there.
- I think it is important for them to tell me which classes will benefit me the most.
- I would hope they'd support the students
- It's all about finding out who you are everyone could use a little guidance.
- Maybe not support, but at least they should try their best to help me seek the best options.
- She has already given me information that doesn't seem very useful so I'm not sure if she knows what's best for me.
- That is their job, to help you succeed. They should be supportive of your best opportunities.
- The primary job of an academic advisor is to help us find the best path of education.

- They're my advisor. They have been through this and can help lead me.
- They've already helped me greatly by helping me know about the Honors College that can help me get into the *** program.
- This should be a main purpose of advisement.
- Yes, I feel she is already doing that. She makes me feel very prepared and not worried!
- Yes. I think they know, based on the students interest and wants, what classes to take to ensure they are taking the right classes for their major.

CHPA

- I hope my academic advisor wants me to thrive and flourish in an academic setting. Otherwise, what is the point?

CNAS

- I have already spoken to my advisor about my educational goals and requirements
- I want the advisor to point me in the right direction and tell me what classes I should take so I don't waste my time and use my money for education wisely
- It's their job.
- Why wouldn't I?

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UND

- I don't know if my advisor cares that I want to complete my prerequisites in two years.
- I don't want someone who will tell me I can't or won't. I know that I am capable of anything I set my mind to.
- I think it's an advisors role to help navigate the best possible options for each student, but some students aren't very thoughtful of the future
- I've heard that some advisors may not necessarily be suitable for the position as advisor so I am somewhat dubious about how much my advisor can help me.
- Of course I do.
- that's what they are there for
- The academic advisors have helped many students before me where as I am experiencing this for the first time
- They're there to ensure my success so they should definitely give me the best possible options.
- Yes, I would accept the best of advice from her.
- Yes, that their job

IND

- I already have my plan for what I am taking @ MSU, but I will consider what my academic advisor has to say about my plans.

7. Please share additional thoughts about your advising experience or related expectations at MSU.

HON

- I do not have any
- I expect them to guide me in the right direction about what classes I should be taking
- I have not met with my advisor yet, but I plan on doing so soon.
- I haven't met with my advisor yet.
- I haven't met yet with my advisor but I'm sure all will go well.
- I like the idea of an advisor laying out a few plans for class schedules. Advisers should be experts at making organized future semester plans
- I think the advising system here is much better than it is at other colleges. The advisors seem to care much more about you
- I want to feel like my advisor doesn't see me as just another paycheck and will actually help me.
- It was easy
- My advisor is great - I'm glad we get one
- My advisor was very efficient at getting me in for an appointment and made me feel secure in my choice of my major
- My advisor was very nice and understanding He also gave me a lot of good information
- No experience yet
- Overall very helpful
- Overall very helpful and friendly
- Since I am planning to go to *** for vet school, I hope my advisor can help me get the edge needed to get into such a competitive major and school
- The lady who looked over my planned schedule was very helpful in my decision making, and I'm looking forward to scheduling for the spring

AGRI

- Haven't thought much about getting advice yet.
- Since I am planning to go to *** for vet school, I hope my advisor can help me get the edge needed to get into such a competitive major and school

COAL

- I have had little advising experience thus far.

- I really enjoy my advisor and get along with him,
- My advisor is great - I'm glad we get one
- When my advisor was talking to me, I felt like I didn't know half the things he was talking about

COB

- Everything is going well
- I do not have any
- I expect my advisor to help as much as she can.
- I feel as if she really helps you with schooling and looks for what's best for you major
- I have had a positive 1st few months
- I have not yet met with my advisor but she was easy to contact. I have set up an appointment to meet with her regarding my major and minor options.
- I think the advising system here is much better than it is at other colleges. The advisors seem to care much more about you
- It was easy
- My advisor hasn't helped much yet
- Very good thus far.
- Very helpful! Would be very unsure if I had to sign up on my own

COE

- Everyone so far has been incredibly helpful
- Extremely helpful, easier to decide which classes to take
- I have not had an actual advisement meeting yet
- I loved how they let me opt out of a class in college because I took a similar class in high school that met all the same requirements.
- My advisor has been extremely helpful and nice. She has even tried to get to know me, and I feel very comfortable with her.
- My advisor quickly answers all my questions via email its been a pretty good relationship thus far
- Obviously , I have no idea what I'm doing I'm hoping they'll teach me what I need to know so I can be somewhat independent.
- So for my experience has been very positive. I was given a lot of information that I did not know. They were very helpful

CHHS

- I expect them to guide me in the right direction about what classes I should be taking
- I have a good advisor who always points me in the right direction

- I have had a great advising experience thus far. They have all been very helpful.
- I have heard my advisor give different information to other students and friends of mine, so it is hard to know what is true
- I have not met with my advisor.
- I have really valued the help I have gotten from my advisors.
- I hope the next few are better. I have several options to choose from which made it hard.
- I like the idea of an advisor laying out a few plans for class schedules. Advisers should be experts at making organized future semester plans
- I need to meet with my advisor.
- I really appreciate the advisors' work because they have informed me on how to do well in school.
- I think that meeting with an advisor helps put everything into perspective
- I think the advisors are very helpful and know what they are talking about.
- I would like an opinion on what path I should take.
- I'm not sure if I trust her judgement
- I've had only good experience she seems very knowledgeable
- It helps a lot.
- It is a great experience to be a part of. I wish I knew more people who are in my major
- My advising experience has been great!
- My advisor has given me lots of helpful advice and information
- My advisor helped me to choose the classes that are required for my major. She told me when the right time would be to take certain classes.
- My advisor is very knowledgeable and organized. She knows what I need to do and the deadline for all of my classes (gen eds)
- My advisor was very efficient at getting me in for an appointment and made me feel secure in my choice of my major
- So far it's all great! I'm meeting with my advisor tomorrow.
- so far so good
- Soar was really good and helpful but my advisors have not been the most helpful.

CHPA

- I have found the advisor to knowledgeable, but scheduling appointments has proved somewhat of a hassle.
- My assigned advisor simply told me to, "look online for requirements and pick classes accordingly." However, *** eventually sat down with me helped"

- Overall very helpful and friendly
- The lady who looked over my planned schedule was very helpful in my decision making, and I'm looking forward to scheduling for the spring

CNAS

- I believe that I will carry on with advising even after I don't need it. I would love to be able to keep up with my grades and opportunities with my major
- I expect to have a good relationship with my advisor, and to feel comfortable around them. I expect for them to be knowledgeable and helpful.
- I have not met with my advisor yet, but I plan on doing so soon.
- I wish the advisors to be more understanding and willing to make an exception for you, if you believe you can take a certain class
- It's very intimidating to talk to my advisor
- Not much, but I know it's available

194 UND

- I don't have any experience.
- all of the advisors that I've talked to have been really helpful
- Brilliant? Hazzah!
- Don't have any.
- Helpful so far
- I asked my academic advisor if I would be able to complete my pre-recs in two years with the original schedule that I had, he said yes, but with further research I found that it would in fact take me four years, not happy
- I have not met with my advisor yet
- I have not met with my advisor yet, but when I do, I plan on getting help about declaring a major.
- I have yet met w/my academic advisor but I plan on to because I need help deciding what to major in.
- I haven't met with my advisor yet.
- I want to feel like my advisor doesn't see me as just another paycheck and will actually help me.
- I'd like easier access to my advisor. I currently can't get ahold of them to meet them
- It was very helpful and much needed
- My advising experience has been good and my advisor is a lot of help.

- My advisor is really helpful and listens to my opinion
- My advisor was very nice and understanding He also gave me a lot of good information
- No experience yet
- Overall very helpful

IND

- I haven't met w/my advisor yet, but I plan to work w/him/her during spring enrollment.

Appendix H

2013 Senior Advising Survey Summary

SPRING 2013 SENIOR ADVISING SURVEY SUMMARY (*n* = 645)

Demographic Information

OVERALL – All freshmen

TRAN – 24 or more credit hours not completed at MSU

HON – Honors College

AGRI – School of Agriculture

COAL – College of Arts and Letters

COB – College of Business

COE – College of Education

CHHS – College of Health and Human Services

CHPA – College of Humanities and Public Affairs

CNAS – College of Natural and Applied Sciences

UND – Undeclared majors

IND – Individualized majors

More than 1 College – More than one college marked

SEX: (*Mark any that apply*)

	SEX		OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Male	258	40.0	114	43.2	26	34.7	28	31.1	90	49.7	15	23.8		
Female	384	59.5	148	56.1	49	65.	61	67.8	90	49.7	48	76.2		
Transgender male	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0		
Transgender female	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Prefer not to say	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Missing response	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0		

	SEX		COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Male	27	20.9	25	59.5	41	55.4	1	100.0	0	0.0	16	53.3		
Female	101	78.3	17	40.5	33	44.6	0	0.0	4	100.0	14	46.7		
Transgender male	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Transgender female	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Prefer not to say	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100	30	100.0		

SEX	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Male	15	50.0
Female	15	50.0
Transgender male	0	0.0
Transgender female	0	0.0
Prefer not to say	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0

RACE AND ETHNICITY: (Mark any that apply)

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RACE and ETHNICITY	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White	556	86.2	222	84.1	62	82.7	75	83.3	143	79.0	60	95.2
Black, African American	14	2.2	5	1.9	1	1.3	2	2.2	6	3.3	0	0.0
American Indian, AK Native	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian Indian	26	4.0	16	6.1	3	4.0	2	2.2	20	11.0	1	1.6
Chinese	2	0.3	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Filipino	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Japanese	2	0.3	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Korean	2	0.3	2	0.4	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Vietnamese	1	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Other Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Samoan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	10	1.6	3	1.1	2	2.7	2	2.2	4	2.2	0	0.0
Some other race	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
More than one race	28	4.3	10	3.8	6	8.0	8	8.9	3	1.7	5	3.9
Missing response	3	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.1	1	0.6	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	261	98.9	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	21	3.3	9	3.4	5	6.7	3	3.3	8	4.4	2	3.2

RACE and ETHNICITY	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White	116	89.9	37	88.1	65	87.8	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0
Black, African American	3	2.3	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
American Indian, AK Native	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Asian Indian	1	0.8	0	0.0	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Chinese	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Filipino	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Japanese	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Korean	1	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Vietnamese	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Samoan	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	2	1.6	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Some other race	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
More than one race	5	3.9	4	9.5	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	73	98.6	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	3	2.3	1	2.4	1	1.4	1	100.0	0	0.0	2	6.7

RACE and ETHNICITY	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
White	24	80.0
Black, African American	2	6.7
American Indian, AK Native	0	0.0
Asian Indian	0	0.0
Chinese	0	0.0
Filipino	0	0.0
Japanese	0	0.0
Korean	0	0.0
Vietnamese	0	0.0
Other Asian	0	0.0
Guamanian or Chamorro	0	0.0
Samoan	0	0.0
Other Pacific Islander	1	3.3
Some other race	0	0.0
More than one race	3	10.0
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	1	3.3

HONORS:

HONORS	OVERALL		TRAN		AGRI		COAL		COB		COE	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	75	11.6	14	5.3	14	15.6	14	7.7	7	11.1	16	12.4
No	569	88.2	249	94.3	76	84.4	167	92.3	56	88.9	113	87.6
Missing Response	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0	129	100.0

HONORS	CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND		More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	6	14.3	10	13.5	0	0.0	1	25.0	0	0.0	7	23.3
No	35	83.3	64	86.5	1	100.0	3	75.0	30	100.0	23	76.7
Missing Response	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0

TRANSFER INFORMATION:

TRANSFER INFO	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Earned all college credits at MSU	149	23.1	4	1.5	26	34.7	18	20.0	42	23.2	20	31.7
Transferred 23 or fewer hours to MSU from another college	232	36.0	7	2.7	39	52.0	50	55.6	58	32.0	20	31.7
Transferred 24 or more hours to MSU from another college	249	38.6	251	95.1	10	13.3	21	23.3	81	44.8	59	36.5
Other	15	2.3	2	0.8	0	0.0	1	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	0.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

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TRANSFER INFO	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Earned all college credits at MSU	21	16.3	12	28.6	22	29.7	0	0.0	2	50.0	8	26.7
Transferred 23 or fewer hours to MSU from another college	49	38.0	13	31.0	26	35.1	1	100.0	0	0.0	10	33.3
Transferred 24 or more hours to MSU from another college	59	45.7	17	40.5	26	35.1	0	0.0	2	50.0	12	40.0
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

TRANSFER INFO	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Earned all college credits at MSU	7	23.3
Transferred 23 or fewer hours to MSU from another college	12	40.0
Transferred 24 or more hours to MSU from another college	10	33.3
Other	1	3.3
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

Advising Items

1. How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU)?

ADV EXPERIENCE	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Extremely Positive	151	23.4	61	23.1	23	30.7	20	22.2	37	20.4	16	25.4
Positive	338	52.4	142	53.8	36	48.0	42	46.7	105	58.0	30	47.6
Neutral	110	17.1	43	16.3	12	16.0	22	24.4	30	16.6	9	14.3
Negative	37	5.7	14	5.3	3	4.0	4	4.4	8	4.4	7	11.1
Extremely Negative	9	1.4	4	1.5	1	1.3	2	2.2	1	0.6	1	1.6
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

205

ADV EXPERIENCE	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Extremely Positive	32	24.8	7	16.7	14	18.9	0	0.0	1	25.0	13	43.3
Positive	70	54.3	20	47.6	40	54.1	1	100.0	1	25.0	14	46.7
Neutral	18	14.0	11	26.2	14	18.9	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	6.7
Negative	6	4.7	4	9.5	5	6.8	0	0.0	1	25.0	1	3.3
Extremely Negative	3	2.3	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

1. (Continued) How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU)?

ADV EXPERIENCE	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Extremely Positive	10	3.3
Positive	15	50.0
Neutral	3	10.0
Negative	1	3.3
Extremely Negative	1	3.3
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

206 **Item 1 responses explained:** (***) replaces advisor or department names)
HON

- Advisor was always willing to help, but was not always the most knowledgeable
- Advisors were not particularly helpful
- All the advisors I had were horrible. They were unprofessional and disrespectful, I showed up on time for meetings and they were consistently late. They also treated me as if I was not a college level student.
- All three of my advisors were extremely helpful.
- As a student in ***, I don't think my advisor was aware of the requirements for my major (***)
- *** advising was average; not really great listeners; more of a "job". Once I found an advisor in my *** major it was much better.
- Didn't fully want to help with all aspects of my academic career. Unhelpful answering questions outside of my class schedule
- Didn't work with my assigned advisor. Worked more with chosen professors.
- Great, but at times I could have used more direction.
- Had several advisers...my first one dropped the ball on some registration stuff, but the rest have been fine.
- I changed career focus halfway through so my faculty member I went to was not an advisor
- I did most of the work, but they were very helpful when I changed my majors/minors.
- I had many advisors. They helped a lot.

- I have a good academic experience at MSU.
- I really love MSU and I feel like I have had great experiences and opportunities here.
- I went through multiple advisors, some were better than others but ultimately it was a positive experience.
- I'm an international student. They help me a lot.
- I've had very great professors who tried who tried their hardest so that I would have the best experience possible and get the most out of each semester.
- It has been a good college experience and I learned a lot.
- It is most helpful when professors have a broad knowledge and are in the field you want to be in.
- It was okay.
- *** was extremely helpful.
- My academic advisor was helpful.
- My academic advisors were extremely helpful and friendly. I enjoyed meeting with them and they gave great advice.
- My advisor always gave excellent recommendations on which classes to take and when.
- My advisor was always helpful and supportive.
- My advisor was always willing to help when I had questions.
- My advisor was ***, and he was great.
- My advisor was excellent.
- My advisor was really great and knowledgeable. I wish he would have met with me even after I got the necessary hours to not need advisor approval for registering.
- My advisor was very helpful in guiding my academic decisions and excellent at assessing how to help me achieve my goals.
- My graduate level advisor is always helpful.
- My last advisor was good but the first three (who are left) were terrible. I don't know my advisor's name...
- My professors have all been very helpful. I do wish my advisor would check in w/ me every once in a while to see how I'm doing.
- No negative experience-prompt about getting back with me.
- One of my advisors wasn't very helpful
- Really helpful, especially since I'm honors and that could make things difficult
- The *** Dept. rocks!
- They did what was necessary. I did take a couple useless classes they recommended.

- They didn't know what I needed to graduate and didn't have enough training.
- They helped me and sometimes revised my schedule.
- They kept switching who my advisor was. Also, my advisor's time slots were filled 4+ weeks in advance.
- Undeclared advising was not very helpful, but once I declared, my advisor was much more helpful.
- *** did a great job

TRAN

- 1st advisor didn't tell me about general education classes needed
- Advisor was very helpful, however I had to cram in a few last minute classes because they were overlooked
- Affordable
- *** is the best
- All of my professors are/have been very helpful.
- Always available for questions via e-mail and to meet
- Always have dealt with pleasant and knowledgeable staff
- As I was deciding upon a major course of study, a full range of options available, was not described or elaborated upon for me.
- At my last school, I basically had to teach the advisors what the forms meant. Advisors at MSU have a clear understanding of what classes need to be taken. They also know who to ask if they have questions.
- At times my advisor was hard to meet with and wasn't very supportive of me.
- BYAH
- Classes went well, with the exception of a few professors. My advisor was helpful.
- Did most of my own scheduling but if I needed help she was there.
- Did my own advising. I take matters into my own hands.
- Did not have to meet with advisor
- Didn't fully want to help with all aspects of my academic career. Unhelpful answering questions outside of my class schedule
- Didn't have a lot of help in the beginning when I wasn't sure what I wanted to major in.
- Didn't work with my assigned advisor. Worked more with chosen professors.
- *** was pleasant and helpful, but it was often difficult to get in contact with him.
- *** requires food brought to him before he will help do anything. He is very unprofessional! Other than him being a joke, my advisors after him were great!
- *** is amazing

- *** is great.
- Everyone except *** helped me in advising to the best of their abilities
- Everything was satisfactory-my advisor did their job.
- Excellent teaching staff
- Extremely approachable, always available.
- First time I discussed ***, and advisor pushed hard to do *** instead. Not sure what his deal was but that was the only negative experience.
- For the most part advised me well. Pretty good at responding to emails.
- *** is a terrible advisor and has no idea what she is doing nor does she care to help. I've never heard one good thing about her. Her office is a huge mess.
- Great class sizes. Professors try to get to know students on a personal level.
- Great.
- Had to have a different advisor every semester due to department issue with professors leaving.
- I became friends with my advisor and will continue to be in contact when I leave.
- I could have graduated much earlier, but the advisor didn't help me decide which classes I should take at what time.
- I did my own advising. My advisor was a grad assistant who knew nothing about my program.
- I don't have an opinion.
- I enjoyed most of my experience. The staff was helpful and I felt like I could be successful and finish my degree.
- I enjoyed my advisor but I don't feel like she provided me with a very good understanding of the degrees available at MSU and potential career related to the degrees.
- I feel my advisor did not take my concerns seriously. ***
- I feel that MSU has prepared me for job opportunities and to further my education.
- I felt as though my advisor was often confused by my situation and misinformed me when I asked some questions.
- I felt the advisement was helpful and the advisor courteous.
- I found that I only needed to see my advisor to get an okay to register. That is all.
- I got a good advise everytime when I went to advising center
- I had a positive experience overall but some classes were subpar.
- I had many advisors. They helped a lot.
- I had no issues with the academic advising

- I have a good academic experience at MSU.
- I have extremely positive experience in MSU
- I have had an amazing advisor after seeking them out and transferring to their advisement. As a whole though the university has made general advisement difficult.
- I have had over and above the effort with my advisor. Her attitude of complete care for students is one I have not seen in all my 55 years of living.
- I have had two advisors at MSU, the first was terrible and the second is great.
- I learned a great deal and achieved a high GPA of 3.88
- I learned a lot of things from not only classes but school life.
- I received very little help from my advisor, if any at all.
- I think my current advisor is extremely willing to help me, but I am an *** major and my advisor is not a part of the *** department.
- I was a part of the *** advising center. The resources and help was amazing
- I was a transfer only had 2 semester.
- I was advised to take a course that was in fact already taken and transferred from another institution. I dropped the course but was short on a full refund!! Other errors were made, but this was the most alarming.
- I was given incorrect information about applying for grad school and other topics
- I went through multiple advisors, some were better than others but ultimately it was a positive experience.
- I wish I had an advisor who was broadly knowledgeable in our subject area. She is very specific on ways she can and can't help.
- I wish I would have a bit more clarity when I first transferred what classes were needed.
- I would prefer to have a more proactive academic advisor. Reminder emails to enroll would have been helpful.
- I've had positive and negative advising experiences, so overall my experience has been neutral.
- I've had very poor and very good advising while at MSU.
- Inaccurate info on several occasions but friendly
- Inconsistent advising
- Intentions were good.
- It has been great! A+
- It is helpful when I want to register new classes for next academic year.

- It was great. My advisor was always willing to listen.
- It was okay.
- Its been awesome. Helping me learn lots of stuff about new field areas in my field of study.
- *** always was willing to help me with anything from adding a degree to study abroad.
- Learned a lot of things.
- Made sure that I was always on track.
- Most efforts of class selection was made on my own with little or no guidance on courses or feedback from the college of ***.
- Mostly positive-a few negatives
- My academic advisors are extremely helpful.
- My advisor did not seem very helpful with my needs, and treated me as an imbicile.
- My advisor didn't know anything helpful to my class success. She advised me to take several wrong classes as well.
- My advisor has overall been helpful in directing me in the proper coursework and protocol needed to complete my degree.
- My advisor helped me a lot.
- My advisor helped me and made the process easy.
- My advisor helped when I need it. Allowed me to know what I needed for graduation.
- My advisor is hardly ever available and when he is I have to search and find the answers I need myself while he only approve things.
- My advisor *** was very well versed in the classes I needed to take for my B.S. - ***. She remained positive and was very supportive.
- My advisor quit or got fired and no one told me so a week before classes started I didn't know what was going on.
- My advisor took time to help with any questions about setting up my schedules
- My advisor *** did a wonderful job making sure my classes were in order.
- My advisor tried to be helpful, but didn't know much about the requirements of my major.
- My advisor was a nice lady who did well in explaining my options and well knowledgeable on the mymissouristate system
- My advisor was always kind and even remembered me after I took a long break from school.
- My advisor was always well informed or knew who to call if I had a question he didn't know the answer to.
- My advisor was awesome.
- My advisor was helpful every semester.
- My advisor was helpful in my planning process.

- My advisor was not very active in our meetings.
- My advisor was really helpful.
- My advisor was very busy and getting a meeting was difficult. She needs more assistance.
- My advisor was very helpful in guiding my academic decisions and excellent at assessing how to help me achieve my goals.
- My advisor was very helpful, through visits and email. She told me the exact classes I needed.
- My advisor was well informed about my major.
- My advisors helped me anytime I had a question. Which made it a lot easier for me to schedule classes and to know what is the best classes to take.
- My advisors helped organize my degree audit and really cared to help.
- My advisors in *** have been phenomenal but I have not dealt with the advisors in ***.
- My advisors were always able to answer my questions.
- My advisors were *** and ***. They encouraged me to pursue classes that interested me, even if they were outside of my major. Their doors were always open to me and I felt like they were invested.
- My first advisor wouldn't give me the time of day, but once I switched it was great.
- My goals were met.
- My initial advisor didn't really know what she was doing. I felt like I did all the research needed on societies and things on campus relevant to ***.
- My professors have all been very helpful. I do wish my advisor would check in w/ me every once in a while to see how I'm doing.
- Never really used
- Not helpful, not unhelpful
- Nothing went wrong.
- Overall my advisor did a good job in placing me in classes and helping when needed, but I would have appreciated further career pursuit assistance.
- Passed me around a lot. Didn't really help.
- Problems with my academic advisors illness made it hard to contact her with questions.
- Provide guidance when needed
- Ran into transferring issues but they were calmly and professionally solved.
- Should advise transfer students to take *** before coming.

- Some evening class professors were below par in regards to teaching
- Some negative for large class size
- The academic advising was always available and provided understandable help.
- The advising was great here. I like how when you met with the advisor your whole education was planned.
- The advisors were beneficial for some issues. But many didn't offer advise unique to individual students.
- The advisors were helpful with keeping me on track for graduation
- The help was there when I wanted it, but I felt like I was being an inconvenience.
- The staff are friendly and the professors are amazing!
- There are so many requirements and most of the advisors don't really know what counts and what works. They never really provided help just sent me to the computer.
- There were limited face to face oportunities with advisors. She was only made available in *** once a semester.
- They helped me and sometimes revised my schedule.
- They were helpful and answered all of my questions.
- They were very helpful and made my advising go very smoothly.
- This is a energetic and friendly environment. I made many friends, who helped me improving my learning and understanding. Professors also were friendly and able to help me.
- Timely responses.
- Very disorganized
- Very good once I got in for the advising appt, sometimes very difficult to get in or scheduled for appt.
- Very helpful and guided me through everything I needed to graduate
- Very helpful in figuring out what I needed to do.
- Very kind, caring, informative staff (***)
- Very open and organized.
- Very pleased.
- Was not very helpful during my freshman year, but has progressed amazingly each year after!
- Was recommended to take courses that helped my graduate school application.
- Wasn't the most trustworthy. Advising never 100% got me knowing what classes I needed to take.

AGRI

- Advisor was generally helpful.
- Advisors mostly just asked w/ my class choices and sent me on my way; hard to contact at times
- Advisors were often ill-informed and I made better decisions on my own. It felt like jumping through unnecessary hoops.
- Came here for *** and I loved it. Campus is nice. Great organizations as well.
- *** is amazing
- Everything was satisfactory-my advisor did their job.
- Excellent teaching staff
- For the most part advised me well. Pretty good at responding to emails.
- Had several advisers...my first one dropped the ball on some registration stuff, but the rest have been fine.
- I always seemed left to my own devices or I know more than my advisor about something I was inquiring about.
- I did my own advising. My advisor was a grad assistant who knew nothing about my program.
- I feel like I received a good education in my field of study
- I had a good experience with my advisor but more often asked my teachers for advice.
- I had a great experience with prof ***. He was very helpful and I believe he is part of the reason I have been so successful at MSU.
- I have a good academic experience at MSU.
- I have had an amazing advisor after seeking them out and transferring to their advisement. As a whole though the university has made general advisement difficult.
- I love the school
- I never changed majors, yet I had a 3 different advisors, 1 advisor told me incorrect information my first year that made me take classes I didn't need.
- I think my current advisor is extremely willing to help me, but I am an *** major and my advisor is not a part of the *** department.
- I was able to find my major quickly which allowed me to stay on schedule throughout my four years here.
- I was never clearly assigned to an advisor; I won't forget this...
- I was told I could graduate and classes were approved and it was all wrong!
- I went through multiple advisors, some were better than others but ultimately it was a positive experience.

- I've had very great professors who tried who tried their hardest so that I would have the best experience possible and get the most out of each semester.
- It was good.
- It was neither beneficial or harmful. Most of the knowledge I acquired, I searched for myself.
- *** always was willing to help me with anything from adding a degree to study abroad.
- *** was extremely supportive, motivating and understanding during my time here. I could always turn to him with any concerns.
- Mostly positive; once I decided on a major my advisor was great
- My academic adviser was inspiring but sometimes left me in the dust too much-almost too independent.
- My advisor didn't know anything helpful to my class success. She advised me to take several wrong classes as well.
- My advisor is hardly ever available and when he is I have to search and find the answers I need myself while he only approve things.
- My advisor was always easy to reach and understanding. He did his best so I could be my best.
- My advisor was always willing to help when I had questions.
- My advisor was great-very helpful!
- My advisor was not very active in our meetings.
- My advisor was there, but not always helpful.
- My advisor was very positive and willing to help me choose the right classes yet inexperienced on which ones to take at some points.
- My advisor was wonderful.
- My advisors helped organize my degree audit and really cared to help.
- My advisors were knowledgeable and helped me to get back on track when I need it. Although I did not like that I had 3 different advisors during my college career.
- My advisors were *** and ***. They encouraged me to pursue classes that interested me, even if they were outside of my major. Their doors were always open to me and I felt like they were invested.
- My first advisor was actually awful, and my second one wasn't any better. My last one was great, but I only had him for a semester.
- My first advisor wouldn't give me the time of day, but once I switched it was great.
- My first year w/ an undeclared advisor was less than ideal but once in my*** Department my experience greatly improved.

- Never really used
- Once I decided on my major, I had an advisor that specialized in my area and could actually give useful advice.
- Same classes are unnecessary such as certain gen ed. Classes
- Some advisors are knowledgeable, some are not
- Some negative, some positive
- The first advisor I had as a freshman was very negative and not helpful at all. The advisor I have within my major is very helpful.
- They didn't know what I needed to graduate and didn't have enough training.
- They were helpful and answered all of my questions.
- They were not the most helpful, but nice to have
- Wasn't always the best of help when searching for classes

COAL

- 1st advisor didn't tell me about general education classes needed
- Advisor did poor job helping me schedule gen eds. Had me take several that I already had credit for from high school. Didn't offer any advice. Told me to google jobs.
- Advisor was very helpful with any questions I had, even when switching majors/minors
- Advisors provide great feedback and support.
- Advisors were very helpful
- *** was very prepared and responded to emails in a timely manner. She gave good advice about classes.
- *** is the best
- Always guided me in the right direction, very easy to communicate with, and she looked out for my best interests.
- Always have dealt with pleasant and knowledgeable staff
- As I was deciding upon a major course of study, a full range of options available, was not described or elaborated upon for me.
- At my last school, I basically had to teach the advisors what the forms meant. Advisors at MSU have a clear understanding of what classes need to be taken. They also know who to ask if they have questions.
- being a nontraditional student some of the class time were less than desirable for a full time working student.
- Could be improved-it takes weeks sometimes months to get an appointment
- Didn't have a lot of help in the beginning when I wasn't sure what I wanted to major in.
- E-mails were always responded to in a timely manner.

- Everything has gone smoothly. So far...Ha!
- Extremely approachable, always available.
- First time I discussed ***, and advisor pushed hard to do *** instead. Not sure what his deal was but that was the only negative experience.
- Great class sizes. Professors try to get to know students on a personal level.
- Great.
- Haven't had problems
- I am in the military reserve and had to be gone from class and some teachers did not think that was a reason to miss class
- I didn't have any issues with my advisor, but I was always prepared. I know several people that had their grad date pushed back because he didn't have his stuff together.
- I enjoyed my advisor but I don't feel like she provided me with a very good understanding of the degrees available at MSU and potential career related to the degrees.
- I feel my advisor did not take my concerns seriously. ***
- I felt as though my advisor was often confused by my situation and misinformed me when I asked some questions.
- I got a good advise everytime when I went to advising center
- I had no issues with the academic advising
- I have extremely positive experience in MSU
- I have had two advisors at MSU, the first was terrible and the second is great.
- I learned a great deal and achieved a high GPA of 3.88
- I learned a lot from my MSU advisors.
- I worked there so I knew a lot about advising
- I would have liked my academic advisor to have been the same throughout my college career.
- I would prefer to have a more proactive academic advisor. Reminder emails to enroll would have been helpful.
- I'm an international student. They help me a lot.
- It is very helpful to have someone guide you through accomplishing the curriculum.
- It was fine. She just explained stuff printed on papers for requirements.
- *** was a huge help in attaining my degree.
- *** was extremely helpful.
- Learned a lot of things.

- Love my friends and my major that I have gained while attending Missouri State
- Met expectations
- Most classes were great but there were a few like *** that I felt were unnecessary and didn't have quality teachers.
- MSU is an excellent college for me. Only problem: difficulties on enrolling for classes and schedule
- My advisor helped me a lot.
- My advisor helped when I need it. Allowed me to know what I needed for graduation.
- My advisor is not very helpful and doesn't seem to really care about his students.
- My advisor *** was very well versed in the classes I needed to take for my B.S. ***. She remained positive and was very supportive.
- My advisor provided very little assistance and when I would ask for help, would tell me "that's not my job". ***
- My advisor quit and they had no idea who to put me with so I was without an advisor for a while.
- My advisor quit or got fired and no one told me so a week before classes started I didn't know what was going on.
- My advisor was very helpful, through visits and email. She told me the exact classes I needed.
- My advisors were always very helpful and friendly
- My advisors were very helpful and made all relevant information readily accessible.
- My experience was positive.
- My first one was amazing but I was given a new one who was good but wasn't as knowledgeable
- My goals were met.
- My last advisor was good but the first three (who are left) were terrible. I don't know my advisor's name...
- Not helpful, not unhelpful
- Nothing went wrong.
- Overall good with the exception of a couple bad teachers.
- Passed me around a lot. Didn't really help.
- Provide guidance when needed
- Since I started studying at MSU I have had two academic advisors and they were perfect with keeping up with me.
- Some evening class professors were below par regards to teaching
- Some negative for large class size
- Somewhat lazy, better focus and service when you're a senior
- The advisors were beneficial for some issues. But many didn't offer advice unique to individual students.

- The advisors were helpful with keeping me on track for graduation
- There were limited face to face opportunities with advisors. She was only made available *** once a semester.
- They did what was necessary. I did take a couple useless classes they recommended.
- They give me a good understanding of the academic.
- They helped me and sometimes revised my schedule.
- They kept switching who my advisor was. Also, my advisor's time slots were filled 4+ weeks in advance.
- They were very helpful and made my advising go very smoothly.
- Timely responses.
- *** and *** were outstanding in helping me decide a career path and helping proceed around down that path.
- *** was an amazing advisor! Extremely helpful.
- Very helpful
- Very helpful but advisor transferred junior year which caused some confusion.
- Very helpful in figuring out what I needed to do.
- Very informative and helpful
- Was switched advisors at least three times.
- You tried but I never used it.
- *** did a great job

COB

- All three of my advisors were extremely helpful.
- As a student in ***, I don't think my advisor was aware of the requirements for my major (***)
- Did not help with class planning.
- Did not receive any help with signing up for classes and had an advisor that knew nothing about my degree.
- *** has been amazing as my advisor!
- Faculty was always helpful
- Had answers to my questions
- Helped me to stay on track and gave me knowledgeable opinion on what I should do with my courses and when
- I could have graduated much earlier, but the advisor didn't help me decide which classes I should take at what time.
- I felt my advisor didn't have much time
- I felt that there was little support.

- I had a great experience overall, but the communication between the two campuses need help.
- I never had any problems, I also never had any real help either.
- I received very little help from my advisor, if any at all.
- I was advised to take a course that was in fact already taken and transferred from another institution. I dropped the course but was short on a full refund!! Other errors were made, but this was the most alarming.
- It was great. My advisor was always willing to listen.
- It was ok.
- It was okay.
- My academic advisor was helpful.
- My advisor has been an amazing help. Even in the job search she has kept me encouraged!
- My advisor tried to be helpful, but didn't know much about the requirements of my major.
- My advisor was always there to help and I knew I could count on her
- My advisor was awesome.
- My advisor was helpful and knowledgeable.
- My advisor was knowledgeable about my field of study, but they personally had little field experience and was difficult to relate too.
- My advisor was not on top of her game and put me back a whole year.
- My advisor was well informed about my major.
- My advisor was very helpful and able to answer all my questions.
- My advisors in *** have been phenomenal but I have not dealt with the advisors in ***.
- Overall a positive experience though at times lacking because of the changes in my major.
- Problems with my academic advisors illness made it hard to contact her with questions.
- Should advise transfer students to take *** before coming.
- *** in the *** Program was wonderful!
- The advisors were helpful, knowledgeable, and will to go the extra mile to ensure my questions were answered. The advisors had a vested interest in my academic success.
- They were helpful!
- They were very helpful when I had any questions.
- Very helpful and informative guidance

- Was not very helpful during my freshman year, but has progressed amazingly each year after!
- Wasn't the most trustworthy. Advising never 100% got me knowing what classes I needed to take.
- When I first started ***, I was unhappy academically. After meeting ***, I started getting better academically because I was happier.

COE

- Academic advisor was not very helpful and was almost discouraging for graduate school
- Advisor truly cares about you and future career goals.
- Advisors failed to let many students know they were significantly short on hours to graduate.
- All of my professors are/have been very helpful.
- Always available, emailed back fairly soon
- Always available for questions via e-mail and to meet
- At times my advisor was hard to meet with and wasn't very supportive of me.
- Classes went well, with the exception of a few professors. My advisor was helpful.
- Did most of my own scheduling but if I needed help she was there.
- Did most of my scheduling myself. Not much help from anyone else.
- Didn't fully want to help with all aspects of my academic career. Unhelpful answering questions outside of my class schedule
- Didn't work with my assigned advisor. Worked more with chosen professors.
- *** requires food brought to him before he will help do anything. He is very unprofessional! Other than him being a joke, my advisors after him were great!
- *** is one of the best. Her guidance in my career path exceeded my expectations.
- *** is a terrible advisor and has no idea what she is doing nor does she care to help. I've never heard one good thing about her. Her office is a huge mess.
- Had to have a different advisor every semester due to department issue with professors leaving.
- I changed career focus halfway through so my faculty member I went to was not an advisor
- I did most of the work, but they were very helpful when I changed my majors/minors.
- I enjoyed most of my experience. The staff was helpful and I felt like I could be successful and finish my degree.
- I had a positive experience overall but some classes were subpar.
- I have had over and above the effort with my advisor. Her attitude of complete care for students is one I have not seen in all my 55 years of living.

- I sought academic advisement from a professor who was not my advisor.
- I was given incorrect information about applying for grad school and other topics
- I've had a lot of advisors some were wonderful others made me want to drop out or switch schools.
- I've had positive and negative advising experiences, so overall my experience has been neutral.
- Inaccurate info on several occasions but friendly
- Inconsistent advising
- Intentions were good.
- It helped slightly.
- It is helpful when I want to register new classes for next academic year.
- It was like the moment a bird decides not to eat from your hand and flies. Just before it flies, the rivers become still, like the moment you realize you are beginning to slide on ice. It was like that, only all the time.
- Its been awesome. Helping me learn lots of stuff about new field areas in my field of study.
- Made sure that I was always on track.
- Mostly positive-a few negatives
- My academic advisor was always available and helpful.
- My academic advisor was discouraging.
- My academic advisors are extremely helpful.
- My academic advisors were extremely helpful and friendly. I enjoyed meeting with them and they gave great advice.
- My advisor always gave excellent recommendations on which classes to take and when.
- My advisor did not help with anything outside of picking classes
- My advisor did not seem very helpful with my needs, and treated me as an imbecile.
- My advisor has overall been helpful in directing me in the proper coursework and protocol needed to complete my degree.
- My advisor helped me and made the process easy.
- My advisor in the undecided department was phenomenal! My advisor in my final department frequently had distractions.
- My advisor never would help me with advising me. I had to advise myself. She didn't want to help with anything! I wasted a whole year because of this!!
- My advisor really helped to guide me
- My advisor *** did a wonderful job making sure my classes were in order.
- My advisor was always helpful and supportive.

- My advisor was always kind and even remembered me after I took a long break from school.
- My advisor was helpful every semester.
- My advisor was helpful in my planning process.
- My advisor was not available to help very often.
- My advisor was very busy and getting a meeting was difficult. She needs more assistance.
- My advisor was wonderful.
- My advisors were always able to answer my questions.
- My first advisor was great, 2nd was terrible (very bad), 3rd great. My 2nd advisor messed up my credits. I was misadvised.
- My professors have all been very helpful. I do wish my advisor would check in w/ me every once in a while to see how I'm doing.
- No negative experience-prompt about getting back with me.
- Overall my advisor did a good job in placing me in classes and helping when needed, but I would have appreciated further career pursuit assistance.
- The advising was great here. I like how when you met with the advisor your whole education was planned.
- The overall experience was very positive, but some professors seemed not to place teaching as a top priority on their list of things to do.
- The staff are friendly and the professors are amazing!
- They helped me plan what classes I needed and what other semesters would be like.
- Very disorganized
- Very good once I got in for the advising appt, sometimes very difficult to get in or scheduled for appt.
- Very open and organized.
- Very pleased.
- Was recommended to take courses that helped my graduate school application.

CHHS

- Advisors were not particularly helpful
- *** advising was average; not really great listeners; more of a "job". Once I found an advisor in my *** major it was much better.
- *** was very helpful. My advisor always made time for me.
- Did not have to meet with advisor

- Great way to find out what I can accomplish.
- I don't have an opinion.
- I felt the advisement was helpful and the advisor courteous.
- I found that I only needed to see my advisor to get an okay to register. That is all.
- I loved my advisor! She always was available to help me and always responded quickly. She knew a lot!
- I survived. That's about it.
- I was a part of the *** center. The resources and help was amazing
- It has been a good college experience and I learned a lot.
- It was okay. I had two different advisors. I think it would be better to have 1.
- My advisor and I had a good relationship and he helped guide me through tough decisions regarding my academics.
- My advisor knew of the profession I want to pursue, but did not inform me that I should be in a different major. She did not respond to emails and promptly or sometimes did not respond at all. She is always short and does not answer my questions. Very frustrating.
- My advisor was a nice lady who did well in explaining my options and well knowledgeable on the mymissouristate system
- My advisor was always well informed or knew who to call if I had a question he didn't know the answer to.
- My advisor was ill informed of many general academic aspects so I could not rely on her information but *** was helpful
- My first advisor passed away and *** was not helpful whenever he became my advisor b/c he was very discouraging.
- Ran into transferring issues but they were calmly and professionally solved.
- Seems like their time was rushed
- *** was not very helpful, but once I declared, my advisor was much more helpful.

CHPA

- *** was amazing but when I got placed in my degree I was not treated as well by that advising department.
- Advisor was always willing to help, but was not always the most knowledgeable
- BYAH
- Did my own advising. I take matters into my own hands.
- Did not provide enough information about various careers and the experience was unorganized
- *** was pleasant and helpful, but it was often difficult to get in contact with him.
- *** has been wonderful.
- *** is the best professor at MSU.

- *** is great.
- First advisor for regular gen eds was not very helpful. Major advisor was very good.
- Helped me reach my goals.
- I enjoyed Missouri State including its courses and teachers.
- I enjoyed my advisor and benefitted from meetings.
- I feel like all of my teachers were well versed in their fields. More hands on learning would have been nice though.
- I have typically had very helpful and knowledgeable advisors.
- I learned a lot of things from not only classes but school life.
- I learned the knowledge that is necessary and useful to me.
- I wish I had an advisor who was broadly knowledgeable in our subject area. She is very specific on ways she can and can't help.
- I wish I would have a bit more clarity when I first transferred what classes were needed.
- I've had very poor and very good advising while at MSU.
- It has been great! A+
- It is most helpful when professors have a broad knowledge and are in the field you want to be in.
- It was generally always easy to get in contact with my advisor and they always helped with choosing classes, etc.
- Little is even known about my career field, despite having the career field as an emphasis in the department.
- My academic advisor didn't help me much, I went to other teachers for help. His name is ***
- My advisor did well in helping me arrange my school schedule around my work schedule.
- My advisor never advised me to take certain classes. He would say my grades are bad such as saying "No you want A". He was generally not specific. I graduated on time without his help.
- My advisor was excellent.
- My advisor was from the *** department and set up all my gen eds first. As a *** major, that is a terrible idea.
- My advisor was really great and knowledgeable. I wish he would have met with me even after I got the necessary hours to not need advisor approval for registering.
- My advisor was very helpful in guiding my academic decisions and excellent at assessing how to help me achieve my goals.
- My advisor was well informed, supportive and really allowed for me to successfully complete my degree.
- My graduate level advisor is always helpful.

- My initial advisor didn't really know what she was doing. I felt like I did all the research needed on societies and things on campus relevant to ***.
- Nice people
- Professor was advisor and just said "looks good" to schedules I made. No further assistance.
- Really helpful, especially since I'm honors and that could make things difficult
- The help was there when I wanted it, but I felt like I was being an inconvenience.
- The professors *** were typically unhelpful when it came to explaining difficult concepts. I repeatedly ask for help, and received very little.
- There are so many requirements and most of the advisors don't really know what counts and what works. They never really provided help just sent me to the computer.
- This is a energetic and friendly environment. I made many friends, who helped me improving my learning and understanding. Professors also were friendly and able to help me.
- Very helpful and guided me through everything I needed to graduate
- Very kind, caring, informative staff (***)

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UND

- Always was worried I wouldn't graduate on time due to poor advising.
- One of my advisors wasn't very helpful
- The academic advising was always available and provided understandable help.

IND

- Advisor was very helpful, however I had to cram in a few last minute classes because they were overlooked
- Advisors were always very helpful, but sometimes they were hard to get a hold of.
- Great advising. Knew where to point in right direction.
- Great place for a person to go to school at. Great everything.
- I feel that MSU has prepared me for job opportunities and to further my education.
- I learned a lot and enjoyed myself while I was here.
- I thought it was very good. I had a really great advisor
- I was a transfer only had 2 semesters.
- In general, all questions were answered in a timely and positive manner.
- My academic advisor was great.

- My advisor never returned my emails and was often unable to get a hold of. I was mis-scheduled a few times also. I started going through a professor of mine.
- My advisor took time to help with any questions about setting up my schedules
- My advisor was in his office when he said he would be, and very helpful and supportive.
- My advisors helped me anytime I had a question. Which made it a lot easier for me to schedule classes and to know what is the best classes to take.
- My first advisor was not helpful, my 2nd advisor was but was unfamiliar with my major. Then I switched to the *** dept and my advisor was great.
- No complaints.
- Outstanding!
- The dept I had before was not that great but the *** dept. was phenomenal!

2. How often did you continue to meet with an academic advisor after you completed 75 hours and were no longer required to receive an advisor release to register for classes?

ADV AFTER 75 HRS	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Never	53	8.2	17	6.4	7	9.3	10	1.11	8	4.4	3	4.8
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arose)	456	70.7	191	72.3	49	65.3	66	76.7	125	69.1	48	76.2
About once a year	93	14.4	42	15.9	12	16.0	2	6.7	33	18.2	11	17.5
Once as a senior for a final degree check	31	4.8	11	4.2	4	5.3	2	6.7	12	6.6	0	0.0
We communicated via email but did not meet in person	11	1.7	2	0.8	3	4.0	0	0.0	3	1.7	1	1.6
Missing response	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

2. (Continued) How often did you continue to meet with an academic advisor after you completed 75 hours and were no longer required to receive an advisor release to register for classes?

ADV AFTER 75 HRS	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Never	7	5.4	8	19.0	15	20.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.7
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arose)	96	74.4	25	59.5	44	59.5	1	100.0	3	75.0	23	76.7
About once a year	18	14.0	5	11.9	11	14.9	0	0.0	1	25.0	2	6.7
Once as a senior for a final degree check	0	0.0	2	4.8	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.7
We communicated via email but did not meet in person	1	1.6	1	2.4	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.3
Missing response	0	0.0	1	2.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	63	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

2. (Continued) How often did you continue to meet with an academic advisor after you completed 75 hours and were no longer required to receive an advisor release to register for classes?

ADV AFTER 75 HRS	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Never	0	0.0
Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arose)	24	80.0
About once a year	3	10.0
Once as a senior for a final degree check	2	6.7
We communicated via email but did not meet in person	1	3.3
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

3. At MSU, in which areas did you receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? *(Please mark all that apply)*

EXPECTED INFO	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	222	34.3	87	33.0	30	40.0	31	34.4	65	35.9	23	36.5
Requirements for your major and minor	601	93.2	248	93.9	74	98.7	88	97.8	165	91.2	59	93.7
Referrals to campus resources	128	19.8	42	15.9	18	24.0	23	25.6	32	17.7	9	14.3
General education requirements	401	62.2	145	54.9	50	66.7	55	61.1	109	60.2	40	63.5
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	281	43.6	101	38.3	36	48.0	47	52.2	47	26.0	12	19.0
Study habits and time management	62	9.6	21	8.0	5	6.7	9	10.0	12	6.6	4	6.3
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	149	23.1	47	17.8	20	26.7	19	21.1	35	19.3	12	19.0
Other	24	3.7	11	4.2	5	6.7	4	4.4	6	3.3	2	3.2
Total	1,868	N/A	702	N/A	238	N/A	276	N/A	471	N/A	161	N/A

3. (Continued) At MSU, in which areas did you receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please mark all that apply)

EXPECTED INFO	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	44	34.1	11	26.2	21	28.4	0	0.0	2	50.0	13	43.3
Requirements for your major and minor	124	96.1	36	85.7	63	85.1	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0
Referrals to campus resources	26	20.2	7	16.7	11	14.9	1	100.0	1	25.0	9	30.0
General education requirements	87	67.4	27	64.3	41	55.4	0	0.0	3	75.0	20	66.7
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	78	60.5	19	45.2	39	52.7	0	0.0	2	50.0	25	83.3
Study habits and time management	17	13.2	6	14.3	4	5.4	0	0.0	1	25.0	4	13.3
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	28	21.7	13	31.0	19	25.7	1	100.0	1	25.0	11	36.7
Other	6	4.7	2	4.8	2	2.7	1	100.0	0	100.0	1	3.3
Total	410	N/A	121	N/A	200	N/A	4	N/A	14	N/A	113	N/A

3. At MSU, in which areas did you receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please mark all that apply)

EXPECTED INFO	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines	12	40.0
Requirements for your major and minor	30	100.0
Referrals to campus resources	9	30.0
General education requirements	19	63.3
Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)	12	40.0
Study habits and time management	5	16.7
Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)	9	30.0
Other	1	100.0
Total	97	N/A

Item 3 “Other” responses explained:

HON

- Helping to decide what my major should be for my desired career path
- Letters of recommendation, thesis advice, advice on conference presentations and publications.
- Research opportunities
- Specific info and help re: medical school applications
- Timing of courses that best prepared me for professional school entry exams and applicants.

TRAN

- *** classes prepared me for the real world.
- Employment opportunities
- Financial, transfer credits
- Grad school options/requirements
- Internship advise
- Letters of recommendation, thesis advice, advice on conference presentations and publications.
- My advisor was also the head director of the *** organization group on campus. She held the meeting in her office.
- My advisor was extremely limited with the understanding of the job and details related to my degree program.
- My advisor is one of my professors and directors. Also I was a SOAR leader.
- Research
- Research opportunities
- Service learning; Athletics academic advising
- Who to contact for Masters programs

AGRI

- Helping to decide what my major should be for my desired career path
- My advisor is one of my professors and directors. Also I was a SOAR leader.
- Service learning; *** academic advising

COAL

- Asked in those areas but received little help.
- *** rocks

- Employment opportunities
- Financial, transfer credits
- Grades & GPA management.
- Scheduling
- Who to contact for Masters programs

COB

- *** classes prepared me for the real world.
- My advisor was extremely limited with the understanding of the job and details related to my degree program.
- Transitioning from my previous major to the one I'm graduating with now.

COE

- Grad school options/requirements
- Internship advise
- My advisor was also the head director of the *** organization group on campus. She held the meeting in her office.
- Recommendation letter
- Research opportunities
- Specific info and help re: medical school applications
- Timing of courses that best prepared me for professional school entry exams and applicants.

CHHS

- Letters of recommendation, thesis advice, advice on conference presentations and publications.
- No good help received.

CHPA

- Only so they could sign off for me to register.
- Research

CNAS

- Study away

IND

- Resume help

4. How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	52	8.1	17	6.4	6	8.0	15	16.7	5	2.8	3	4.8
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	402	62.3	157	59.5	58	77.3	62	68.9	104	57.5	33	52.4
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	151	23.4	66	25.0	11	14.7	13	14.4	49	27.1	23	36.5
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	38	5.9	22	8.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	22	12.2	4	6.3
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	2	0.3	2	0.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

4. (Continued) How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	6	4.7	6	14.3	13	17.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	82	63.6	29	69.0	47	63.5	1	100.0	2	50.0	21	70.0
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	35	27.1	7	16.7	7	9.5	0	0.0	2	50.0	9	30.0
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	6	4.7	0	0.0	6	8.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

4. (Continued) How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	4	13.3
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	20	66.7
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	6	20.0
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

5. How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?

POST-GRADUATION RESPONSIBILITY	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	293	45.4	123	46.6	33	44.0	44	48.9	16	8.8	20	31.7
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	296	45.9	118	44.7	39	52.0	40	44.4	68	37.6	34	54.0
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	48	7.4	19	7.2	3	4.0	2	2.2	16	8.8	8	12.7
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	8	1.2	4	1.5	0	0.0	4	4.4	2	1.1	1	1.6
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

5. (Continued) How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?

POST-GRADUATION RESPONSIBILITY	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	46	35.7	21	50.0	39	52.7	0	0.0	2	50.0	13	43.3
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	75	58.1	18	42.9	30	40.5	1	100.0	2	50.0	15	50.0
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	8	6.2	3	7.1	4	5.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	6.7
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

5. (Continued) How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?

POST-GRADUATION RESPONSIBILITY	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.	13	43.3
I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.	12	40.0
I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.	5	16.7
My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.	0	0.0
My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

6. Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?

EXPECTED SUPPORT	OVERALL		TRAN		HON		AGRI		COAL		COB	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Absolutely	24	37.8	96	36.4	33	44.0	34	37.8	58	32.0	28	44.4
Yes	259	40.2	107	40.5	29	38.7	33	36.7	77	42.5	22	34.9
Somewhat	106	16.4	46	17.4	10	13.3	36	16.7	36	19.9	10	15.9
No	26	4.0	11	4.2	3	4.0	7	6.7	6	3.9	3	4.8
Not at all	9	1.4	3	1.1	0	0.0	2	2.2	2	1.1	0	0.0
Missing response	1	0.2	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
Total	645	100.0	264	100.0	75	100.0	90	100.0	181	100.0	63	100.0

EXPECTED SUPPORT	COE		CHHS		CHPA		CNAS		UND		IND	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Absolutely	49	38.0	18	42.9	22	29.7	1	100.0	1	25.0	20	66.7
Yes	54	41.9	18	42.9	35	47.3	0	0.0	2	50.0	6	20.0
Somewhat	22	17.1	4	9.5	12	16.2	0	0.0	1	25.0	3	10.0
No	3	2.3	0	0.0	3	4.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	3.3
Not at all	1	0.8	2	4.8	2	2.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	129	100.0	42	100.0	74	100.0	1	100.0	4	100.0	30	100.0

6. (Continued) Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?

EXPECTED SUPPORT	More than 1 College	
	<i>n</i>	%
Absolutely	12	40.0
Yes	12	40.0
Somewhat	3	10.0
No	3	10.0
Not at all	0	0.0
Missing response	0	0.0
Total	30	100.0

243 Item 6 responses explained: (***) replaces some advisor or department names)

HON

- He had several good suggestions, knew resources I was not aware of.
- I only talked to my advisor when I was unsure of something.
- My advisor always had suggestions, esp. with what classes would compliment my degree, etc.
- The general advisor I have has just helped me by approving my classes for registration.
- Wanted me to succeed but didn't try her best

TRAN

- As stated before, my past experience supports another degree program available, than the one I have completed.
- *** was my advisor. She was great at helping me!
- Didn't really engage in any conversations of personal interests
- *** was an amazing advisor and he pushed me towards my dreams.
- *** was great. I'm glad I got switched to him.
- Great
- Helped me graduate. Nothing geared towards "best possible education"
- Helped set guidelines-but had a few troubles with accuracy of information from her.

- I just read the requirement from the book.
- Knew what I needed to be competitive
- *** was an amazing advisor!
- My advisor always had suggestions, esp. with what classes would compliment my degree, etc.
- *** needs more qualified professors to fill classes.
- She barely even knew my name let alone how to help me.
- She gave me support when classes were difficult
- She knew the best options and informed me of them.
- She made sure I was in the best classes with the best teachers and wanted to make sure I was truly enjoying myself.
- She never made me felt as if I wasn't good enough
- She tried with what she could.
- Support in form of positive encouragement, but I can get that from my mom.
- Talking about goals/options after earning my bachelor's degree would have been nice.
- The communication level was not always acceptable and the level of organization of the degree program was not always efficient.
- They were only as helpful as I needed them to be. No, personal input or feedback.
- *** took over when my advisor failed to be of help! She was incredible!

AGRI

- *** was great. He was very supportive and knowledgeable. Alas, my first and second advisers didn't take any interest.
- He was also my instructor twice.
- I had horrible advisors for 2 years that weren't even professors in my major.
- My advisor discouraged me from continuing my chosen program.
- My advisor was new.
- She barely even knew my name let alone how to help me.
- She didn't really ever give me options. I mostly just got her approval on my schedule.
- The helped, up to a point. At a certain point it was mostly up to me.
- Very knowledgeable about degree program.

COAL

- Advisor was always helpful and kept me on track

- Again *** and *** helped on both scheduling and class choosing.
- As stated before, my past experience supports another degree program available, than the one I have completed.
- Assistance with scheduling was my only cause for interaction
- Didn't really engage in any conversations of personal interests
- Great
- Helped me choose classes
- Helped me graduate. Nothing geared towards "best possible education"
- I just read the requirement from the book.
- My advisor actually discouraged me from taking more than 15 hours. I took 12 w/ all A's.
- My first advisor did not support my decisions as much, the new one does.
- She gave me support when classes were difficult
- She had no choice but to support me...It's my choice.
- She was able to answer any questions that I had about where things were needed.
- Talking about goals/options after earning my bachelor's degree would have been nice.
- The general advisor I have has just helped me by approving my classes for registration.
- They were only as helpful as I needed them to be. No, personal input or feedback.

COB

- *** is the best!
- *** was great. I'm glad I got switched to him.
- I said where I needed to go and they support that decision.
- My advisor would at times discourage me and not lift me up.
- Provided contradictory information.
- She was kind of pushy for me to graduate in 4 years even though I wanted 4 1/2.
- Support in form of positive encouragement, but I can get that from my mom.
- While she seemed supportive - I feel as though she has too many advises on her plate.

COE

- *** was my advisor. She was great at helping me!
- *** was an amazing advisor and he pushed me towards my dreams.

- He thought students were (unintelligible) and we shouldn't do anything but study therefore we can take all the (unintelligible) classes
- Helped set guidelines-but had a few troubles with accuracy of information from her.
- Knew what I needed to be competitive
- *** was an amazing advisor!
- My advisor was there to get paid. She did not care about my success and made that clear.
- No, *** assisted me, rather than my advisor.
- *** needs more qualified professors to fill classes.
- She knew the best options and informed me of them.
- She made sure I was in the best classes with the best teachers and wanted to make sure I was truly enjoying myself.
- She never made me felt as if I wasn't good enough
- She wasn't too helpful in signing up for classes.
- The communication level was not always acceptable and the level of organization of the degree program was not always efficient.
- *** took over when my advisor failed to be of help! She was incredible!
- Wanted me to succeed but didn't try her best

CHHS

- He was basically saying I was ignorant, wouldn't amount to anything, and rude.
- My advisor always had suggestions, esp. with what classes would compliment my degree, etc.
- She helped me with finding an internship.
- She suggested what I should take and left the rest up to me.

CHPA

- He had several good suggestions, knew resources I was not aware of.
- I didn't use him.
- I only talked to him to get my schedule release.

IND

- He frowned upon taking "blow-off" classes.

7. Please share additional thoughts about your advising experience at MSU. (*) replaces some advisor or department names)**

HON

- Advisor was very much covered for my well-being and a student.
- Anytime I was confused about anything, my advisor knew exactly how to help me.
- Better informed SOAR leaders
- Communication was never a problem. Emails were very helpful for addressing issues and scheduling appointments.
- ***, ***, and *** were all amazing and very supportive.
- *** in the *** department is wonderful.
- Dual credit in high school 24 credits
- Have one permanent advisor-don't switch them up on students. Since upper classmen register first, let them have advisor meetings first.
- I changed majors several times. Each advisor I had was good, but my *** advisor was extremely helpful.
- I developed close relationships with professors other than advisor who helped more.
- I had a great advisor.
- I had an excellent advisor! ***!
- I really liked my advisor. He was always willing to look things up for me.
- I thought my advisor was a good match for me. He gave me freedom to choose my class schedule and made sure I kept on track for graduation.
- I wish *** advising was through professors. The professional advisors by in large were terrible.
- I would have liked more info on internships.
- I've been pursuing a non-traditional route for my career and so a lot of times the counsel that I received was well-intended but not always helpful.
- In one of my semesters, my advisor switched to a new professor. I found it very frustrating that I was not notified of the switch or why it occurred.
- *** is amazing!
- My advisor as a *** major was very supportive. However, my advisor in *** was not as helpful
- My advisor was excellent. Always available, even just to chat.
- My advisor was exceptional a great resource.

- My advisor was nice. She didn't know a lot of my questions but knew where to send me to find out.
- My advisor won Advisor of the Year. Nice!
- My advisors were helpful. The SOAR leaders didn't help much at all with choosing my classes first semester though.
- My experience was so great that fellow students asked me advice based on what my advisor told me.
- My first advisor wasn't at all helpful, so I asked for a new one. I eventually changed my major, and found out I wasn't in the right program for my career choice.
- N/A, it was really good.
- Ok
- Please have better training available. Also, I had 3 advisors in 4 years. I feel like MSU is known for their bad advisors unfortunately.
- The fact that the resource was there was a great tool for me.
- They are helpful and friendly.
- This test is dumb and pointless.
- Very helpful.

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TRAN

- Advisor just didn't seem to go out of their way to help.
- Advisor was helpful with transferring credit.
- Advisors should be held to a higher standard of accountability. My advisor should not be advising.
- Always available for appointment. Thanks.
- *** advising was much more proactive than my dept advisor
- *** helped me tremendously.
- *** is amazing.
- Educate staff to the fullest. This was a joke in our department, as I was not alone with this experience.
- Even though most my course work was done off campus or at another MSU location (***) my advisor was always available to help or direct.
- Everything was great. *** is awesome!
- Exceptional.
- For some reason, I received different advisor's advising each semester.
- Give me some advice for graduate school.

- Good
- Good experience
- Good job
- Good overall, other advisors were willing to help me as well in the *** Department.
- Great
- Great education-challenging but effective
- Great person.
- Had a rough start, but once I found the degree I changed to things got better
- Hard to get appointment. I work full time.
- Hard to meet with. Cancelled on my many times. Pass me around. Didn't have flexible times throughout week.
- Helped at first after my sophomore year was unneeded
- I am glad that I transferred to this university. They have helped me achieve my goals.
- I am very much appreciated for the help.
- I came here and first spoke with my advisor and came back for final look over and she retired a year before so had to get a new one, no email was regarding.
- I did not graduate on time because of my advisor.
- I feel if I have passed my classes this test shouldn't have a need to be taken.
- I felt that my advisor was extremely rude, unhelpful, and inconsistent with the info she gave me.
- I had good experience with my advisor at MSU.
- I had my advisor as a professor for the classes and was on great terms and communicated frequently in person and via email.
- I have high respect for ***. Always answered all my questions in a timely manner. *** is awesome.
- I love my advisor. ***.
- I really enjoyed the entire *** department faculty. I truly felt like a family, so advising was very easy.
- I really liked my advisor. He was always willing to look things up for me.
- I thought my advisor helped a lot from transition from a different college. She gave advice and helped with what classes I need to take.
- I went to *** for two years before I transferred here. The advising here is so much better than it is at ***
- I wish my advisor would of told me to take more hands on classes
- I would like to have more help from my advisor about options regarding grad school.

- I've been pursuing a non-traditional route for my career and so a lot of times the counsel that I received was well-intended but not always helpful.
- It has been wonderful
- It was great.
- It was positive
- It was very well organized and all the advisers were very nice.
- *** is amazing. She was my fourth advisor and she is a big reason I will be graduating soon.
- Much of the *** requirements were [unintelligible]
- My advisor changed every semesters of my junior and senior year. I prefer to have a stale advisor that can be familiar with my information instead of asking every time.
- My advisor was amazing
- My advisor was excellent. Always available, even just to chat.
- My advisor was overloaded with students and the *** students seem to be given little to no advise, usually too late.
- My advisor was very flexible with his time and was useful as a referral for future employment.
- My advisor was very friendly making appointments was always easy.
- My advisor was very kind and always looked out for my well-being.
- My advisor wasn't much help but one of my professors really pushed me and sent internship applications to me as well as suggest additional classes to take.
- My advisor, ***, always had a positive attitude and a smile.
- My first academic advisor was never available. My second advisor was great!
- No additional thoughts. I had a positive experience.
- *** was so amazing when I needed help in my quest to earn a *** degree.
- Seemed to vary semester to semester on advisement for future
- Seemed very organized and caring
- She really helped me. She told me what I had left to do. She advised me in the right direction.
- She was great! Became very knowledgeable!
- Sometimes academic advising do not help transfer students very well. I have to retake 5 courses which I have taken in my previous school.
- Terrible. I had to fight to transfer some things and received little help that was good.

- The academic advisor helped me to select the courses that were useful for my major and future career carefully every semester.
- There were only two advisors for my degree, one who didn't know much and one who wasn't helpful.
- They are well versed in what is required for graduation and extremely helpful.
- They do everything they can to help you graduate.
- They were all positive meetings
- They were there to help anytime I needed help in a decision.
- They were very helpful and willing to work with me when I had a question or problem.
- Very helpful when able to get in to meet with advisor
- Very positive experience, although it was redundant at times.
- Waste of time and resources
- whatever
- When asking my advisor what to do about my CBASE and graduation plans she provided me zero help.
- When I came here as a transfer from ***, the advisor in my department at the time spoke to me in a way that made me uncomfortable. Her manner was that I didn't know what college was like coming from ***.
- William H. Darr School of Agriculture was amazing about giving support and feedback all my advisors, professors, and department head truly cared about me and my education.
- You shouldn't penalized people who don't meet with their advisor in a timely fashion. Advisors who knew about your program and check in with you would be a positive step.

AGRI

- Advisor was helpful with transferring credit.
- Advisors should be held to a higher standard of accountability. My advisor should not be advising.
- Athletics academic advising was much more proactive than my dept advisor
- Communication was never a problem. Emails were very helpful for addressing issues and scheduling appointments.
- *** helped me tremendously.
- Go Bears!
- Have dedicated advisors - people who actually enjoy the job and don't make you feel like you're burdoning them.
- He's a great guy and easy to locate and communicate with
- I had a few difficult advisors. All good.
- I had an excellent advisor! ***!

- I have had two advisors while at MSU, and I have had very good experiences with both, they were very helpful and supportive. The music department is a wonderful place to learn.
- I may as well not have one. Nice enough man, but never really proved helpful.
- I think if we have advisors they should know requirements
- I wish I could have picked my own advisor.
- I wish I had a better advisor my first two years.
- I wish my advisor would of told me to take more hands on classes
- I've been pursuing a non-traditional route for my career and so a lot of times the counsel that I received was well-intended but not always helpful.
- In one of my semesters, my advisor switched to a new professor. I found it very frustrating that I was not notified of the switch or why it occurred.
- It helped that my advisors were experienced in the *** field. I could always approach them with any question about my future in that career.
- It is a great resource for students and helps keep them on track
- It was helpful at the beginning when I needed to know which classes to start with.
- My advisor was very helpful in regards to my classes and career aspirations. She always fully answered my questions and helped me find an internship.
- My advisor wasn't much help but one of my professors really pushed me and sent internship applications to me as well as suggest additional classes to take.
- My first advisor wasn't at all helpful, so I asked for a new one. I eventually changed my major, and found out I wasn't in the right program for my career choice.
- Overall I felt that my advisor was partly helpful but I gained most of my knowledge on certain things on my own.
- Please have better training available. Also, I had 3 advisors in 4 years. I feel like MSU is known for their bad advisors unfortunately.
- The fact that the resource was there was a great tool for me.
- There is definitely room for improvement. There are those advisers who genuinely care, but you can tell that others really feel that it's an inconvenience.
- Waste of money, time, and resources. Students should be able to figure it out on their own.
- Waste of time and resources

- whatever
- When faculty or staff decide to stop advising students, it is important to let the students know as soon as it happens. This was not the case for me and it happened twice.
- When I came here as a transfer from ***, the advisor in my department at the time spoke to me in a way that made me uncomfortable. Her manner was that I didn't know what college was like coming from ***.
- When I was undecided, I had trouble and stress about getting a good advisor. Once I went into the *** Dept, my advisor was great!

COAL

- *** has been the best advisor. I've had out of the 4 I've met with.
- All advisors were kind and helpful
- *** was BEST academic advisor.
- Even though most my course work was done off campus or at another MSU location (***) my advisor was always available to help or direct.
- Everything was great. *** is awesome!
- Excellent!
- Exceptional.
- For some reason, I received different advisor's advising each semester.
- Give me some advice for graduate school.
- Good
- Good experience. Active, helpful, and useful advising information.
- Great
- Great experience
- Had a rough start, but once I found the degree I changed to things got better
- Hard to get appointment. I work full time.
- Hard to meet with. Cancelled on my many times. Pass me around. Didn't have flexible times throughout week.
- Have one permanent advisor-don't switch them up on students. Since upper classmen register first, let them have advisor meetings first.
- Helped to outline certain classes to take and requirements to complete.

- I cannot say enough about *** and ***. *** had me from day one and was my favorite faculty on campus and still is due to her knowledge and helpfulness.
- I changed advisors too much!
- I changed majors several times. Each advisor I had was good, but my *** advisor was extremely helpful.
- I did not graduate on time because of my advisor.
- I did not think he was helpful at all and wish there was another option through my major.
- I don't have any additional thoughts
- I had good experience with my advisor at MSU.
- I have had three. *** sucked. *** and *** were incredible.
- I have high respect for ***. Always answered all my questions in a timely manner. *** is awesome.
- I just think my advisor isn't really good at what he does & he doesn't really care.
- I never felt she was professional or that knowledgeable.
- I thought my advisor helped a lot from transition from a different college. She gave advice and helped with what classes I need to take.
- I wish *** advising was through professors. The professional advisors by in large were terrible.
- I wish she would had given me straight answers to my questions. Sometimes I would ask her for help and she would explain how instead of just telling me.
- It was good.
- It was overall a good experience with only a few negative aspects.
- It was very well organized and all the advisers were very nice.
- More *** classes are needed.
- Much of the *** requirements were (unintelligible)
- My advisor changed 3 times
- My advisor changed every semesters of my junior and senior year. I prefer to have a stale advisor that can be familiar with my information instead of asking every times.
- My advisor was always on the ball and prepared for any questions I had.
- My advisor was always helpful and had answers to questions I had.
- My advisor was not extremely helpful, only made sure I was meeting requirements.
- My advisor was very friendly making appointments was always easy.

- My advisor was very kind and always looked out for my well-being.
- My advisor, ***, always had a positive attitude and a smile.
- Ok
- Overall it was beneficial
- Overall, I was pleased with my academic advising. Very helpful.
- She helped me initially really well. Then *** retired :(
- She's kind.
- Some areas in the *** department were not the best including professors. Made it difficult to enjoy my academic experience.
- The academic advisor helped me to select the courses that were useful for my major and future career carefully every semester.
- They are helpful and friendly.
- *** helped.
- very helpful
- Very helpful
- Very useful
- Was not as personable as other advisors
- You shouldn't penalized people who don't meet with their advisor in a timely fashion. Advisors who knew about your program and check in with you would be a positive step.

COB

- Better informed SOAR leaders
- *** was planning all my courses for the time I planned on being here. It helped a lot.
- Educate staff to the fullest. This was a joke in our department, as I was not alone with this experience.
- Good experience
- Great advisors in the *** department.
- I enjoyed my advising appointments and felt better when I left knowing I was on track
- I feel that my advisor was an important part of my experience.
- I had a great experience with my advisement from my advisor.
- I really liked my advisor. He was always willing to look things up for me.
- I wish there had been more than one advisor.
- It was very good. Every time I e-mail or had concern I received reply promptly.

- My advisor always had my interest and goals at the core of her advising.
- My advisor for *** is wonderful but the advisor that I had previously did NOT know anything about graduating or career paths to take. Need to give advisors more training on how to advise!
- My advisor was nice. She didn't know a lot of my questions but knew where to send me to find out.
- My advisor was ok but she could have been a little more open and organized. But I worked it out.
- My advisor won Advisor of the Year. Nice!
- My thoughts are not enough help.
- No additional thoughts. I had a positive experience.
- She really helped me. She told me what I had left to do. She advised me in the right direction.
- She was great! Became very knowledgeable!
- Stop changing the program every year.
- There were only two advisors for my degree, one who didn't know much and one who wasn't helpful.
- They are well versed in what is required for graduation and extremely helpful.
- Very helpful, visited every semester
- When asking my advisor what to do about my CBASE and graduation plans she provided me zero help.

COE

- *** was an amazing, supportive advisor.
- *** almost made me have to drop out of MSU.
- *** is amazing.
- *** in the *** department is wonderful.
- Dual credit in high school 24 credits
- *** rules
- Give *** a raise
- Good keep it up.
- Good overall, other advisors were willing to help me as well in the *** Department.
- Great education-challenging but effective
- I am glad that I transferred to this university. They have helped me achieve my goals.
- I developed close relationships with professors other than advisor who helped more.
- I felt that my advisor was extremely rude, unhelpful, and inconsistent with the info she gave me.

- I had a positive relationship and felt very directed on the courses to complete my degree.
- I knew most of the stuff before talking to my advisor. He helped me a little.
- I thought my advisor was a good match for me. He gave me freedom to choose my class schedule and made sure I kept on track for graduation.
- I went to *** for two years before I transferred here. The advising here is so much better than it is at ***
- I wish I had more input from my advisor
- I wish I would have known all options and been encouraged to take more credits/more difficult options to prepare me better.
- I've enjoyed my time here.
- I've had two academic advisors while at MSU. The first was amazing, the second was terrible.
- Information regarding additional resources for non-traditional students was not provided (i.e. ***). This resulted in fewer scholarship opportunities and greater personal financial responsibility.
- It could be more organized. I know professors that can't even read a degree audit. Also, they do not know about advise for professional school
- It was great!
- It was positive
- My academic advisor was very helpful with choosing classes.
- My advisor advised way too many students to actually personalize any help.
- My advisor could have been more positive and helpful
- My advisor did a great job with giving me advice and information
- My advisor was exceptional a great resource.
- My advisor was helpful, but could have provided a step by step plan
- My advisor was overloaded with students and the *** [department] students seem to be given little to no advise, usually too late.
- My advisor was very helpful.
- My advisors were helpful. The SOAR leaders didn't help much at all with choosing my classes first semester though.
- My experience was so great that fellow students asked me advice based on what my advisor told me.
- My first advisor was awesome and very helpful and encouraging. After the first two years, advisor was no longer proactive in helping me. They were new.
- Only excellence. She was amazing.

- Overall, great experience.
- *** was so amazing when I needed help in my quest to earn a *** degree.
- *** was extremely hard to get a hold of and meet with.
- Seemed to vary semester to semester on advisement for future
- Seemed very organized and caring
- Sometimes academic advisors do not help transfer students very well. I have to retake 5 courses which I have taken in my previous school.
- The information that was given was correct and helpful.
- They do everything they can to help you graduate.
- *** deserves a raise
- Undecided advisors were helpful.
- Very helpful when able to get in to meet with advisor
- Very helpful.
- Very positive experience, although it was redundant at times.
- When I was a *** major, my advisor was not helpful or encouraging. My current *** advisor is so much better.

CHHS

- Always available for appointment. Thanks.
- Did not meet often
- *** rocks!
- I am very much appreciated for the help.
- I had a great advisor.
- I had my advisor as a professor for the classes and was on great terms and communicated frequently in person and via email.
- I had two advisors and I loved them both. They guided me a lot. Without their help, I would've been so lost and confused.
- I love my advisor. ***.
- I think it was a complete joke
- It was very frustrating especially now towards graduation when I have a lot of questions. My advisor does not fully answer my questions, or just tells me to look on the MSU website.
- *** is amazing!
- My advisor was excellent. Always available, even just to chat
- Very passionate advisors!

CHPA

- Advisor just didn't seem to go out of their way to help.
- Advisor was very much covered for my well-being and a student.
- Almost non-existent.
- Dr. *** was a great help when I asked for it, however, most of the time I had to figure out most of everything.
- Dr. *** wasn't very helpful.
- Great person.
- He gave me a chance to be his grader so I could use my spare time to work in campus.
- Helped at first after my sophomore year was unneeded
- I had to see other teachers outside of my assigned academic advisor.
- I love my advisor - ***. She has been a teacher, mentor, and sounding board for me for 3 years now.
- I really enjoyed the entire *** department faculty. I truly felt like a family, so advising was very easy.
- I would like to have more help from my advisor about options regarding grad school.
- It has been wonderful

- It was good. I feel like my advisor could have guided me a bit more but otherwise it was fine.
- My advisor as a *** major was very supportive. However, my advisor in the *** [department] was not as helpful
- My advisor was amazing
- My advisor was very flexible with his time and was useful as a referral for future employment.
- My advisors were easy to approach and provided helpful information
- N/A, it was really good.
- Once I got into my major my advisor was much more focused on us each individually and got to know us and I enjoyed that much more so than my advisor previously.
- Random teachers shouldn't be allowed to advise students if they are not department heads or are well immersed in general education requirements or prerequisite courses.
- Terrible. I had to fight to transfer some things and receive little help that was good.
- Was not set up for my department until my senior year. Now it is a great system.

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- Advisors need more knowledge on graduation requirements
- ***, ***, and *** were all amazing and very supportive.

IND

- I feel if I have passed my classes this test shouldn't have a need to be taken.
- I had a great advisor and hope to stay in contact with him.
- I had a great advisor who was always there to meet or answer my questions through email.
- It was awful!
- It was great.
- It was just great!
- My 1st advisor wasn't the best but when I got with my 2nd advisor I really had a great experience with it.
- My first academic advisor was never available. My second advisor was great!
- No additional thoughts.
- The *** department was so helpful! They would help you even if you just walked in w/o an appointment
- They were all positive meetings
- They were there to help anytime I needed help in a decision.

- They were very helpful and willing to work with me when I had a question or problem.
- *** was amazing about giving support and feedback all my advisors, professors, and department head truly cared about me and my education.

Appendix I

Empirically Supported Advising Assessment: A Plan for Missouri State University

Empirically Supported Advising Assessment: A Plan for Missouri State University

I. Student Self-Efficacy

Theory	Constructs	Supporting Literature	MSU Advising Mission Statement	MSU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
Find/create logic in one's education (Lowenstein, 2005)	Student Self-Efficacy (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	(Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006)	Student self-reliant problem solving (<i>is encouraged by advisors</i>)	Adopt a developmental approach to help advisees become independent learners and self-reliant problem solvers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for meetings with your advisor; bring a list of questions, a current degree audit, and ideas about class choices. - Check program requirements and class prerequisites, too. 	<p><i>(Advisors)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use a developmental advising approach to teach students to become independent learners and problem solvers. <p><i>(Students)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop as independent learners by being prepared for advising.

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Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Use advising syllabus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - supervisor provides template to advisors - advising appointment - emailed to new advisees 	- advisor	- completed syllabus submitted to supervisor	- 50% of advisors incorporate syllabus
(B) Share where/how students can find answers to questions instead of providing only an answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in advising syllabus - in meetings - via email to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advising syllabus - advising notes - sent emails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advisor submits syllabus to supervisor - advisor reviews advising notes for the semester or year to provide examples - advisor produces email example 	- variable

KEY: (B) = Behavioral outcome/ “doing”; (C) = Cognitive outcome/ “knowing”; (A) = Affective outcome/ “valuing”

I. Student Self-Efficacy (continued)

Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Coach students to appropriately advocate for themselves	- in meeting - via email	- advisor - student report	- advisor reviews advising notes and provides examples - student focus group or survey	- 80% of students who requested the help received it

Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Learn the importance of advising	- Campus visit - SOAR - GEP 101	FR-1 st term	- students	- survey or focus group with rubric (1-4 scores possible)	- FR – 2 - SO – 3 - JR and SR – 4
(C) Know process for scheduling advising	- SOAR - GEP 101 - advising syllabus	FR-1 st term	- advisors - students	- advisor provides % of advisees scheduled or advised by each week of sequenced registration - student survey - question in student's My Missouri State	- 90% of advisees have been scheduled or advised by last day of sequence (and those not scheduled or advised have been contacted via email or telephone) - FR-2 nd term = 85% - SO-2 nd term = 90% - JR and SR = 100%
(B) Demonstrate ability to navigate online undergraduate catalog	- GEP 101 assignment (e.g., 4-year plan) - advising meeting	FR-1 st term	- GEP instructor - advisor checks rubric box programmed into advising notes screen	- 1 st Year Programs Office - Argos report	- FR = request assistance - SO = use catalog but need clarification of policies - JR and SR = proficiently locate information in catalog

I. Student Self-Efficacy (continued)

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Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Know where to seek help with various problems	- SOAR - GEP 101 - advising syllabus	FR-1 st term	- students - GEP 101 produces graded work demonstrating student learning - advisor checks new “appropriate referrals made” box on advising notes screen	- survey - SOAR office - 1 st Year Programs office - Argos report of referral boxes checked and students who checked box are invited to participate in a focus group on accessing campus resources	- variable
(B) Bring list of questions, current degree audit, and ideas about class choices to advisement meeting	- advising meeting	FR-2 nd term	- advisor checks any of 3 applicable boxes on advising notes screen (1-brought questions, 2-brought audit, 3-brought ideas for class choices, 4- items not needed)	- Argos report of boxes checked	- FR = 60% brought at least 2 to meeting - SO = 75% brought at least 2 to meeting - JR and SR = brought needed items to meeting
(B) Demonstrate knowledge of program requirements	- GEP 101 - Intro to Major course - advising meeting	SO-1 st term or term of major declaration (no later than 75 hours)	- instructors - advisor checks box added to advising notes screen	- produce graded work or results of Qualtrics survey - Argos report - Advisor completes rubric	FR = 65% know Gen Ed requirements SO = 75% know Gen Ed and major requirements JR = 85% know Gen Ed, major, and minor requirements SR = 100% know their specific degree program requirements

I. Student Self-Efficacy (continued)

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Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Understand differences among types of degrees (e.g., BS/BA, comprehensive /non-comprehensive)	- SOAR - GEP 101 - advising meeting	FR	- student - instructor - advisor	- SOAR survey - instructor submits samples of graded work (e.g., 4-year plans) - advisor checks box on advising notes screen (rubric with answers ranging from 4-knows which option is most aligned with career goals, to 1-does not know the difference)	- FR = 75% will know the difference - SO = 90% will know the difference; 50% can explain which is best for them - JR = 100% know the difference; 75% can explain which is best for them - SR = 100%; 100%
(B) Find information about degree requirements (e.g., Gen Ed, majors, minors)	- SOAR - GEP 101 - advising meeting	FR	- student - instructor - advisor	- SOAR survey - instructor submits samples of graded work - advisor documents in advising notes - Argos report of times online catalog is accessed	- FR = 65% can locate information - SO = 75% can locate information - JR and SR = 100%
(B) Find information about individual classes (e.g., descriptions, periodicity, prerequisites)	- SOAR - GEP 101 - advising meeting	FR	- student - instructor - advisor	- SOAR survey - instructor submits samples of graded work - advisor checks box in advising notes screen - Argos report of periodicity system access	- FR = 75% can locate course descriptions; 50% can locate periodicity and prerequisite information - SO = 95% / 80% - JR and SR = 100% / 100%

I. Student Self-Efficacy (continued)

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Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Understand the process for required standardized exams (e.g., GRE, MCAT)	- intro to major course - advising meeting	JR	- students - advisors	- survey - advisors check appropriate box on advising screen (e.g., not relevant for student, provided information, advised on test preparation, student registered for test, student completed test)	- variable
(C) Understand options for starting a graduate transcript (e.g., senior permission, accelerated master's)	- advising meeting	JR	- students - advisors	- survey or focus group - advisors check a box on advising screen (e.g., not relevant for student, discussed with student, advised student to pursue option, student enrolled)	- variable
(B) Create and maintain résumé	- intro to major course - Career Center -Résumé Madness	SO	- students - instructors - Career Center	- students asked to participate in focus group and bring résumé for discussion - instructors provide before and after samples - Career Center tracks walk-in and appointment requests for résumé assistance	- FR = 20% have résumé - SO = 40% have résumé - JR = 75% have updated résumé; 50% have consulted with Career Center to enhance it - SR = 100% have updated résumé; 75% have consulted Career Center to enhance it

II. Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment

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Theory	Constructs	Supporting Literature	MSU Advising Mission Statement	MSU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner (Lowenstein, 2005)	Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	(Habley, 2004; Katz et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010)	<i>(Advisors provide)</i> Information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide accurate and timely information about the University and its programs. - For advisors who work with prospective or transfer students, facilitate transferring from other institutions to Missouri State. All advisors assist students in transferring from Missouri State to other institutions when that is in the best interest of the student. - Maintain a high degree of professionalism. - Engage in personal growth and development. 	Meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your long-term and short-term goals and evaluate your academic progress.	<i>(Advisors)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain accountability through demonstrating that they are professional, available, and knowledgeable. - Empower students through being helpful and providing needed information.

Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Run a degree audit	- in advising meetings	- screen shots of audit list - documented activity in advising notes	- review of advising notes - peer observation of appointment	- 100% of advisors can run audits
(B) Locate advisee list and use it to email selected advisees	- variable	- advisor produces screen shot of activity	- provide copy of email (e.g., sent to remind advisees to schedule appointments)	- 100% of advisors can access and email advisees from list

II. Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment (continued)

Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Know how to use the Missouri State transfer equivalencies web link				
(B) Maintain posted office hours				
(B) Document advising sessions in Advising Notes				
(C) Maintain knowledge of changing departmental and University requirements				
(C) Know department and University deadlines				
(B) Support University requirements and programs (e.g., general education)				
(B) Educate students about the MSU Public Affairs mission.				
(B) Make appropriate referrals to University personnel when advisee needs extend beyond professional experience and training				
(B) Attain and maintain Master Advisor status				

II. Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment (continued)

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Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Regularly attend training and education related to academic advisement (e.g., Academic Advisor Forums)				
(B) Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the Missouri Academic Advising Association (MACADA)				
(B) Attend appropriate discipline-specific professional development opportunities related to student advising, retention, and success				
(B) Demonstrate helpful attitude toward advisees.				
(C) Maintain knowledge of tutoring resources.				

II. Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment (continued)

Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Maintain knowledge of cocurricular opportunities.				
(C) Maintain knowledge of career resources.				
(B) Provide specific information and assistance as requested.				

III. Student Responsibility

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Advising Theory	Constructs	Supporting Literature	MSU Advising Mission Statement	MSU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built (Lowenstein, 2005)	Student Responsibility (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	(Kuh et al., 2005)	Student participation required in the decision-making process	<i>(Not addressed through this document)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be punctual for appointments and contact your advisor in advance of any necessary schedule changes. - Communicate honestly with your advisor about information he or she may need to know about you in order to help you effectively; this includes information about significant changes that can affect your academic progress and goals, like a job change or new choice of a major. - Accept responsibility for the decisions and actions (or inactions) you take that affect your educational progress. 	<p><i>(Advisors)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster development of student responsibility for decision making. <p><i>(Students)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take responsibility for decision making related to academic advising.

Outcome (ADVISED)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(C) Know the roles of the student and advisor in the process.				
(B) Communicate student/advisor roles				

III. Student Responsibility (continued)

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Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Appropriately schedule appointments.		FR			
(B) Communicate important information to advisor.		FR			
(C) Know that advisors are there to assist, but students are responsible for decision making.		FR			
(B) Develop a 4-year plan		FR			
(B) Use degree audit to check progress toward degree completion		SO			
(B) Take standardized exams at appropriate times		JR			
(B) Visit Commencement Information website next-to-last semester		SR			

(B) File application to graduate		SR			
(C) Understand purpose and process for taking GEN 499 (University Exit Exam)		SR			
(B) Prepare a strong "Plan B" in case graduate school admission is delayed		SR			

IV. Student Study Skills

Advising Theory	Constructs	Supporting Literature	MSU Advising Mission Statement	MSU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned (Lowenstein, 2005)	Student Study Skills (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	(Robbins et al., 2004)	Students become lifelong learners	<i>(Not addressed through this document)</i>	Seek help from your advisor when you need it, so any problems you face don't become overwhelming.	<p>(Advisors) - Teach students the skills to become lifelong learners.</p> <p>(Students) - Seek help from advisors to develop problem-solving skills that will promote success in college and beyond.</p>

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Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Help students to develop time management strategies				
(B) Teach students grade management strategies				
(B) Teach students or provide information about learning strategies (e.g., studying, note taking)				

IV. Student Study Skills (continued)

Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Ask advisor's help to develop time management strategies		As needed			
(B) Ask advisor to provide guidance on grade management strategies		As needed			
(B) Ask an advisor to provide you with information about learning strategies (e.g., studying, note taking)		As needed			
(B) Run a degree audit		FR-2 nd term			

V. Perceived Support

Advising Theory	Constructs	Supporting Literature	MSU Advising Mission Statement	MSU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
<i>(No comparable element)</i> (Lowenstein, 2005)	Perceived Support (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	(Jones, 2008; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010)	<i>(Advisors)</i> Support students as they seek the best possible education at MSU	- Maintain regular contact with all advisees. - Establish positive relationships with all advisees.	- Appreciate your advisor's multiple duties-- which can include teaching, committee work and research activities-- and be prepared to work with his or her schedule, too.	<i>(Advisors)</i> - Maintain positive relationships and regular contact with advisees. <i>(Students)</i> - Contribute to positive advising relationship by demonstrating understanding of advisors' schedule limitations.

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Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Email advisees or selected groups				
(B) Post advising information on a web site				
(B) Schedule regular meetings with all advisees (once a semester, minimum)				

V. Perceived Support (continued)

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Outcome (ADVISOR)	Where will process occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Schedule frequent meetings with advisees who are having academic difficulties				
(B) Recognize advisees and be able to call them by name				
(B) Address the needs of diverse students (e.g., nontraditional, international)				
(B) Show a personal interest in students' lives				

Outcome (STUDENT)	Where to learn it?	By when should learning occur?	From whom will evidence be gathered?	Where/how will evidence be gathered?	Level of Expected Performance
(B) Demonstrate respect for advisor's schedule limitations when requesting assistance.		SO-1 st term			

(B) Begin to establish connections with individuals who can serve as references later (e.g., for scholarships, internships, jobs, graduate school)		SO-2 nd term			
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CHAPTER FIVE:
CONTRIBUTION TO SCHOLARSHIP

From Mission to Measurement: Advising Program Theory and Impact Evaluation

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MISSION TO MEASUREMENT

Abstract

Through a program evaluation approach, this study was designed as a mixed method, causal comparative, cross-sectional inquiry into academic advising program theory and outcomes at a large public Midwestern university. Review of data sources (i.e., advising mission statement, best practices, and archival survey data) revealed only implicit articulation of program theory—that is, the operational plan did not logically connect desired advising outcomes with program activities. Results of chi square analyses demonstrated significant differences between freshman expectations and senior experiences related to information provided through advising. ANOVA results highlighted advisor support, advisor information, and personal responsibility as significantly linked to senior GPA, and hierarchical regression analyses revealed these variables as significant predictors of senior GPA. Qualitative feedback supported results of quantitative analyses and provided insights to expand learning-centered advising theory. Additionally, deficiencies in institutional advising outcome measurement were identified along with recommendations to address them. In sum, findings were aligned with the theory of advising as teaching (Lowenstein, 2005) and constructs from the literature, including advisor accountability and empowerment, student responsibility, self-efficacy, study skills, and perceived advisor support (Young-Jones, Burt, Dixon, & Hawthorne, 2013), and resulted in recommendations to enhance institutional advising assessment.

Keywords: academic advising, advisor, evaluation, learning outcomes

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From Mission to Measurement: Advising Program Theory and Impact Evaluation

Over the past 25 years, a developmental as opposed to learning-centered approach to academic advising may have contributed to its measurement in terms of student satisfaction with the advising relationship (e.g., Smith, 1983; Fielstein & Lammers, 1992; Smith & Allen, 2006). Though satisfaction is an important aspect of a student's college experience (Propp & Rhodes, 2006), effective advising reaches beyond student satisfaction to measurably impact achievement (Young-Jones, Burt, Dixon, & Hawthorne, 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) provocative question, "If advising is teaching, what do advisors teach?" (p. 123) can guide the articulation of advising program theory and outcomes, both of which are necessary to conduct effective program evaluation (Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004).

This study aimed to evaluate Anywhere University's (AU, a pseudonym) advising program theory and current assessment outcomes to inform recommendations for advancing AU's advising assessment practices in alignment with accountability demands (Keeling, 2010; McLendon, Heller, & Young, 2005). Three research questions guided the study:

Research Question 1: How can AU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?

Research Question 2: What can be learned about AU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?

Research Question 3: How can AU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?

Conceptual Framework

Lowenstein (2005) provided four conceptual responses to the question of what advisors teach. First, he asserted that advisors teach students to find or create logic in their education in a manner that promotes active learning (i.e., advisors teach students to seek out the structure or rationale behind the overall educational process just as a classroom teacher organizes material to motivate student ownership and pursuit of meaningful course objectives). Second, he asserted that advisors teach students to view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense (i.e., advisors help students to put curricular elements into perspective in a manner that leads to building connections between various areas of study or seeking out experiences that promote new types of learning or thinking). Third, advisors teach students to base educational choices on a developing sense of the overall edifice being self-built (i.e., advisors teach students to responsibly build mental connections between various components of their education as practice for using those same cognitive and behavioral skills to reason through and successfully master future challenges). Finally, Lowenstein suggested that advisors teach students to continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned—a skill that results in a “well-constructed education that prepares one for lifelong learning... [continued] every time new information is juxtaposed with previously acquired knowledge” (p. 130).

Lowenstein’s (2005) framework is supported by current literature connecting the advising process to measurable constructs (see Figure 1). For example, Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified six factors (i.e., advisor accountability and empowerment, student self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) linking academic

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advising to student success as defined by grade point average (GPA) and meeting basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000). These factors are embedded in academic advising literature and support application of Lowenstein's conceptual framework in this study aiming to advance institutional assessment of advising outcomes (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz, Kaplan, & Gueta, 2010; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins et al., 2004; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010).

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

Scholarly Context

Although learning outcomes have been insufficiently assessed, the teaching function of advising was identified in literature over four decades ago (Crookston, 1994), as inextricably linked to the principles of sound pedagogy that are central to college student learning (Hagen, 2005). Huggett's (2004) description of learner-centered advising suggested that advisors should elicit student examination of and reflection on academic goals, aspirations, decisions, and potential outcomes. While Lowenstein (2005) conceptually discussed advising as teaching, his descriptions did not clarify specific teaching responsibilities, pedagogy, learning activities, or measurable outcomes needed to demonstrate that advising teaches students to responsibly manage their development as lifelong learners (Melander, 2005). Melander highlighted that institutions need to adopt excellence criteria and performance monitoring to demonstrate the impact of advising on learning outcomes.

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Assessment of Academic Advising

As advising practice has shifted toward an emphasis on student learning outcomes, how have institutions responded to increasing accountability demands through advising assessment? In a survey of 1623 postsecondary institutions conducted by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), 71% of responding institutions ($N = 649$) reported having no explicitly articulated student learning outcomes for advising (though 59% reported conducting advising assessment), and 32% had only evaluated student satisfaction (Macaruso, 2007). In these situations, efforts to assess attainment of unidentified objectives may result from and maintain confusion and ambiguity about assessment of student learning in relation to academic advising.

Effective advising assessment requires institutions to implement and evaluate policies and practices aligned with scholarly findings from the fields of education and organizational management (Melander, 2005). Program evaluation has been successfully applied to assess advising for students who are exploring majors (Sams, Brown, Hussey, & Leonard, 2003) and is recommended as an approach to advising assessment because of its emphasis on data-driven decision making and continuous improvement of advising practice and related outcomes (Aiken-Wisniewski, Smith, & Troxel, 2010). However, many advising systems do not clearly articulate program theories and intended outcomes, making impact assessment challenging at best (Aiken-Wisniewski et al.; Habley, 2005). Ultimately, embedding assessment into program planning and implementation can allow advisors to view their work as the context wherein students' goals are connected to institutional mission in meaningful and measurable ways (Kelley, 2008).

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Identifying Desired Advising Outcomes

What can help an institution to identify and assess desired, empirically supported advising outcomes? Program theory, goals, and objectives need to be identified before outcomes can be effectively assessed (Robbins, 2009; Robbins & Zarges, 2011).

Exploration of student expectations and institutional mission and vision statements may be starting points for articulating advising program theories and identifying program goals and intended outcomes. Students' expectations of advising vary for numerous reasons (Propp & Rhodes, 2006), but their expectations are important as these stakeholders hold increasing financial responsibility for their education due to external funding cuts.

Advisors are in a prime position to shape students' expectations of college and advising in alignment with institutional vision even though 41% of vision statements for advising units were created independently of (and may not clearly align with) university vision statements or other official school documents (Abelman, Atkin, Dalessandro, Snyder-Suhy, & Janstova, 2007; Demetriou, 2005; Miller, Bender, & Schuh, 2005). Applying institutional vision to advising could guide assessment and enhance existing advising practices (Abelman & Molina, 2006; Maki, 2004), and it is recommended in order to evaluate alignment of a system's advising model with institutional goals and objectives (Abelman, Atkin, et al.). Sorting through empirical studies and unique aspects of an organizational structure to articulate desired advising outcomes is a daunting task. Application of Lowenstein's (2005) framework may be helpful for an institution seeking to gather theoretically based information about the impact of its advising system.

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Lowenstein's conceptual framework aligns with empirically identified factors linking advising to measurable advisor and student outcomes.

Advisor Outcomes

In addition to an increasing focus on student learning outcomes, institutions need to clarify the role of advisors in the advising process. Even though the Council for Advancement of Standards in higher education (CAS, 2003) has established professional standards to guide advising practice toward a focus on student learning and development, many advisors are not familiar with them (Keeling, 2010). With inadequate literature documenting its impact, the work of advising may remain at the periphery of students' postsecondary experiences (Habley, 2009). However, emerging research suggests that advisors should be willing to meet in person, provide correct information, communicate effectively, and demonstrate concern and professionalism as they teach students to develop self-authorship of educational plans and outcomes (Barnes, Williams, & Archer, 2010; Baxter Magolda, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; Bitz, 2010; Hester, 2008; Simmons, 2008; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Aligned with findings supporting advising as teaching, two primary factors emerge for institutions to consider when identifying measurable advisor outcomes: advisor accountability and advisor empowerment (Burt, Young-Jones, Yadon, & Carr, 2013; Demetriou, 2011; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Lowenstein's (2005) theoretical framework addressed advisors teaching students how to connect seemingly disparate elements of the higher education curriculum into a meaningful whole—an outcome that likely results from adequate advisor empowerment, accountability, and support.

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However, for an institution to assess the extent to which advising results in learning, advisor accountability and empowerment need to be translated into measurable outcomes.

Young-Jones et al. (2013) found significant relationships between advisor accountability and empowerment and desired outcomes from advising. They defined advisor accountability as student expectations regarding professionalism, preparation, and availability of their advisors, and their regression model identified higher student expectations of advisor accountability as a predictor of higher self-efficacy, responsibility, study skills, and perceived support. Similarly, Wiseman and Messitt (2010) highlighted the advisor's potential to promote student learning through mentoring students toward effective goal setting, decision making, relationship building, incorporating strategies for academic success, and developing self-regulation and self-determination. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified advisor empowerment as helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful referrals, and they found it marginally predicted GPA and significantly predicted levels of student responsibility. Empowering college students to feel positively about themselves and in control of their environment can increase learning motivation and help to connect students' diverse interactions (e.g., with specific course content, campus resources, and educational professionals) to the overall college experience in a manner that contributes to success (Borgard, 1981; Frymier & Houser, 2000).

Student Learning Outcomes

Postsecondary institutions need to leverage the contribution of advising to student learning in regard to goal setting, academic self-confidence, motivation, and engagement as well as mastery of specific course content (Lotkowski, Robbins, & Noeth, 2004).

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Lowenstein (2005) suggested that advising can teach students to find or create logic within a self-built, continually enhanced learning edifice. These findings echoed Tinto's (2006) assertion that advising can enhance students' expectations of themselves as scholars who are important members of a university community. Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified related student variables (i.e., self-efficacy, personal responsibility, study skills, and perceived support) that can help institutions frame student learning outcomes from advising. Student self-efficacy relates to beliefs about the ability to succeed in college (e.g., dealing with stress, preparation for college, ability to navigate coursework and exams), and Young-Jones et al. (2013) identified it as a significant predictor of student GPA that is highest in students who meet with an advisor at least once a semester and hold greater accountability expectations of their advisors. Literature on self-direction and self-authorship supports these findings (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2009; Firmin & MacKillop, 2008; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006; Simmons, 2008).

Though multifaceted, student responsibility was operationalized by Young-Jones et al. (2013) as student contributions to advising through goal-setting and planning, preparing for appointments, following up on referrals, and communicating with advisors. They found that students who met with an advisor at least once a semester reported higher responsibility, as did those holding higher expectations of advisor empowerment and accountability. Multiple studies link academic achievement and retention with goal-setting (e.g., Cheng & Chiou, 2010; Kem & Navan, 2006; Kim, Newton, Downey, & Benton, 2010; Hurt, 2007; Upcraft, Gardner, & Barefoot, 2005), and others have investigated appointment keeping (Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds, & Klyce, 2008), decision making (Lerstrom, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), educational and life planning

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(Hurt & Barro, 2006; Melander, 2005), communicating openly with advisors about GPA realities (Moore, 2006; Svanum & Bigatti, 2006), and factors related to frequent major changes (Firmin & MacKillop, 2008). Additionally, Young-Jones et al. (2013) summarized study skills as a set of behaviors related to academic success (i.e., time and grade management, studying, exam preparation, concentration, motivation, getting adequate sleep, and seeking an advisor's assistance). Advisors can help students develop strategies that enhance motivation and achievement (e.g., GPA, graduation rates) across the college experience (Burt et al., 2013; Graunke, Woosley, & Helms, 2006; Kallenbach & Zafft, 2004; Moore, 2006; Smith, Dai, & Szelest, 2006; Vander Schee, 2007).

According to Young-Jones et al. (2013), perceived support addresses a student's relational and stress management resources. They found that perceptions of advisor support were higher in students who met with advisors at least once a semester and in those who reported higher expectations of advisor accountability and empowerment. Existing research suggests that academic advisors are in a prime position to identify students who are struggling to adjust in the college environment and to teach them effective methods for coping with academic stress (McClellan, 2005). Though perceived support is linked to student motivation and success (Burt et al., 2013; Jones, 2008; Pizzolato, 2006), further research is needed to explore the influence of complex academic support relationships on student learning (Danielsen, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009; Wentzel et al., 2010).

Setting for the Study

Anywhere University (AU) is a public higher education system providing undergraduate and graduate degree programs for annual enrollments of over 20,000

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students in a Midwestern metropolitan region populated by over 444,000 citizens (AU website, 2013). AU's 2012 first-fall to second-fall retention rate for full time students who were new to college (i.e., retention of first-time college students who returned to the university after the first year) was 75.25% (AU website). Additionally, 59% of AU's students are female, and 80.64% are White or Caucasian (AU website). AU's Associate Provosts and Vice President for Student Affairs oversee numerous institutional programs and services, but a common thread woven through each division (and each AU student's educational experience) is academic advising. Determining who oversees advising, however, requires more than a review of the university's organizational chart.

Academic Advising at Anywhere University

Advising begins at AU when prospective students and their families visit to learn about academic programs of interest. Early advising also occurs at local and regional events geared toward student recruitment. Once admitted to AU and before beginning classes, traditional students with less than 24 post-high school college (transfer) credit hours participate in a two-day orientation. The program includes an extensive academic advising component that covers general education, opportunities for first-year college students, and the rationale for students establishing positive relationships with their assigned academic advisors. Transfer students are invited to attend a similar orientation and are then advised in advisement centers (undeclared majors) or individual academic departments (declared majors).

Academic advising is required for AU students at least once a semester prior to course registration until they have completed 75 credit hours. Students with undeclared majors are advised by professional advisors in an advisement center. Once students

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declare majors, they are advised by faculty members or professional advisors in academic departments. At first glance, this advising system appears to seamlessly cover bases for all students; however, very little is known at AU about the actual impact of advising on student higher education experiences. This lack of understanding (and data) is not unique to AU. In fact, even though academic advising is commonly assumed to contribute to college student success and retention, Campbell and Nutt (2008) suggested that this case is not explicitly supported in existing literature. Additionally, the American College Testing (ACT) program and NACADA indicated that many higher education institutions do not capitalize on the potential of academic advising to promote student success (Habley, 2004; NACADA, 2004). How can an institution like AU address the challenge of advising assessment in such a decentralized structure?

AU Academic Advising Council

In November 2008, AU's Provost displayed interest in more clearly understanding the relationship between advising and student success by establishing the Academic Advising Council (AAC). Provost-appointed AAC membership includes advisement coordinators, directors of programs with advising components, faculty advisors, and professional advisors. These individuals represent all AU colleges as well as campus advisement centers serving specific populations (i.e., undecided, business, psychology, and education majors). The Provost charged the group to evaluate administration and delivery of advising to all AU students, make recommendations for improvements, identify and encourage successful advising practices, and enhance consistency and quality of the AU advising system.

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The AAC has since demonstrated leadership across multiple aspects of AU advising practice. In 2008, charter members composed a mission statement for AU advising and, based on CAS recommendations (2003), they identified best practices for individual advisors, followed by communicating expectations to students through a “Be Advised” document (see Figure 1). These materials were distributed across campus through multiple methods and are now core components of AU advisor training, recognized by NACADA as one of the nation’s exemplary advisor training programs (Voller, Miller, & Neste, 2010).

In 2009, the AAC began evaluation efforts by conducting an advising satisfaction survey. Although understanding student satisfaction with advising is important and results were incorporated to enhance advising (e.g., training advisors to inform students about co-curricular engagement opportunities like internships), AAC members agreed that satisfaction surveys could not be the sole data source applied to evaluate and improve AU advising. AAC members identified the need to implement a consistent assessment process investigating both advising delivery and student outcomes. In 2010 and 2011, the AAC elected a present researcher to chair the AAC and lead efforts to meet evaluative elements of its charge. This study analyzed AAC artifacts (i.e., mission statement, best practices, and survey data) to investigate AU’s advising program theory and impact and to provide recommendations for future AU advising assessment.

Design for the Study

This mixed method, causal comparative, cross-sectional inquiry addressed research questions through a program theory and impact evaluation (Creswell, 2009; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Rossi et al., 2004; Salkind, 2010). First, the study aimed to

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identify and articulate AU's advising program theory—the operational plan through which desired outcomes logically connect to program activities (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010; Rossi et al.). Typological analyses (Hatch, 2002) were applied to extrapolate program theory from existing documents, while outcomes were investigated through statistical and typological analyses of archival data from the AAC's 2012-2013 assessment effort (Field, 2009; Hatch, 2002). AU requires advising for all undergraduate students until they complete 75 credit hours. Thus, while an experimental design with a control group of unadvised students was not feasible, the *ex post facto* design allowed exploration of relationships between independent and dependent variables even though advising and its assessment had already occurred (Salkin, 2010). Recommendations for enhanced advising assessment emerged based on findings related to program theory and impact.

Participants and Sample

Participants ($N = 1172$) consisted of a cross-section of AU freshmen and seniors who completed advising surveys between September 2012 and May 2013. The AAC believed that an initial advising assessment effort would likely be most effective in settings where student attendance was already required, thus first-year seminar classes and senior exit exam administrations were targeted as desired assessment venues. As large, randomly selected samples typically reduce sampling errors (Fink, 2009), the AAC aimed to acquire samples that represented at least 20% of the students from each identified freshman and senior population.

Freshmen completed surveys during first-year seminar class periods from September through November 2012. Simple random cluster sampling (Fink, 2009) was

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employed to select and survey 22 of 89 sections of the seminar required of all incoming freshmen (and to select and survey two from 15 sections of the required Honors College first-year seminar). The freshman response rate was 75% ($n = 501$) of 667 students enrolled in the sampled first-year seminar sections, and the selected sample represented 20% of 2465 students enrolled in all fall 2012 first-year seminar courses. This sample size is estimated to provide a 3.91% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Seniors ($n = 671$) completed the survey during the University Exit Exam required of all students after completion of 90 credit hours. Senior surveys ($n = 675$) accompanied exam administrations from February through May 2013, with group sizes of 30 to 227, until all but four forms were distributed. The senior survey response rate was 100% as it was distributed to students who actually attended registered test administrations. Of 1756 students registered for the spring 2013 exit exam, 38% completed the survey. This sample size is estimated to provide a 2.97% margin of error with a 95% confidence level (Raosoft, 2013).

Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained through review of existing documents and the archived set of advising survey responses. Initial qualitative data were collected through review of AU's advising mission statement, advisor best practices, and the "Be Advised" document intended to communicate advisor expectations to students (see Figure 1). A document analysis guide based on this study's conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) was created and incorporated to determine alignment of each document's elements with extant literature and to identify AU's advising program theory (e.g., Baxter Magolda,

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2009; Gore, 2006; Habley, 2004; Jones, 2008; Katz et al., 2010; Kuh et al., 2005; Pizzolato, 2006; Robbins et al., 2004; Rossi et al., 2004; Wentzel et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010; Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Qualitative and quantitative archival data collected from AU's 2012-2013 advising surveys were also analyzed in the present study. The AAC designed the surveys to align with the institution's advising mission statement. As such, responses were expected to provide key insights into the relationship between AU's advising program theory and student outcomes (e.g., GPA). Because archival data without student identifiers were proposed for intended analyses, IRB approval was granted to conduct this study without further review. Participant confidentiality was assured as the surveys collected no student names or other identifiers.

Freshman Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 14-item instrument in alignment with the AU advising mission statement to collect information from freshmen about their expectations and experiences related to AU advising (e.g., overall experience, personal responsibility, advisor support, types of expected assistance). Item formats included use of a five point Likert type scale, multiple response selection, and short answer for collecting qualitative and GPA data. The survey also requested demographic information (e.g., Honors College involvement, athletic participation, race, ethnicity, sex, and college in the university). No pilot assessment was conducted, however, AAC members worked through multiple iterations of the instrument before approving its final form.

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire. The AAC created this 15-item instrument to mirror the freshman survey in question format and demographic data

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collection. However, the senior survey focused on actual advising experiences instead of expectations, and an item was added to identify transfer student status. The pilot sample ($n = 23$) was too small for robust reliability analyses (Field, 2009), however, results suggested acceptable item reliability.

Data Analysis

Mixed methods data analyses were undertaken in three steps to address this study's research questions. The first step included a qualitative typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) of data collected from documents reviewed to investigate AU's advising program theory. Step two included quantitative analyses of ordinal and interval survey data, as well as GPA, to explore program impact (Field, 2009). Quantitative data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) through crosstabs with chi square tests of independence, analyses of variance, independent samples *t*-tests, and hierarchical multiple regression with significance levels of $p < .05$. Step three included typological analysis of open ended survey responses to further explore program impact. Typological analyses in steps one and three were conducted in alignment with the study's conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005), and trustworthiness of data was further validated through triangulation with survey results and related literature (Patton, 1999). Findings were expected to inform empirically based recommendations for enhancing future advising assessment at AU.

Findings

AU's Advising Program Theory

Typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) of AAC-created documents revealed insights into AU's advising program theory (i.e., strategies and tactics identified by AU's

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advising system to achieve measurable goals and objectives, Rossi et al., 2004).

Typological categories (see Figure 1) included constructs empirically linked to the study's conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Findings addressed Question 1: *How can AU's advising program theory be understood through related program documents?*

Advising mission statement. AU's advising mission statement (see Figure 1) was typologically analyzed against conceptual and operational elements of Lowenstein's (2005) theory of advising as teaching. Due to its emergence as a significant factor related to advising outcomes, perceived advisor support (Burt et al., 2013; Young-Jones et al., 2013) was added as a category though it is not expressly identified within Lowenstein's (2005) framework. Each element of the AU advising mission statement (see Figure 1) corresponds to conceptual elements of advising as teaching (Lowenstein) and operational constructs identified in advising literature as related to GPA (Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Advisor best practices. Analysis of AU advisor best practices revealed information about program theory. The "Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Anywhere University" document identifies practices aligned with national standards (CAS, 2003) and related literature (see Figure 1). While suggesting activities through which advisors may incorporate best practices, goals, and objectives, measurable advising outcomes are not identified.

Advisor expectations of students. In addition to analyzing documents intended to guide advising practice, "Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You" was analyzed to explore how advisor expectations of students could illuminate program theory. Elements

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align with current literature, as shown in Figure 1. Additionally, this document suggests measurable outcomes.

The theory underlying AU's advising mission and practice aligns with advising literature and national standards for advising programs (CAS, 2003; Lowenstein, 2005; Young-Jones et al., 2013). It is important to note that each element of AU's mission statement is empirically supported, as are advisor best practices and expectations communicated to students. However, program theory articulation is implicit and lacks identified objectives and outcomes. As such, it is not clear what outcomes are expected of advisors or students through AU advising.

AU's Advising Program Impact

Impact evaluation is intended to answer questions about program outcomes (Rossi et al., 2004). This phase of the study employed quantitative and qualitative analyses of advising survey responses (Field, 2009; Hatch, 2002) guided by the following research question: *What can be learned about AU's advising program impact through analyzing existing data?* Analyses were conducted only with surveys including all necessary data points (freshmen, $n = 500$; senior, $n = 645$, except for ANOVA and regression analyses, where $n = 644$). Program impact is illuminated through descriptive summaries, comparison of freshman expectations and senior experiences, and exploration of relationships between advising, student responsibility, and GPA.

Descriptive summaries. General demographic information was summarized for each sample. Freshmen consisted primarily of White (85.4%) female (60.2%) students with 10.6% reporting Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. The senior sample was

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comprised of mostly White (86.2%) female (59.5%) students, 3.3% of whom reported Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

When asked about taking personal responsibility for academic planning, most students reported that they would or did take the lead role in decision making with input from their advisor (freshmen = 67.2%; seniors = 62.3%), followed by students partnering 50/50 with their advisor (freshmen = 24.4%; seniors = 23.4%). Differences were visible between freshman expectations and senior experiences related to taking personal responsibility for goals following college graduation. Among freshmen, 66% expected to take the lead role with input from the advisor, while 45.9% of seniors did so. Only 17% of freshmen reported the expectation of making all decisions in this area, whereas 45.4% of seniors reported making all related decisions.

When asked to rate their overall experience with AU advising, most students reported it as extremely positive or positive (freshmen = 75.6%; seniors = 75.8%). Most freshmen (91.2%) reported expecting to meet with their advisor occasionally or at least once a year after completing 75 credit hours (the point at which advising is no longer mandatory), and 85.1% of seniors met with advisors at least once a year after that time. More freshmen (89%) reported expecting advisors to provide information about career-related options than seniors who reported actually receiving such information (43.6%), and the same pattern was visible when students reported expectations (freshmen = 50.8%) and experiences (seniors = 21.7%) of receiving information about opportunities for cocurricular involvement. Finally, 93.8% of freshmen reported expecting advisors to support them in seeking the best possible education at AU, whereas 78% of seniors reported experiencing such support.

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Freshman expectations and senior experiences of AU advising. Chi square tests of independence compared frequencies of freshman expectations to senior experiences of advising assistance in specific areas. Assumptions for acceptable cell counts were met for all chi-square analyses. Significant interactions were found in six areas. These included information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines, $\chi^2(1) = 9.61, p = .002$, referrals to campus resources, $\chi^2(1) = 38.24, p < .001$, career related options, $\chi^2(1) = 250.58, p < .001$, study habits and time management, $\chi^2(1) = 55.30, p < .001$, opportunities for involvement, $\chi^2(1) = 94.75, p < .001$, and in relation to continued advisement after completion of 75 credit hours, $\chi^2(1) = 40.86, p < .001$.

Odds ratios further highlight differences between freshman expectations and senior experiences of advising. Freshmen were 1.46 times more likely to expect information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines, 2.29 times more likely to expect referrals to campus resources, 10.48 times more likely to expect advisors to provide career related options, 3.35 times more likely to expect advisor assistance with study habits and time management, and 3.43 times more likely to expect advisement related to opportunities for involvement than seniors were to receive such assistance. No significant proportional differences were revealed between freshmen expectations and senior experiences of advising assistance related to major and minor requirements, $\chi^2(1) = .71, p = .398$, or general education requirements, $\chi^2(1) = .01, p = .937$. Significantly fewer than expected freshmen reported no plan to meet with advisors after completion of 75 hours, whereas a higher than expected proportion of seniors did not meet with advisors after completing 75 credit hours. The same pattern held true for freshman

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expectations compared to senior experiences of meeting with advisors only once per year after 75 hours.

Relationships between advising, personal responsibility, and senior GPA.

Subscales were created by combining related survey items for advisor information, advisor support, and personal responsibility to begin identifying variables potentially related to senior GPA. One-way analyses of variance and independent samples *t*-tests were applied to investigate group differences in senior GPA based on the new variables. Finally, multiple regression analysis was applied to explore GPA variance predicted by these three variables.

Advisor information. The advisor information variable was created based on results of independent samples *t*-tests comparing group GPA differences by types of information received. Significant GPA differences were observed for groups who received information from advisors about major and minor requirements ($n = 601$, $M = 3.35$, $SD = .43$) compared to students who did not receive this information ($n = 44$, $M = 3.16$, $SD = .42$), $t(643) = 2.87$, $p = .004$. GPA also differed between students who received information about career related options such as internships, work experience, and graduate school preparation ($n = 281$, $M = 3.39$, $SD = .41$) compared to students who did not receive this information ($n = 364$, $M = 3.29$, $SD = .44$), $t(643) = 2.79$, $p = .005$. Responses related to both types of assistance were combined to create the advisor information variable (1 = yes to only one or neither help, and 2 = yes to both helps). An independent samples *t*-test revealed that students who received both types of information from advisors ($n = 269$) reported significantly higher GPA ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .41$) than students who received only one or neither type of information from advisors ($n = 376$, M

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= 3.29, $SD = .44$), $t(604.54) = -3.28$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$. This means that advisor provision of information about majors, minors, and career related options accounted for 2% of GPA variance.

Advisor support. The advisor support variable was created by averaging responses on two correlated ($r = .64$, $p < .001$) Likert type senior survey items: “How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Anywhere University (AU)?” (5 = extremely positive, and 1 = extremely negative); and, “Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Anywhere University?” (5 = absolutely, and 1 = not at all). Ordinal categories for the new advisor support variable included (1) neutral to poor support ($n = 188$), (2) moderate support ($n = 182$), (3) high support ($n = 146$), and (4) highest support ($n = 119$). One-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the amount of GPA variance explained by advisor support. One case was removed for a missing data point. The overall ANOVA was significant, $F(3, 640) = 3.24$, $p = .022$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, with advisor support accounting for 2% of GPA variance. GPA increased in a linear fashion with increasing advisor support, however, post hoc analyses using a Bonferroni correction only indicated significant GPA differences between students who reported highest advisor support ($M = 3.41$, $SD = .39$) and those who reported neutral to poor support ($M = 3.27$, $SD = .45$), $p = .021$.

Student responsibility. The student responsibility variable was created by averaging responses on two similar items from the senior survey: “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?” Responses included, (a) I made all decisions without input from an

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academic advisor; (b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor; (c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor; (d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input; and (e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me. With collapsed categories due to group size issues, student responsibility was recoded as follows: (1) Advisor responsible for at least half of decision making ($n = 156$); (2) Student took lead role in decision making with input from advisor ($n = 241$); and, (3) Student made all decisions without advisor input ($n = 238$).

One-way ANOVA was conducted to determine GPA variance explained by student responsibility. The overall ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 642) = 4.91, p = .008$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, indicating that student responsibility accounted for 2% of GPA variance. Post hoc analyses using a Bonferroni correction revealed significant GPA differences only between students who reported that advisors made at least half of their academic and post-graduation planning decisions ($M = 3.25, SD = .42$) and students who took the lead role in decision making ($M = 3.39, SD = .45$), $p = .005$. GPA for students who made all decisions without advisor input ($M = 3.33, SD = .41$) fell between GPA for the other groups without significantly differing from them.

Advising and student responsibility as GPA predictor variables. Finally, three variables were tested as predictors of senior GPA ($n = 644$) in a hierarchical multiple regression analysis: advisor provision of major and/or career related information (aspects of accountability and empowerment), advisor support, and student responsibility for planning. Data screening revealed that assumptions were met for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, homogeneity, and homoscedasticity. Advisor information and advisor

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support were entered first into a hierarchical regression to account for advisor contribution to GPA. This model (see Table 1) indicated that advisor information and support significantly predict student GPA, $F(2, 642) = 8.23, p < .001, R^2 = .03$ (i.e., the model explained 3% of variance in student GPA). Advisor information was a stronger predictor of GPA, $b = .09, t(642) = 2.57, p = .010, pr^2 = .01$, which showed that students whose advisors provide major and career related information are likely to have higher GPAs. Advisor support also predicted GPA, $b = .04, t(642) = 2.43, p = .016, pr^2 = .01$; therefore, higher levels of advisor support were reported by students with higher GPAs.

Student responsibility for planning was added in a second step to examine if it enhanced the model's predictive value. As shown in Table 1, the addition of this variable was significant, $F(4, 640) = 7.43, p < .001, R^2 = .04$, with the second model explaining an additional 1% of GPA variance. Participants who reported that their advisors took responsibility for at least half of their academic and post-graduation planning reported lower GPAs than participants who made all decisions on their own, $b = -.13, t(640) = -2.91, p = .004, pr^2 = .01$, whereas students who took the lead role in decision making in collaboration with advisors did not report significantly different GPAs than students who made all of their own decisions, $b = .02, t(640) = .43, p = .668, pr^2 < .001$. Thus, greater student responsibility for planning is a predictor of higher GPA.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Using the second model's regression equation, the best case scenario (i.e., high advisor information, highest advisor support, and high student responsibility) predicts a 3.51 GPA, and the worst case scenario (i.e., low advisor information, low advisor support, and low student responsibility) predicts a 3.13 GPA. Taking into consideration

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the standard errors of the estimate, the model predicts with 95% confidence that minimum GPAs will fall between 3.06 and 3.18, while the range of maximum GPAs will be 3.40 to 3.62. These GPAs are not substantially different because the model explains only 4% of overall GPA variance. However, when considering GPA as an outcome variable, it is important to note the restricted GPA range of 2.00 to 4.00 for students to continue studies or graduate from AU. When such a narrow range is considered, a 4% increase in GPA related to academic advising is meaningful.

Qualitative aspects of advising as teaching. Open ended survey responses were typologically analyzed (Hatch, 2002) to explore freshman expectations and senior experiences of AU advising. Students were asked to explain responses to items about advising satisfaction, advisor support, and additional thoughts about AU advising. Lowenstein's (2005) framework was applied to qualitative data to seek insight into how students' responses could inform empirically supported efforts to enhance AU advising. Feedback revealed themes aligned with advisor empowerment and accountability, perceived support, and student responsibility, self-efficacy, and study skills (see Figure 2)—supporting application Lowenstein's theory to advising evaluation (Barnes et al., 2010; Baxter Magolda, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2009; Bitz, 2010; Hester, 2008; Simmons, 2008; Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2008; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Discussion of related themes is organized from the construct most frequently alluded to through student comments (i.e., advisor empowerment) to the least prevalent (i.e., study skills).

[Insert Figure 2 about here]

Advisor empowerment. In relation to advisor empowerment (i.e., helping students to learn, understand, and plan for the future by providing feedback and helpful

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referrals, Young-Jones et al., 2013), qualitative data revealed themes related to *advisor helpfulness as a demonstrated attitude* and *helpfulness demonstrated through providing information*. Freshmen emphasized the importance of advisors displaying a willingness to help (e.g., “they should be supportive of your best opportunities”) and reported overwhelmingly positive feedback about general advisor helpfulness (e.g., “I haven’t had a bad experience and I don’t think I will”). While some seniors perceived unhelpful advisor attitudes, describing advisors as “discouraging for graduate school” or indicating that an advisor “just sent me to the computer [or AU website],” more students expressed gratitude for advisor helpfulness (e.g., describing advising as “part of the reason I have been so successful at AU,” and stating, “Her attitude of complete care for students is one I have not seen in all my 55 years of living”).

Although generally helpful advisor attitudes were valued by students, qualitative feedback also revealed a theme related to advisors being helpful specifically through providing information. Some freshmen sought more in-depth advising information or assistance than was received (e.g., “advisors have only enrolled me in classes and haven’t really stepped in to help when I’m in need of assistance academically”), whereas other freshmen described advisors as “always telling us about campus resources and getting us involved” and providing “good advice and insight for continuation of my education.” Freshmen further highlighted advising as helping them learn to navigate the college environment (e.g., through a “welcoming” orientation experience, one student summarized aspects of several freshman responses by sharing that “the whole scary college process was broken down and made simple and less intimidating”).

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Senior feedback provided additional insights regarding the information they expect from advisors. For example, some seniors wished that advisors had been more “proactive” by sending “reminder emails to enroll” or providing more “information about various careers” or course sequencing. Other seniors reported wishing to be encouraged toward specific activities by their advisors (e.g., “to take more credits/more difficult options to prepare me better” and “to take more hands on classes”). However, the majority of related senior comments were positive (e.g., praising advisors as “helpful with any questions... even when switching majors/minors,” and providing “guidance in my career path [that] exceeded my expectations”). Seniors valued advisors’ helpfulness in providing information beyond class selections and schedule approvals (e.g., “from adding a degree to study abroad,” “even in the job search she has kept me encouraged,” “helped me decide an area of focus for a graduate program and helped me decide where to apply,” “helped me find an internship, and “was excellent at assessing how to help me achieve my goals”).

Advisor accountability. Qualitative feedback related to advisor accountability (i.e., advisor professionalism, preparation, and availability, Young-Jones et al., 2013) revealed three themes that further clarify what it means for advisors to be accountable (i.e., *being available*, *being knowledgeable*, and *communicating that students are valued in the advising relationship*). A fourth theme illuminated what it means to students for an advising system to be accountable (i.e., *the institution establishes conditions that promote strong advising relationships*). Interestingly, although the senior sample was only 22% larger than the freshman sample, more than twice as many seniors provided feedback

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related to advisor accountability, with one student stating that “advisors should be held to a higher standard of accountability.”

Advisor accountability was first illuminated by themes related to timely availability of advisors and advisor knowledge. Freshmen provided feedback about the importance of advisors being available in a timely manner (e.g., “very efficient at getting me in for an appointment,” “flexible with time”) as did seniors (e.g., “emails were always responded to in a timely manner,” and “I showed up on time for meetings and they were consistently late,” and “...scheduling appointments has proved somewhat of a hassle”). In addition to timely availability, another aspect of professionalism emerged as a theme related to advisor accountability: being knowledgeable. For freshmen, a sense of security appeared related to perceptions of an advisor’s knowledge (e.g., “Any questions that I have I know can be answered by my advisor,” and “made me feel secure in my choice of my major”). Mention of inconsistency or inadequate knowledge further revealed the value freshmen placed on this aspect of advisor competence (e.g., “At [orientation], my leader told me the classes I should take, when I met with my advisor, she said I should be taking other classes,” and “couldn’t answer [my] questions”). Senior feedback echoed the importance of advisor knowledge (e.g., “was always on the ball and prepared for any questions,” “knew nothing about my degree,” and “didn’t know what I needed to graduate”).

Additional themes related to advisor accountability revealed that seniors expected advisors and AU’s advising system to provide conditions fostering development of advising relationships. First, in addition to being available and knowledgeable, advisors were expected to communicate valuing students (e.g., “doors were always open to me and

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I felt like they were invested,” as opposed to “just asked my class choices,” “does not even know my name,” “advised way too many students to actually personalize any help,” and “there are those advisors who genuinely care, but you can tell that others really feel that it’s an inconvenience”). Not only did students expect for advisors to value them as individuals, students expected for AU to promote development of advising relationships (e.g., through consistent advisor assignments and evaluation of quality). Changing advisors was sometimes viewed disparagingly (e.g., “I never changed majors, yet I had 3 different advisors”), while other students appreciated changing advisors (e.g., “my first advisor wouldn’t give me the time of day, but once I switched it was great”). Students preferred consistency in advisor assignment unless a change could lead to advising from someone more available or knowledgeable.

Perceived advisor support. While perceived support (i.e., a student’s relational and stress management resources, Young-Jones et al., 2013) is a student outcome, qualitative feedback from this study revealed three themes with strong implications for advising practice. First, the advising relationship may serve as a *resource for managing stress* in an academic environment. Two additional themes related to affective outcomes: students value a *balance of academic and personal support* from advisors, and the *advising relationship may increase in perceived value over time*. A large body of literature addresses stress faced by students in college, and present findings highlighted the first theme pointing to advising as a potential resource for coping with such stressors. Freshman comments began to illuminate this theme (e.g., “I really enjoy my advisor and get along with him,” “the advisors [at AU] seem to care much more about you [than at other colleges],” and “My advisor has been extremely helpful and nice. She has even

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tried to get to know me, and I feel very comfortable with her”), with negative interactions potentially adding to or exacerbating existing stress (e.g., “some people care more than others,” “it’s very intimidating to talk to my advisor,” and “she is so busy that I feel that I am just a time slot to her”). Over one-third of senior comments revealed perceptions of advising relationships that could add to stress in an academic setting, describing advisors who were “not great listeners,” who viewed advising as “more of a job,” and who “made me want to drop out or switch schools.” However, the majority of senior feedback painted a positive picture of advisor support. For example, students praised advisors who were “always willing to listen,” “were extremely supportive, motivating, and understanding,” and “even remembered me after I took a long break from school.”

Remaining themes related to perceived support highlighted the value students place on different types of support from the advising relationship. Freshman feedback suggested the importance to students of advisors providing a balance of both personal and academic support (e.g., “my advisor was not very friendly towards me,” “said I couldn’t [take a certain math class] because she thought it would be too hard for me; basically calling me stupid,” and “I did not feel very encouraged, but we got everything done that we needed to”). This theme was further developed through senior comments describing the most positive advising interactions as those that scaffold learning while supporting student goal attainment and overall wellbeing (e.g., “truly cares about you and future goals,” “helped guide me through tough decisions regarding my academics,” “always had my interest and goals at the core of her advising,” “do everything they can to help you graduate,” and “truly cared about me and my education”). The final theme related to advisor support revealed that the perceived value of a sustained advising relationship may

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increase over time. As with comments regarding advisor accountability, seniors expressed frustration related to changing advisors (e.g., “I would have liked my academic advisor to have been the same throughout my college career”). This theme was further developed by comments that described advising relationships as progressing across a student’s time at AU and beyond (e.g., “major advisor was much more focused on us each individually and got to know us and I enjoyed that,” and “became friends with my advisor and will continue to be in contact when I leave”). Qualitative data suggested a possible contrast between students’ views of advising as a relationship and institutional views of advising as a process.

Student responsibility, self-efficacy, and study skills. Open ended survey responses also provided insight into the relationships between advising and student responsibility, self-efficacy, and study skills. Although students provided fewer comments addressing what they contribute or learn from advising, related themes were suggested. These included consideration of *student versus advisor roles*, *student clarity about the advising process*, *students learning from advising what is needed for success*, and the *importance or benefits of meeting with an advisor*.

Young-Jones et al. (2013) defined student responsibility as student contributions to advising through goal-setting and planning, preparing for appointments, following up on referrals, and communicating with advisors. The theme that began to emerge from qualitative data suggested the importance of clearly delineating advisor versus student roles in the advising process. This study did not evaluate specific student actions, but freshman comments indicated they possess knowledge of their role versus the advisor’s role in advising. Students who “have not used [advising] fully” or “to full advantage”

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still know “advising is there when [they] need it.” Some freshmen “have a plan... but will consider what [an] academic advisor has to say” or report that they “need to allow someone else’s input and perhaps rely on them more.” Senior feedback further illuminated the theme related to allocation of responsibility within the advising relationship (e.g., “I take matters into my own hands,” and “students should be able to figure it out on their own”). One student said, “Sometimes I would ask for her help and she would explain how instead of just telling me.” Others indicated that an “advisor was helpful, but could have provided a step by step plan” and, “I didn’t have any issues with my advisor, but I was always prepared. I know several people that had their grad date pushed back because he didn’t have his stuff together.” As student comments differed regarding levels of responsibility they expected of themselves and their advisors, this theme calls into question how clearly such roles are delineated through articulation of AU’s advising program theory.

Qualitative feedback was also analyzed (Hatch, 2002) to explore students’ perceptions related to self-efficacy (i.e., beliefs regarding their capacity for college success, Young-Jones et al., 2013). Too few comments were provided upon which to draw conclusions; however, two themes began to emerge—for freshmen in relation to familiarity with the logistics of advising, and for freshmen and seniors, a theme focused on what students may learn from advising that is needed for their success in college and beyond. Some freshman comments revealed a lack of clarity about advising (e.g., “When my advisor was talking to me, I felt like I didn’t know half the things he was talking about”). In feedback referencing orientation, comments described it as “amazing” and “a great experience” while indicating residual confusion about scheduling and registration.

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Other students indicated inadequate knowledge on contacting an advisor (e.g., “I haven’t had a chance to meet w/my advisor yet. I am confused about how to go about that”).

The second theme that began to develop in relation to self-efficacy suggested that advising teaches students how to be successful in college and beyond. For example, freshman feedback demonstrated how self-efficacy increased as a result of advising (e.g., “I was really nervous about college before [orientation] but I had wonderful [orientation] leaders and loved the whole program,” and “I really appreciate the advisors’ work because they have informed me on how to do well in school”). Senior feedback revealed additional insights related to this theme (e.g., “worried I wouldn’t graduate on time due to poor advising,” and “I believe you should not have to meet with your advisor after freshmen year”). While few comments were provided, 11 of the 17 senior comments related to self-efficacy included references to learning or gaining knowledge from advising. Students reported learning “a lot of things” from advisors (e.g., “great way to find out what I can accomplish,” and “knowledge that is necessary and useful to me”). One student said, “The staff was helpful and I felt like I could be successful and finish my degree,” a comment similar to that of another student who reported, “I enjoyed my advising appointments and felt better when I left knowing I was on track.” Student feedback in relation to self-efficacy brings into question what students know about advising and what they learn from it.

Review of qualitative data revealed the fewest comments in relation to student study skills, defined by Young-Jones et al. (2013) as student competencies related to time and grade management, skills related to learning course content, the abilities to concentrate and prepare for exams, adequate motivation and sleep, and contacting an

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advisor for assistance. Student comments suggested a possible theme related to understanding the importance or benefits of meeting with advisors. Too few comments were provided to lead to conclusions, but one freshman stated, “I have problems myself, keeping meetings with my academic advisor,” and another reported the intention to continue with advising even after it is no longer required to “keep up with my grades and opportunities with my major.” While freshman feedback was limited, students identified not keeping meetings as problematic and continued meetings as beneficial. Senior comments shed additional light on advising related study skills. Whereas some students did not view advising as essential to their academic success (e.g., “you tried but I never used it”), others identified advising as a “great resource” or tool to help “keep them on track” (e.g., with “grades & GPA management” and “what [was] needed for graduation”). Although this study did not evaluate students’ skills or contributions to advising, student feedback reveals these as areas from which student learning outcomes may be identified.

Summarizing AU’s advising program impact. Question 2 investigated what could be learned from AU’s existing assessment data about advising program impact. Quantitative analyses demonstrated that AU students reported taking the majority of responsibility for academic and post-graduation decision making and that they have primarily enjoyed positive experiences with advising. Freshmen held higher expectations than seniors experienced with regard to information provided by advisors, and such information (i.e., major, minor, and career related) along with advisor support and personal responsibility were identified as predictors of senior GPA. Qualitative analyses revealed themes related to the study’s conceptual framework (Lowenstein, 2005) and related literature on student expectations of advising (Barnes et al., 2010; Bloom, Propst

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Cuevas, Hall, & Evans, 2007; Lerstrom, 2008; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010) that can potentially inform identification of related student learning outcomes to evaluate what students know, do, and value about advising.

Improving Advising Assessment and Evaluation Practices

Results of this study demonstrate how student expectations are addressed by AU's advising program and highlight how these findings align with institutional expectations broadly defined in AU's advising mission statement. Findings also identify deficiencies in outcome measurement and recommendations to address them in response to Question 3: *How can AU improve its advising program assessment and evaluation practices?*

Building on an empirically established foundation. Learning outcomes are expected to result from educational programs, making Lowenstein's (2005) advising as teaching framework relevant for guiding measurement of advising impact. Lowenstein suggested that effective advising teaches students to find or create logic in their education, view seemingly disconnected curricular elements as parts of a whole that makes sense, base educational choices on developing a sense of an overall edifice being self-built, and continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned. Lowenstein's conceptual framework aligns with empirically identified factors linking advising to measurable student and advisor outcomes (Young-Jones et al., 2013)—specifically, advisor empowerment, advisor accountability, student self-efficacy, student responsibility, student study skills, and perceived support. AU's implicit program theory (derived from the advising mission statement and best practices), along with themes identified through student feedback,

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suggest related program objectives that can guide identification of measurable learning outcomes (see Figure 1).

Elements were organized in Figure 1 to demonstrate how AU's advising program theory is grounded in the literature. Additionally, program objectives were drafted through document review and qualitative analyses in the present study. Advisor and student outcomes need to be identified and mapped (Robbins & Zarges, 2011) to align with these objectives. It is important to note that effective implementation of an advising assessment process will require time and ideas contributed from multiple stakeholders (Robbins & Zarges, 2011). The assessment framework provided in response to Question 3 (see Figure 1) provides an empirical foundation upon which AU can invite key stakeholders to identify and map desired advising outcomes.

Implementing recommendations. The following key points summarize recommendations for AU to consider with regard to future advising assessment efforts:

- Purposefully communicate this study's findings with college deans and program directors, and encourage their collaboration with an advising assessment taskforce.
- Appoint an advising assessment taskforce comprised of faculty, staff, and students with interests in advising assessment, including a representative from Computer Services.
- Charge the taskforce to collaborate with AAC's Assessment Subcommittee to implement the remaining recommendations across campus programs with advising components (Beer et al., 1990; Robbins & Zarges, 2011), and as feasible, support group members with stipends or release time toward this effort.

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- Create rubrics to assess specific outcomes, conduct focus groups, and program computerized data collection tied to screens frequently accessed online by advisors and students. Investigate how such assessment tools can best be embedded into normal work flow (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Robbins & Zarges, 2011).
- Collaborate with the Assessment Office and AAC Assessment Subcommittee to develop a five-year plan to evaluate one outcome each year, including plans for dissemination of findings (i.e., to whom, how). Once a specific plan and data collection tools are in place, the AAC will have access to a consistent influx of data upon which to base future recommendations for enhancing AU advising (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2010).

Discussion

Review and analysis of documents guiding advising at AU demonstrated implicit articulation of advising program theory. In other words, assumptions inherent in AU's advising practices were not clearly tied to expected results of advising. Although articulating program theory for divisionalized advising in a large organization is complex, academic advising programs need to demonstrate outcomes of their work (Keeling, 2010; McLendon et al., 2005). Conceptually guided by Lowenstein's (2005) framework of advising as teaching, this study pulled from recent research, AU's advising mission and best practices, and survey data to lay a foundation for explicit articulation of institutional advising program theory.

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Articulating an Empirically Grounded Advising Program Theory

Quantitative results linked advising outcomes with advising information and support in conjunction with student responsibility, and qualitative feedback aligned with these findings (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Student comments related supported the operationalization of Lowenstein's theory and aligned with current advising literature related to the role advisors play in student engagement, motivation, and learning (Habley, 2004; Katz et al., 2010; Lotkowski et al., 2004; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010). However, specific advisor and student outcomes need to be identified within AU's advising program theory (Rossi et al, 2004) in order to assess them.

Advising teaches students to view curricular elements as parts of a meaningful whole (Lowenstein, 2005). Student comments related to accountability and empowerment suggested that advisors can indeed teach students to establish important curricular connections. Advisors who are approachable and accessible can facilitate such learning opportunities, and students will trust advisors who provide them with correct and helpful information. Through advising, students can enhance their understanding of how curricular elements are related. For seniors in particular, advisor empowerment was related to assistance with planning beyond satisfaction of specific course requirements and toward enhanced student motivation in pursuit of future goals (Burt et al., 2013; Demetriou, 2011).

The "Be Advised" document provided insights into identifying student advising outcomes. While finding or creating logic in one's education is a conceptual phenomenon (Lowenstein, 2005), and student self-efficacy (Young-Jones et al., 2013) is a variable requiring an operational definition for measurement, preparing for advisement

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meetings, producing a list of questions or a degree audit, and demonstrating knowledge of program requirements and course prerequisites are potentially measurable student learning outcomes of advising. As another example, encouraging students to appreciate advisors' multiple duties and working with their schedules are guidelines expected to point students toward developing mutual respect that characterizes supportive advising relationships. While connections between practices and expected outcomes were clearer in this document than in the advising mission statement or best practices, the need remains for AU's advising program theory to be explicitly articulated.

Students can learn from advisors how to base educational choices on a developing sense of the conceptual structure they build through pursuit of educational goals (Lowenstein, 2005). While comments from this study offered insight into students' views of their role in the advising process, communicating responsible actions that advisors should expect of students, identifying the point by which students should demonstrate those actions, and creating conditions that facilitate those actions (Kuh et al., 2005) are institutional responsibilities. Once these elements of program theory (Rossi et al., 2004) are in place, the construct of student responsibility may be more directly linked with measurable learning outcomes (e.g., retention, graduation).

Advisors teach students to find or create logic in their education (Lowenstein, 2005). Student feedback in this study suggested that freshmen may need to learn why it is important to meet collective degree requirements—in other words, why specific courses (and even advisement) are required elements of the educational journey. Advisors are uniquely situated to show students the importance of such learning. They can help freshmen understand the logic behind academia's proverbial hoops they must

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jump through, while promoting development of the self-efficacy students need to create a personal logic underlying and motivating future decision-making (Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006). Senior comments suggested that learning resulting from advising is linked to confidence about meeting educational goals. Explicitly articulated program theory can clarify aspects of advising expected to facilitate development of student self-efficacy, and guide translation of self-efficacy from a research construct to measurable outcomes an institution may desire from advising.

Literature supports that advising is related to skill development that contributes to academic success (Robbins et al., 2004), though measurement of specific skills was not attempted by this study. Students' positive and negative feedback echoed studies demonstrating that advising can cultivate self-efficacy and foster reflection, planning, and self-authorship that function to transform students' goals into successes (Baxter Magolda, 2001, 2004, 2009; Gore, 2006; Simmons, 2008). Advisors teach students to continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to prior learning (Lowenstein, 2005). Study skills as operationalized by Young-Jones et al. (2013) are essential for students to identify and master courses to meet goals that align a completed major with successful career-related outcomes. In essence, advisors can help students learn to learn—a set of skills beneficial in college and beyond.

Although Lowenstein's (2005) framework for advising as teaching does not include perceived support, advising literature increasingly highlights its important contribution to student success (Burt et al., 2013; Jones, 2008; Wentzel et al., 2010; Young-Jones et al., 2013). Comments from students in the present study suggested that optimal advising relationships support student learning, goal attainment, and overall

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wellbeing (McClellan, 2005). Freshmen may not enter the university setting with such expectations, but by the time they graduate, seniors grow to appreciate the relational and academic support provided by advisors.

Credibility of the Study

The present research proceeded under assumptions that AU's implicit advising program theory was correctly organized and implemented. Additionally, the researcher assumed that freshman and senior samples were demographically representative of the AU student population and that honest, thoughtful student survey responses comprised the archival data set to be analyzed. Limitations of this study related to the survey instrument, as well as the study's design and setting. AAC members created surveys to collect the archival data under investigation but did so in the absence of an explicitly articulated advising program theory. The instruments' reliability and validity were not empirically tested prior to data collection. Additionally, the causal comparative design of this study was not as robust as longitudinal experimental design. Finally, transferability of findings across other institutions is limited and should be attempted with caution as this study specifically explored AU advising program theory and assessment outcomes for the purpose of enhancing institutional assessment practices.

Mixed methods design of the present study required intentional efforts to address existing limitations. Typologically analyzed qualitative findings were triangulated against the study's conceptual framework, advising literature, and quantitative findings to enhance trustworthiness of the results (Hatch, 2002). Quantitative design controls were applied to increase reliability and validity of statistical analyses (Field, 2009). For example, crosstabs with chi square analyses were employed to compare senior and

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freshman samples to optimally demonstrate response patterns beyond simple mean comparisons. Qualitative analyses enhanced interpretation of quantitative findings to better inform recommendations for future assessment.

Call for Future Research

In addition to revealing that AU's advising practices are empirically grounded and producing recommendations to enhance advising assessment, this study elucidated through program evaluation how advising is teaching (Lowenstein, 2005) with measurable advisor and student outcomes. Research is needed to address the following questions arising from the present findings. How do advisors demonstrate helpfulness as an attitude and through providing information? What is an optimal balance between advisor helpfulness and fostering student responsibility? How do institutions ensure that advisors are available, knowledgeable, and facilitate conditions that promote development of advising relationships wherein students feel valued? How does advising help students to manage stress in the college environment? How do students' perceptions of the value of advising shift over time? To what extent does an optimal advising relationship balance provision of academic and personal support? Do advising programs and individual advisors clearly delineate student versus advisor roles in advising? Do incoming students have clarity about logistics of the advising process (e.g., contacting advisors, scheduling meetings)? What do students learn from advising that is needed for success in college and beyond? These questions may also be asked by institutions to guide identification and evaluation of outcomes needed to move their advising programs from mission to measurement.

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Figure 1. Empirically Supported Advising Assessment: A Plan for Anywhere University

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Construct (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	Supporting Literature	AU Advising Mission Statement	AU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
Find/create logic in one's education	Student Self-Efficacy	(Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006)	Student self-reliant problem solving (<i>is encouraged by advisors</i>)	- Adopt a developmental approach to help advisees become independent learners and self-reliant problem solvers.	- Prepare for meetings with your advisor; bring a list of questions, a current degree audit, and ideas about class choices. - Check program requirements and class prerequisites, too.	(Advisors) - Use a developmental advising approach to teach students to become independent learners and problem solvers. (Students) - Develop as independent learners by being prepared for advising.
View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner	Advisor Accountability and Advisor Empowerment	(Habley, 2004; Katz et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010)	<i>(Advisors provide)</i> Information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities	- Provide accurate and timely information about the University and its programs. - For advisors who work with prospective or transfer students, facilitate transferring from other institutions to AU. All advisors assist students in transferring from AU to other institutions when that is in the best interest of the student. - Maintain a high degree of professionalism. - Engage in personal growth and development.	- Meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your long-term and short-term goals and evaluate your academic progress.	(Advisors) - Maintain accountability through demonstrating that they are professional, available, and knowledgeable. - Empower students through being helpful and providing needed information. (Students) - Meet with advisor at least once a semester to discuss goals and academic progress.

Advising Theory (Lowenstein, 2005)	Construct (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	Supporting Literature	AU Advising Mission Statement	AU Advising Best Practices	Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You	Program Objectives
Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built	Student Responsibility	(Kuh et al., 2005)	Student participation required in the decision-making process	<i>(Not addressed through this document)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be punctual for appointments and contact your advisor in advance of any necessary schedule changes. - Communicate honestly with your advisor about information he or she may need to know about you in order to help you effectively; this includes information about significant changes that can affect your academic progress and goals, like a job change or new choice of a major. - Accept responsibility for the decisions and actions (or inactions) you take that affect your educational progress. 	<p>(Advisors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster development of student responsibility for decision making. <p>(Students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take responsibility for decision making related to academic advising.
Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned	Student Study Skills	(Robbins et al., 2004)	Students become lifelong learners	<i>(Not addressed through this document)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek help from your advisor when you need it, so any problems you face don't become overwhelming. 	<p>(Advisors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teach students the skills to become lifelong learners. <p>(Students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seek help from advisors to develop problem-solving skills that will promote success in college and beyond.
<i>(No comparable element)</i>	Perceived Support	(Burt et al., 2013; Jones, 2008; Wentzel et al., 2010)	(Advisors) Support students as they seek the best possible education at AU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain regular contact with all advisees. - Establish positive relationships with all advisees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciate your advisor's multiple duties--which can include teaching, committee work and research activities--and be prepared to work with his or her schedule, too. 	<p>(Advisors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain positive relationships and regular contact with advisees. <p>(Students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribute to positive advising relationship by demonstrating understanding of advisors' schedule limitations.

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Table 1

Hierarchical multiple regression of GPA as a function of advisor information, advisor support, and student responsibility

Variable	B	SE B	β	<i>p</i>
Step 1				
Advisor info	.089	.035	.103	.010
Advisor support	.038	.016	.097	.016
(Constant)	3.117	.056	—	<.001
Step 2				
Advisor info	.098	.035	.113	.005
Advisor support	.045	.016	.115	.006
Advisor resp.	-.130	.045	-.131	.004
Student resp.	.017	.040	.019	.668
(Constant)	3.117	.056	—	<.001

Note. *n* = 644.

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Figure 2. Student Comment Summary.

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Typological Category	Positive		Mixed/Neutral		Negative		Total by Class		Total
	<i>FR</i>	<i>SR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>SR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>SR</i>	<i>FR</i>	<i>SR</i>	
<i>Freshman (FR), n = 500</i> <i>Senior (SR), n = 645</i>									
Advisor Empowerment	130	97	36	32	7	31	173	160	333
Advisor Accountability	12	47	15	26	29	58	56	131	187
Perceived Advisor Support	3	38	5	20	5	31	13	89	102
Student Responsibility	3	5	9	7	0	11	12	23	35
Student Self-Efficacy	2	9	6	4	7	4	15	17	32
Student Study Skills	2	9	0	5	1	2	3	16	19

CHAPTER SIX:
SCHOLARLY PRACTITIONER REFLECTION

How the Dissertation Influenced My Practice as an Educational Leader

The dissertation influenced my practice as an educational leader at three different levels—within me, on my campus, and potentially across other segments of the higher education community. The process furthered my development as an authentic and collaborative leader and is allowing me to contribute to an important area of needed growth on the Missouri State University (MSU) campus. Additionally, potential publication of these findings can expand my sphere of influence beyond MSU to demonstrate for other institutions how to address a complicated assessment dilemma.

Writing about authentic leadership (AL) in relation to my dissertation's focus required me to reflect on how AL principles (i.e., self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency) are embedded across my sphere of influence. Exploring how political influences shape the practice of leadership gave me insight into how I handle myself in the various networks with which I am connected across MSU. I have a large sphere of influence, and as a result, I need to be aware of the perspectives of others who may affect or be affected by my decision making, the questions I ask, and how I go about trying to answer those questions. In one among many examples from the dissertation process, I was required to consider the level of caution to employ when summarizing and reporting student feedback among qualitative findings. I was unclear about the appropriate balance between redacting sensitive information from students' comments and retaining enough information in the report for administrators to consider in their responses to the findings. This led to a consultation with the Associate Provost that incorporated each element of authentic leadership. I was aware that I held sensitive information, I wanted to contribute to the greatest good

through what I chose to report, I considered multiple perspectives, and I was comfortable taking my question to someone who appreciated me for asking and provided a recommendation on how to proceed.

In addition to enhancing my growth as an authentic leader, the dissertation required me to reflect on what I could contribute to the campus community from my position in MSU's organizational structure. It would be easy for a non-tenure track instructor (i.e., departmental advisor, departmental advisement coordinator) to limit intentions to influence MSU to my own department or classes or advisement meetings. I make an impact through my work in each of those venues, but I suppose leadership demands more than just showing up and fulfilling job duties. It was an honor to be appointed to the Provost's Academic Advising Council (AAC) in 2008, and I had no idea that my work with the group would have such an enormous impact on my future. It was through AAC involvement that I decided on a dissertation topic, and I have been supported along the way by colleagues who believe in the importance of my study and look forward to reading the results. Unlike some doctoral dissertations, I know that at least substantial portions of this one will be read. This AAC has been an avenue for providing advisors a voice on campus, and this study adds students' voices to a conversation where MSU's upper level decision makers are listening.

Interestingly, not everyone I encounter is as excited about advising assessment as me. In fact, I have come to realize that most of my colleagues swing toward the negative end of a continuum in their views of assessment (e.g., somewhere between minimally tolerating, detesting, or even fearing it). The fact that I was the AAC member most excited about assessment resulted in me being viewed as a leader. The AAC's charge

included evaluation of advising, and I was the one brave enough (and in enough need of a dissertation topic) to tackle it. Organizational analysis through structural and political frames helped me to write a practitioner document that can assist multiple stakeholders (e.g., program directors, academic deans, the Provost and Associate Provosts) by providing an overview of our decentralized advising system, findings about its impact, and suggestions for enhancing it through assessment. This dissertation is allowing me to make an important contribution to strengthen my organization, and I am grateful for that opportunity.

Finally, beyond contributing to a critical element of student success on our campus, this study's literature review helped to place MSU's advising assessment dilemma into a broader context. Other institutions need to remediate similar deficiencies in advising assessment, so in addition to demonstrating leadership on my home campus, publishing these findings will allow me to expand my leadership potential to further develop advising theory, practice, and assessment elsewhere. The AAC's accomplishments are worth sharing as a strong example of collaborative authentic leadership applied to address a challenging and pervasive institutional issue. Though I conducted the study, it would not have been possible without the collaborative contributions and support of these colleagues. What we accomplished as a group laid the foundation for this study and has the potential to contribute to enhanced advising practice for students I'll never even know. It might be a stretch to view this study as a legacy I'll leave behind, but alignment of these findings with the literature is strong enough that advising programs implementing a similar program theory will positively impact

students' futures. As a leader whose favorite part of education is student achievement and development, such results would be the pinnacle of this dissertation's influence.

How the Dissertation Process Influenced Me as a Scholar

The dissertation has influenced me as a scholar in three primary areas. I have expanded my understanding and application of broad aspects of research design. My quantitative and qualitative data analysis skills have also been sharpened. Finally, the process has further shaped my future research goals.

Through the dissertation process, my understanding of general elements of designing and conducting research has expanded. As a result of my work to complete this study, I more clearly see the value of program evaluation and mixed methods designs for addressing research questions. I have learned the importance of designing a survey carefully. As with a program evaluation, the quality of collected data is only as good as the questions that are asked. I find this lesson particularly relevant for quantitative analyses as they can be quite limited by the types of data that have been collected. The dissertation process has also sharpened my skills in relation to APA style, word processing, and the ability to work more efficiently through Adobe software and Qualtrics. I have also become more familiar with the intricacies of multiple site IRB applications and approvals. Though these are not the most difficult aspects of research, it is important for a scholar to firmly grasp these competencies.

Data analysis is the second area the dissertation has influenced in my growth as a scholar. Although qualitative analytical methodology is not my preference, I gained clearer understanding of identifying themes. I see how students' comments can guide identification and assessment of student learning outcomes for advising (e.g., by

influencing development of questions for student focus groups), and I made related recommendations within the foundational assessment plan at the end of this dissertation's practitioner document. I grew most in my conceptual understanding and ability to run statistical analyses of quantitative data. I have become more adept with SPSS and look forward to further developing this skill set.

Finally, the dissertation helped me to more clearly define my future research goals. I am now better prepared to serve on future thesis and dissertation committees, and I look forward to those opportunities. My advisor has provided an exemplary model for me to follow as a future dissertation advisor and for conducting peer reviews of manuscripts for potential publication. At a recent conference, I spoke with an editor about future opportunities as a reviewer for a journal that published my work in 2013. It is exciting to be moving closer to some of my long-term goals as a scholar as a result of the completed dissertation. I am also pleased that the new dissertation in practice model facilitates production of a submission ready manuscript. I anticipate another publication as a result of this project, and as a scholar, that is exciting. Overall, the dissertation and the call for future research in Chapter Five have helped me to more clearly conceptualize the direction of my future research agenda. I listed questions that arose from this study, and I anticipate pursuing research to answer those questions in my future scholarly work.

Summary

There is nothing like conceptualizing and completing every step of an empirical study to demonstrate the importance of sound research (and to highlight why those who enjoy it appear to be a rare minority of the population, even among educators). The dissertation experience has enhanced my development as an educational leader and as a

scholar. Most importantly, the process has demonstrated for me (and will for others) how a scholar-practitioner may be optimally positioned to effect change that reverberates across an organization and the broader educational community.

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Appendix A

Missouri State University Advising Mission Statement

Academic advisors at Missouri State University provide academic and professional guidance as students develop meaningful educational plans in pursuit of their life goals. Advisors provide students with information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities. They require student participation in the decision-making process, help students become lifelong learners, and encourage self-reliant problem solving through exploration of students' own interests and values. Advisors support students as they seek the best possible education at Missouri State University.

Appendix B

Conceptual Framework Organization

MSU Advising Mission Statement	Conceptual (Lowenstein, 2005)	Operational (Young-Jones et al., 2013)	Supporting Literature
Student self-reliant problem solving (<i>is encouraged by advisors</i>)	Find/create logic in one's education	Student Self-Efficacy	(Baxter Magolda, 2009; Gore, 2006; Pizzolato, 2006)
(<i>Advisors provide</i>) Information about coursework, University policies and procedures, the Public Affairs mission, and career options and opportunities	View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner	Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability	(Habley, 2004; Katz et al., 2010; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010)
Student participation required in the decision-making process	Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built	Student Responsibility	(Kuh et al., 2005)
Students become lifelong learners	Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned	Student Study Skills	(Robbins et al., 2004)
(<i>Advisors</i>) Support students as they seek the best possible education at MSU	(No comparable element)	Perceived Support	(Jones, 2008; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010)

Appendix C

Best Practices for Academic Advisors at Missouri State University

Consistent with the mission of the University, academic advisors who use best practices help develop students who are academically prepared and able to take their positions as citizens contributing to the common good. Moreover, excellent academic advising helps provide a positive student experience and enhances the University's retention efforts.

The bullet points below each of the numbered "best practices" are examples of how advisors might carry out that practice.

1. Maintain regular contact with all advisees.

Examples of methods:

- Email advisees or selected groups
- Post advising information on a web site
- Schedule regular meetings with all advisees (once a semester, minimum)
- Schedule frequent meetings with advisees who are having academic difficulties

2. Establish positive relationships with all advisees.

Examples of methods:

- Recognize advisees and be able to call them by name
- Educate students about advisor and advisee roles and responsibilities
- Maintain up-to-date advising notes
- Address the needs of diverse students (e.g., nontraditional, international)
- Show a personal interest in students' lives

3. Provide accurate and timely information about the University and its programs.

Examples of methods:

- Know department and University requirements
- Know department and University deadlines
- Communicate pertinent information to advisees or selected groups
- Know and be able to refer students to appropriate University resources as appropriate to students' needs
- Know about and be able to refer students to appropriate web sites for specialized information
- Know about and be able to recommend to students appropriate organizations for their professional development (e.g., departmental student professional organizations, etc.)

4. For advisors who work with prospective or transfer students, facilitate transferring from other institutions to Missouri State. All advisors assist students in transferring from Missouri State to other institutions when that is in the best interest of the student.

Examples of methods:

- Know how to use the Missouri State transfer equivalencies web link

- Develop and maintain relationships with appropriate individuals at transfer institutions
- Be willing to work with prospective freshman and transfer students prior to Missouri State enrollment

5. Adopt a developmental approach to help advisees become independent learners and self-reliant problem solvers.

Examples of methods:

- Foster development of advisees' decision making skills
- Use an academic advising syllabus
- Coach students on appropriate ways to advocate for themselves

6. Enhance advisees' understanding of and support for the University's public affairs mission.

Examples of methods:

- Encourage appreciation for diversity within the University environment
- Promote study away opportunities
- Promote civic engagement through involvement in CASL, internships, and cooperative learning
- Email advisees regularly about relevant events, lectures, and activities that promote the public affairs mission

7. Maintain a high degree of professionalism.

Examples of methods:

- Maintain posted office hours
- Keep advising appointments
- Keep up to date on changing departmental and University requirements
- Prepare for advising appointments and document advising sessions in "Advising Notes"
- Support University requirements and programs (e.g., general education)
- Maintain a positive attitude regarding department and University colleagues and programs
- Maintain confidentiality as possible
- Consult with and make appropriate referrals to University personnel when advisee needs extend beyond professional experience and training

8. Engage in personal growth and development.

Examples of methods:

- Attain and maintain Master Advisor status
- Regularly attend training and education related to academic advisement (e.g., Academic Advisor Forums)
- Take advantage of opportunities for professional growth through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the Missouri Academic Advising Association (MACADA)
- Keep up-to-date on current advising techniques and strategies
- Attend appropriate discipline-specific professional development opportunities related to student advising, retention, and success

Appendix D

Be Advised: Help Your Advisor Help You

Academic Advisors at Missouri State are committed to helping you meet your educational goals, and we want you to use available resources to help you succeed in college and beyond. These guidelines for working with your academic advisor will assist you with completing your degree and in planning for your future:

- Meet with your advisor at least once a semester to discuss your long-term and short-term goals and evaluate your academic progress.
- Prepare for meetings with your advisor; bring a list of questions, a current degree audit, and ideas about class choices. Check program requirements and class prerequisites, too.
- Be punctual for appointments and contact your advisor in advance of any necessary schedule changes.
- Seek help from your advisor when you need it, so any problems you face don't become overwhelming.
- Communicate honestly with your advisor about information he or she may need to know about you in order to help you effectively; this includes information about significant changes that can affect your academic progress and goals, like a job change or new choice of a major.
- Appreciate your advisor's multiple duties--which can include teaching, committee work and research activities--and be prepared to work with his or her schedule, too.
- Accept responsibility for the decisions and actions (or inactions) you take that affect your educational progress.

Appendix E

Document Analysis Guide

Name of Document: _____ Date of review: _____

<p>Student Self-Efficacy</p>	<p>Find/create logic in one's education (Lowenstein, 2005)</p>	
<p>Advisor Empowerment and Advisor Accountability</p>	<p>View seemingly disconnected pieces of curriculum as parts of a whole that makes sense to the learner (Lowenstein, 2005)</p>	
<p>Student Responsibility</p>	<p>Base educational choices on developing sense of overall edifice being self-built (Lowenstein, 2005)</p>	
<p>Student Study Skills</p>	<p>Continually enhance learning experiences by relating them to knowledge that has been previously learned (Lowenstein, 2005)</p>	
<p>Perceived Support</p>		

Appendix F

Freshman Academic Advising Questionnaire

1. So far, how would you rate your overall experience with academic advising (e.g., SOAR) at Missouri State University (MSU)?

- a) Extremely positive
- b) Positive
- c) Neutral
- d) Negative
- e) Extremely negative

Please explain:

2. After you complete 75 credit hours you are no longer required to meet with your academic advisor before registration. How often do you expect to meet with your advisor after that point?

- a) Never
- b) Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arise)
- c) About once a year
- d) Once as a senior for a final degree check
- e) We will communicate via email without meeting in person.

3. During your experience at MSU, in which of the following areas do you expect to receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Please check all that apply):

- a) Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines
- b) Requirements for your major and minor
- c) Referrals to campus resources
- d) General education requirements
- e) Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)
- f) Study habits and time management
- g) Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)
- h) Other (please specify)

Please specify "Other" response:

4. How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your academic planning?

- a) I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.
 - *If you do not know, please leave this question blank.*

5. **How much personal responsibility do you expect to take with regard to your goals following college graduation?**
- a) I will make all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
 - b) I will take the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
 - c) I will partner 50/50 with my academic advisor.
 - d) My academic advisor will take the lead role in decision making with my input.
 - e) My academic advisor will make the decisions with little input from me.
 - *If you do not know, please leave this question blank.*

6. **Do you expect your academic advisor to support you in seeking the best possible education at MSU?**

- a) Absolutely
- b) Yes
- c) Somewhat
- d) No
- e) Not at all

Please explain (*optional*):

7. **Please share additional thoughts about your advising experience or related expectations at MSU.**

8. **I am a student in the Honors College.**

- a) No
- b) Yes

9. **I am a Missouri State University athlete.**

- a) No
- b) Yes

10. **Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

- a) No
- b) Yes

11. **What is your expected first-semester GPA?**

12. **MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My sex is:**

- Male Transgender Male Prefer not to say
 Female Transgender Female

13. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My race is:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black, African-American | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian, AK Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other race |

14. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – What is the MSU College, School, or Program of your declared major(s)?

- I have not declared a major.*
- Individualized Major*
- School of Agriculture
- College of Arts & Letters
(e.g., ART, COM, DAN, DES, ENG, Foreign Language, JRN, MED, MUS, THE)
- College of Business
(e.g., ACC, BUS, CIS, FID, FIN, MGT, MKT, TCM)
- College of Education
(e.g., CFD, ECE, EEM, ELE, Middle School EDU, SPE)
- College of Health & Human Services
(e.g., ATC, BMS, CSD, GER, KIN, NUR, PSY, REC, SWK)
- College of Humanities & Public Affairs
(e.g., ANT, CRM, ECO, HST, MIL, PHI, PLS, REL, SOC)
- College of Natural & Applied Sciences
(e.g., AST, BIO, CHM, CSC, ENG, GLG, GRY, HRA, MAT, MTH, PHY, PLN)
- Global Studies*

Appendix G

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire

1. **How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University (MSU)?**

- a) Extremely positive
- b) Positive
- c) Neutral
- d) Negative
- e) Extremely negative

Please explain:

2. **How often did you continue to meet with an academic advisor after you completed 75 hours and were no longer required to receive an advisor release to register for classes?**

- a) Never
- b) Occasionally (i.e., about once a semester or as questions arose)
- c) About once a year
- d) Once as a senior for a final degree check
- e) We communicated via email but did not meet in person.

3. **At MSU, in which areas did you receive help from a faculty or staff academic advisor? (Mark all that apply):**

- a) Information about academic rules, regulations, and deadlines
- b) Requirements for your major and minor
- c) Referrals to campus resources
- d) General education requirements
- e) Career-related options (e.g., internships, work experience, graduate school preparation)
- f) Study habits and time management
- g) Opportunities for involvement (e.g., campus organizations, community involvement, cultural opportunities)
- h) Other (please specify)

Please specify "Other" response:

4. **How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?**

- a) I made all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me.

5. **How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?**

- a) I made all decisions without input from an academic advisor.
- b) I took the lead role in decision making with input from my academic advisor.
- c) I partnered 50/50 with my academic advisor.
- d) My academic advisor took the lead role in decision making with my input.
- e) My academic advisor made the decisions with little input from me.

6. **Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?**

- a) Absolutely
- b) Yes
- c) Somewhat
- d) No
- e) Not at all

Please explain (*optional*)

7. **Please share any additional thoughts related to your academic advising experience at MSU.**

8. **Please select the option that best describes you:**

- a) I earned all of my college credits at MSU.
- b) I transferred 23 or fewer hours to MSU from another college.
- c) I transferred 24 or more hours to MSU from another college.
- d) Other (please explain)

Please explain "Other" response:

9. **I am a student in the Honors College.**

- c) No
- d) Yes

10. **I am a Missouri State University athlete.**

- c) No
- d) Yes

11. **Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**

- c) No
- d) Yes

12. **What is your cumulative MSU GPA?**

13. **MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My sex is:**

- Male
- Transgender Male
- Prefer not to say
- Female
- Transgender Female

14. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – My race is:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Korean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black, African-American | <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian, AK Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other race |

15. MARK ANY THAT APPLY – What is the MSU College, School, or Program of your declared major(s)?

- I have not declared a major.*
- Individualized Major*
- School of Agriculture
- College of Arts & Letters
(e.g., ART, COM, DAN, DES, ENG, Foreign Language, JRN, MED, MUS, THE)
- College of Business
(e.g., ACC, BUS, CIS, FID, FIN, MGT, MKT, TCM)
- College of Education
(e.g., CFD, ECE, EEM, ELE, Middle School EDU, SPE)
- College of Health & Human Services
(e.g., ATC, BMS, CSD, GER, KIN, NUR, PSY, REC, SWK)
- College of Humanities & Public Affairs
(e.g., ANT, CRM, ECO, HST, MIL, PHI, PLS, REL, SOC)
- College of Natural & Applied Sciences
(e.g., AST, BIO, CHM, CSC, ENG, GLG, GRY, HRA, MAT, MTH, PHY, PLN)
- Global Studies*

Appendix H

Senior Academic Advising Questionnaire Pilot Report (compiled by MSU Assessment Research Coordinator in June 2012)

Since this is a small sample ($n = 23$), it is difficult to tell if the items are working as they should. It is ideal for all answer options to be selected to show that they are relevant to the question and the population. This sample did not use all answer options except for on Item 3 (choose all that apply). In a larger and broader sample, it is possible that all options could be utilized.

After running correlations on items 1, 2, and 4-6, two relationships produced a significant result. Not surprisingly, students gave similar ratings on the first item, “How would you rate your overall experience with academic advising at Missouri State University?” and on Item 6, “Did your academic advisor support you in seeking the best possible education at Missouri State University?” ($\alpha = .81, p \leq 0.001$). The only other really plausible correlation one should expect is between Items 4 and 5: “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your academic planning?” and “How much personal responsibility did you take with regard to your goals following college graduation?” The positive correlation between these items was marginally significant ($\alpha = .37, p \leq 0.1$). Since the remaining items are not directly related to one another, one should not expect them to be significantly correlated with each other. This was the case according to these tests which suggests that the items are all working as they should.

VITA

Tracie D. Burt was born in Pascagoula, Mississippi in 1972. She was raised in Arkansas and graduated valedictorian of her high school class of nearly 500. She earned psychology and sociology majors toward completion of a Bachelor of Arts at Harding University in 1995, graduating first in her class. She completed a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology at Abilene Christian University in 1997, and defense of the present dissertation will meet remaining requirements for 2014 completion of her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis through the University of Missouri. She has worked as a TRIO Counselor and Academic Coordinator, a tobacco cessation counselor, and a database manager, but her primary love is teaching college students. In 14 years as an instructor, she has taught introductory psychology, sociology, child development, adolescent development, and lifespan psychology through seated and online modalities, and her first peer-reviewed publications were accepted in 2013. She is passionate about student learning and development and has won university recognition for excellence in online instruction, as well as university and national recognition for excellence as an academic advisor and advising administrator. Her intended career trajectory is earning tenure in an academic department where she can teach, advise, research, and further develop her leadership skills in service to her department and university.