2013-2014 Assessment Report

College of Liberal Arts

Liberal Arts Academic Affairs

Expected Outcome 1. Student Satisfaction
Students will indicate a high level of satisfaction with CLA advising services.

Assessment Method 1: Satisfaction Survey

Assessment Method Description
Students are surveyed each semester about their experiences with CLA academic advising. A link to a survey on Qualtrics is sent to all students about halfway through each semester. Graduating seniors also receive a survey about their educational experiences in the CLA in the semester prior to their graduation.

Findings
The Auburn University Academic Affairs Career Ladder Committee established seven questions asked of all Auburn University students regarding the quality of their advising experience. When asked about their general satisfaction with their advisor, 81% of respondents in the College of Liberal Arts were either satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their advising. This represents an increase of 3.2% over survey results from 2012-13. Other measures reveal that 74% of students in CLA agree or strongly agree that their advisor has accurate knowledge of degree requirements related to their individual academic needs and 82% of CLA survey respondents agree or strongly agree that their CLA advisor has thorough knowledge of Auburn's policies and procedures regarding academics. And in a slight improvement on the already high score from previous years, 94% of respondents believe their advisors to be courteous and professional.

How did you use findings for improvement?
While we were pleased with the overall high levels of student satisfaction, we were able to look closer at some of the particular measures and also the range of student comments included in the survey to identify some areas of focus. The Associate Dean and Director of Student Services reviewed the comments first, and then facilitated a meeting with all advisors to identify any concerns and possible actions to be taken from the survey results. In addition to a commitment to continue the positive steps of previous years, we have taken the following additional steps. We updated the Camp War Eagle communications and presentations with incoming students to emphasize the different advisors (CLASS, Major, and Minor) a student might have and how they work differently and together; have advisors review the comments on the forms about advisor language and interaction with students to
identify possible changes; continue the use of the intake form and its beneficial effects on time for active advising with students; and increasing efforts in communications with students to have them visit advisors at non-peak advising times.

**Additional Comments**

**Assessment Method 2: Analysis of Statistical Data**

**Assessment Method Description**
Data on advising services is collected through SARS, an electronic appointment system database. It reports to us the number of students receiving advising services, and the reasons for their advising visits.

**Findings**
Analysis of SARS data indicates that 3,367 student appointments were either cancelled or missed, representing a decrease of 10% from 2012-13 data. We also see an 11% improvement in student positive response about wait time once they arrive for their appointment, with 87% of students answering that the wait time is "just about right." While we are happy with these positive steps, we do still see the missed or cancelled appointments as missed opportunities to advise students. Comments in the open response section of the survey suggest the appointment system is still a friction point, and one we still need to consider.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
Greater use of Peer Advisors and extended walk-in hours (including over the lunch hour) have met with positive response from students who perceive that we are making advising more available to them. Another step in this direction has been the ad hoc availability of advisors through phone or skype advising in the case of students who cannot make it to our office. This has not been an organized or systematic experiment, but we may look to expand this availability in the coming years. Additionally, we are in Fall 2014 implementing an appointment reminder system through SARS to encourage students to attend or cancel their appointments. We hope the result will be more appointments kept, but also hope that by an earlier cancellation of appointments they will then become available for other students who are seeking counsel.

**Additional Comments**
**Expected Outcome 2. General Education Requirements**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of university core curriculum requirements, identify their college advisors as important and reliable sources of information about these requirements, and apply that knowledge in navigating their academic programs.

**Assessment Method 1: Satisfaction Survey**

**Assessment Method Description**

Students are surveyed each semester about their experiences with CLA academic advising. A link to a survey in Qualtrics is sent to all students about halfway through each semester. Graduating seniors also receive a survey about their educational experiences in CLA in the semester prior to their expected graduation.

**Findings**

86.5% of students surveyed in 2013–14 either agreed or strongly agreed that they understand Auburn's university core requirements and apply that knowledge when making decisions regarding their course scheduling. This represents a 2% increase from 2012–13 survey results. Another positive finding is that students in 2013-14 were less likely to cite parents/friends/acquaintances as the source of their information on core requirements. 26% of students point specifically to their CLASS advisor as the source of this information. Other prominent answers include Camp War Eagle (also staffed by CLASS), the CLA Website, and the AU Bulletin making a total 84% of students who are pointing to what we would consider good sources of information on the core.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**

CLASS continued to place a strong emphasis on general education requirements and student learning outcomes in its Camp War Eagle and Successfully Orienting Students advising sessions. In addition, the college continued its use of a university core course summary sheet encapsulating core requirements on a single front/back sheet as a resource for students and advisors (see attached file). Finally, CLASS staff highlighted DegreeWorks in advising sessions with new students to help them see how their core courses fit into the curriculum.

- 📃CoreSheet2014

**Additional Comments**

CLA conducts annual training to keep advisors current on core requirements and share best practices in assisting students in assimilating core
requirements. Advisors meet weekly within the office to address current advising concerns. Further, advisors are encouraged to participate in campus-wide advising training opportunities.

**Assessment Method 2:** Analysis of Statistical Data

**Assessment Method Description**
Data on advising services is collected through SARS, an electronic appointment system database. It reports to us the number of students receiving advising services and the reasons for their advising visits.

**Findings**
Of the 9,916 scheduled and "drop-in" appointments in 2013–14, there were a total of 4,550 made for general advising. 3,367 appointments were missed or canceled--a cancellation/no-show rate of 34% that is identical to that of 2012-13 and a 6% improvement over 2011-12.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
CLASS has continued vigorous efforts aimed at encouraging students to make and keep appointments, with particular emphasis on first semester students with 65 or more earned hours who have yet to declare a major. Methods used to encourage these appointments include: making it a point of emphasis in Camp War Eagle communications and presentations, utilizing CLA Peer Advisors in person and through their active Twitter feed, utilizing other CLA social media sources, in Welcome Week activities, and through the Dean's communications with students at various times in the semester.

**Additional Comments**

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**Expected Outcome 3. Proactive Use of Advising Services**
Students will meet with an academic advisor prior to registering for courses for the upcoming term. While this is not a student learning outcome in the strictest sense of the term, if students take the initiative to meet with an advisor prior to registration, it indicates that they do see value in advising services.

**Assessment Method 1:** Student Satisfaction Survey

**Assessment Method Description**
Students are surveyed each semester about their experiences with CLA academic advising. A link to a survey in Qualtrics is sent to all students about halfway through each semester. Graduating seniors also receive a survey about their educational experiences in CLA in the semester prior to their expected graduation.
Findings
82% of surveyed students affirmatively responded that they met with their CLASS advisor prior to registration during 2013-14. This is an improvement of 5% over the data from 2012-13.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Prohibiting students with cumulative GPA below 2.0 and students with more than 90 earned semester hours from registering until they meet with their CLA advisor continues to engage an overwhelming number of students in this cohort in advising services prior to registration. In addition, more active efforts are made to promote advising services to all students. These methods include: through communications prior to and presentations at Camp War Eagle, communications from the Peer Advisors, through CLA social media resources, including advisors in Welcome Week and other student-audience activities, and in various communications from the dean to students.

Additional Comments
Assessment Method 2: Analysis of Statistical Data

Assessment Method Description
Data on advising services is collected through SARS, an electronic appointment system database. It reports to us the number of students receiving advising services, and the reasons for their advising visits.

Findings
Analysis of SARS data continues to indicate a small, but measurable connection between student use of advising services to academic success. Also, student survey data shows student satisfaction (at rate of 87%) that advisors provide timely and accurate information.

How did you use findings for improvement?
Efforts have been focused on improving the overall quality of the advisement experience, through expanded use of peer advisors, more aggressive communication about the value of advising services and the correlation between advising and academic success, and incorporating the interactive use of Degree Works in advising sessions with first semester freshmen in order to encourage more proactive student use of advising services.

Additional Comments

Expected Outcome 4. Advising Regimen
Students will meet regularly with their CLA Advisor to enhance their ability to
successfully navigate academic choices and graduate in a timely fashion.

**Assessment Method 1: Satisfaction Survey**

**Assessment Method Description**
Students are surveyed each semester about their experiences with CLA academic advising. A link to a survey in Qualtrics is sent to all students about halfway through each semester. Graduating seniors also receive a survey about their educational experiences in CLA in the semester prior to their expected graduation.

**Findings**
86% of students surveyed reported visiting their CLA student services advisor at least once per semester in 2013–14.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
With findings indicating a strong percentage of students seeking their CLA advisor at least once a semester, CLA maintained existing efforts urging students to see advisors regularly, and took efforts to make advisors more visible to students through inclusion in communications from the college and at college events targeted at current students. CLA also focused on improving the quality of the advising experience in the following ways:

1. Utilizing an intake form adopted in previous year to collect important information from students prior to the face-to-face portion of the advising appointment. This process allows for clearer communication and provides more time for advisor and student to discuss concerns.

2. Office hours expanded in 2012–13 were continued for this year too, allowing students to receive advising services during the lunch hour.

3. Peer advisors were again deployed to a number of CLA departments as well as the CLA student services office and do answer the basic questions many students bring to the office. This allows for a speedy answer to students and frees appointment times for professional advisors to answer more complicated or advising-related questions from students.

**Additional Comments**

**Assessment Method 2: Analysis of Statistical Data**

**Assessment Method Description**
Data on advising services is collected through SARS, an electronic appointment system database. It reports to us the number of students receiving advising services, and the reasons for their advising visits.

**Findings**
Statistical analysis of SARS data over several years indicates that students
who meet with their advisor at least once a semester have a higher GPA than those who do not.

**How did you use findings for improvement?**
The link between regular advising and academic success was actively highlighted in Camp War Eagle presentations and communications with incoming and continuing students.

**Additional Comments**