Chapter IX - Academic Standards, Procedures and Policies

9.7 Advising

Advising is a process by which faculty and designated persons assist students in successfully navigating the course options and requirements that lead to the attainment of their academic and career goals.

Faculty responsibility: A major part of the teaching responsibility is in the advising of students the faculty has in class or those assigned as advisees. For that purpose, each faculty member should be available at specific times. Early in the semester, faculty members should post near their offices and send to the Dean of the College a schedule of those hours during which they are available for consultation with students. The hours listed should be in sufficient number and varied during the days so that any student has an opportunity for consultation.

9.7.1 Advisor Assignment

9.7.1.1 Undergraduate Students:

a. New Students: Students who have not declared an academic major are advised through the Pre-Major Advising Program in the Academic Success Center. Students with a chosen major will be assigned a faculty advisor by the department chair in that major. The faculty advisors in the various academic areas will be appointed by their department chair. Changes of advisor assignments will be made upon request of the student or advisor and will be confirmed by a written notice to the previous advisor from the department chair. The advisor folder containing test reports and other material should be forwarded to the student's new advisor.

b. Continuing students: The assignment of advisors to continuing students will reflect the request of the student and the approval of the advisor and the department chair. Usually sophomores stay with their freshman advisors. Some departments may assign advanced students to senior staff or to the chair.

9.7.1.2 Graduate Students:

An advisor in the student's area of specialization will be assigned by the program coordinator of that area during the process of a student's admission to a graduate degree program. It is the advisor's responsibility to help the student formulate a plan of study leading toward the accomplishment of the student's objectives. Most of the information that follows is geared toward undergraduate student advising. Faculty should consult the Graduate Catalog for specific information regarding graduate program policies and regulations.

9.7.2 Advising Information and Procedures

The following factors are worthy of consideration in advising the student on educational goals:

1. ACT profile information
2. Aptitudes and abilities
3. Previous achievement
4. Motivation and attitudes
5. Financial resources and employment
6. Personality
7. Health
8. Career Goals

9.7.3 Advisor/Advisee Agreement [FS 11/12-86]

At the initial meeting of an advisor and advisee, the advisor should make the advisee aware of an advisor's responsibilities and those of the advisee as stated in 8.7.3.1 & 8.7.3.2 (below)

9.7.3.1 Responsibilities of Advisors in the Advising Process

The advisor’s responsibility is to:

1. Meet with advisees at least once each semester, review their Degree Progress Reports with them, discuss the advisee’s academic and career goals, make them aware of their progress at that point in their academic career, acquaint them with any new information and options, and help them interpret requirements and schedule courses.
2. Keep files with all pertinent information (uniform standards of confidentiality and security regarding files must be maintained),
3. In necessary, direct advisees experiencing academic difficulties and having specific issues to appropriate sources of assistance.
4. Encourage advisees to obtain information about extracurricular on-and-off campus activities, organizations, internships, scholarships, as well as about career opportunities and graduate programs.

9.7.3.2 Responsibilities of Students in the Advising Process

The student’s responsibility is to:

1. Become familiar with General Education, graduation and program requirements and monitor their progress toward fulfillment of these requirements.
2. Meet with advisor in advance of each semester’s registration date and come prepared for the meeting with a tentative course schedule.
3. In special cases, such as academic difficulty, declaring a (new) major or minor, withdrawing from the university, etc., schedule an additional appointment with the advisor.
4. Seek advisor assistance with academic decisions rather that expecting the advisor to make the decisions. Students must accept responsibility for the decisions made by them.
5. Seek information about on-campus activities related to his or her major (clubs, teams, organizations), as well as internships, scholarships, graduate programs, and other career opportunities.

9.7.4 Graduation Requirements
The undergraduate catalog lists General Education and diversity requirements for all undergraduates as well as requirements for each major and minor. The graduate catalog lists all requirements, regulations and procedures for graduate programs.

9.7.4.1 Undergraduate Student Load

9.7.4.1.1 Undergraduate Students:
A student should average 15 credits of work for 8 semesters for a total of 120 credits. The maximum load for freshmen students is 17 credits per semester. The maximum load for sophomores, juniors, or senior students is 18 credits per semester. The maximum load for undergraduate students is 12 credits per summer session (with a credit per week ratio of no more than one credit per week during the summer) is permitted for sophomores, juniors, and senior students. The maximum load for undergraduate students is one credit per week during J-term (typically no more than 4 credits per J-term). The maximum load for freshmen students is 17 credits per semester.

Full-time students are designated as being enrolled for 12 or more credits. Students in the Honors Program may carry one honors course per semester in addition to the regular course load. (For additional information regarding the Honors Program, see previous section, 9.6.4, in this chapter.)

9.7.4.1.2 Graduate Students:
Full-time graduate student status is defined by enrollment for at least 8 credits in fall or spring terms, and for at least 4 credits in summer.

When graduate students complete undergraduate courses, each graduate credit will count as a graduate credit in calculating load.

Graduate students who are working as graduate assistants must be either currently enrolled in a graduate course or admitted to a graduate program and enrolled in a course (either graduate or undergraduate).

9.7.4.2 Excess Load:

9.7.4.2.1 Undergraduate Students:
Undergraduate students may apply to the Dean of their College at registration time for an excess load. Application forms for excess load are available in the Office of the Registrar. Only students whose average is "B" or better should be recommended for excess load except under special conditions. Similar procedures are in effect during the summer session.

9.7.4.2.2 Graduate Students:
Full-time graduate students may not exceed 15 credits per term during the fall or spring, or 12 credits during the summer, with a credit per week ratio of no more than one credit, unless they have written approval from their adviser, program chair, and the director of graduate studies. To be granted this exception, a student must have successfully completed at least 8 graduate credits and must not be on academic probation at the time.

9.7.4.3 Grades:

Online grade records should be used as a basis for further counseling and planning with the student.
9.7.4.4 Long-range Planning:

Some departments require that a plan of studies be worked out in the sophomore year for the junior and senior years. It is useful for students to plan ahead so far as possible, particularly in the spring for the ensuing year. All departments have worked out a four-year model for use in planning a student's course work toward the degree.

9.7.5 American Cultural Diversity and Global Perspectives Course Requirements

Undergraduate students are required to take one course designated as Global Perspectives (G) and one course designated as American Cultural Diversity (D). This requirement may be satisfied as part of their General Education program, their major or minor programs of study, or their elective credits. To the degree possible, courses designated D or G should also address issues of gender and class. Courses must be taken at the 200 level or above and must be at least three credits.

9.7.5.1 American Cultural Diversity (D)

Criterion:

Courses designated D will examine changing social identities and divergent beliefs of one or more racial or ethnic group of American culture as defined by the UIW-System to include the following groups: African American, Hispanic/Latino(a), Asian-American, and American Indian.

Outcomes:
a. Students will examine the ways in which issues of race and/or ethnicity shape social identities and influence behaviors within diverse segments of American society.

b. Students will analyze social and historical factors that may influence their interaction with members of a diverse society.

9.7.5.2 Global Perspectives (G)

Criterion:

Courses designated G will require students to examine subject matter from a global/international perspective. Outcomes:

a. Students will describe and analyze global or international issues.

b. Students will compare and contrast various aspects of an international culture to their own.

9.7.6 Advising Aids

9.7.6.1 ACT Profile Sheets

The UW System requires that all incoming freshmen take the ACT to assist faculty in advising. The Admissions Office will provide these profiles to the advisors beginning with the initial registration during summer orientation. The profiles will then be forwarded to the student's permanent advisor.

9.7.6.2 Placement Tests

All freshmen are required to take the Wisconsin English Placement Test and the Wisconsin Math Placement test before registering for their first term of enrollment. The profile sheets reporting the results of these tests will be provided by the Admissions Office to advisors during the registration prior to the student's first term of enrollment. The profile sheets will then be forwarded to the student's permanent advisor. Students who have studied a foreign language (French, Spanish or German) in high school are advised to take the Wisconsin Modern Language Placement test; this test is given at Regional Testing in the spring, each morning of Freshman summer registration, or by special arrangement with the Modern Language Department.

9.7.6.3 Individual Testing

When additional information is needed concerning a student, arrangements for testing and assessment may be made through Career Services and the Academic Success Center. A minimal fee may be charged.

9.7.7 Access to Records

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, students are entitled to review those records, files, documents and other materials which are maintained by the University and which contain information directly related to them. Exceptions are: personal notes of UWRF staff and faculty, employment records, medical and counseling records used solely for treatment, records in the Department of Public Safety, parents' financial records, confidential letters and statements placed in the records prior to January 1, 1975, and confidential letters and statements of recommendation for
admission, employment or honorary recognition, placed in the records after January 1, 1975, but for which the student has waived the right of inspection and review. Students must submit written requests to review their records, and the University has 45 days to comply with such requests.

Students have the right to challenge information in their educational records which they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate, and to insert in the record a statement explaining any such material from their point of view. A formal challenge to administrator of the appropriate office.

The Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance has been designated by the Chancellor as the custodian of all public records maintained at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

"Directory Information" includes name, address, telephone listing, date of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities including sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance (including classification and year, matriculation and withdrawal dates), degrees and awards received and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. This information will be routinely released to any inquirer unless the student requests, in writing to the Registrar, that all or part of it be withheld.

There is an electronic phone book linked to the UWRF Home Page (http://www.uwrf.edu). Information listed on each individual includes: name, email address, alias, classification, major(s), minor(s), hometown, local address, and local telephone number. As is the case with other directory information, this information will not be posted if the student so requests, in writing, to the Registrar.

9.7.8 Annual Schedule of Advising

9.7.8.1 Introduction

Advising starts when a student expresses an interest in UWRF and continues until the student completes his or her education at UWRF or leaves. Each department is responsible for an advising program that uses the services of UWRF for the specific needs of the student—the choice of classes for majors and minors, remedial concerns, development of special talents, enrichment through extra-curricular involvement, and career planning. Each chair should assign faculty to contact students interested in the department.

The following outline provides information about advising whereby the department maintains consistent contact with new students, continuing students, and interested students.

9.7.8.2 Prospective Students

The names of prospective students are sent to departments on a continuing basis. These names come from interest cards completed by prospective students when admissions counselors visit schools or when they attend college fairs and career days as well as from mail inquiries to the Admissions Office. These names also come from students who have taken the ACT or SAT and had their score reports sent to UWRF. Throughout the year, letters from the department heads are sent to these interested students, stressing the advantages the department has for the student. These letters may be standard, but an extra handwritten comment is suggested.
Computer printouts of accepted students are sent to the Deans, on a monthly basis, from the Admissions Office. This information is sorted by major, address of student, and other data.

9.7.8.3 Freshmen and Transfer Students

June-July Orientation/Registration: New students register during a number of days dedicated to this process. At that time new students will meet with department representatives who will advise them on course work and requirements. Testing and initial orientation also take place on these advising days. The Admissions Office provides students with detailed advance information on services available at this time. August-September Orientation/Registration: New students may also register on a specified day just prior to the opening of the academic year.

9.7.8.4 Continuing Students

In the month of October, students and their academic advisors will receive information regarding advising periods and registration times for the next spring semester. In the month of March, students and their academic advisors will receive information regarding advising periods and registration times for the next fall semester. Students and their advisors will meet prior to the student's registration appointment in order to work out the student's schedule for the following semester and to do whatever long-range planning is appropriate (see previous sections on advising).

9.7.9 Advisors and Lost PINs

The Registrar's Office will not reissue lost PIN numbers without written authorization from the advisor. Acceptable written authorization includes a hand-written or word processed note, not an email correspondence. The note may be carried by the student to the Registrar's Office.