UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

Dean's Task Force on Academic Advising

Final Report

August 31, 2016

Table of Contents

Summary and Recommendations 3

Task Force Mandate, Membership and Process 5

Contextual Definition of Academic Advising 5

Student Survey Highlights 6

Advisor Survey Highlights 8

Recommendations

1. Maintain the current academic advising service structure 9
2. Replace the term ‘counsellor’ with ‘academic advisor’ 10
3. Promote and recognize the professionalization of academic advisors 10
4. Maintain and enhance developmental advising practices 12
5. Implement an on-line academic advising platform for students and advisors 13
6. Create an academic advising steering committee 15
7. Encourage deeper contextual knowledge of Faculty policy and the student experience 15
8. Promote the benefits and scope of academic advising to students, staff and faculty through a more comprehensive communications plan 16
9. Identify faculty and other mentors for engineering career related advice 16
10. Develop a network of specially trained academic advisors for students encountering sexual violence, harassment or other gender related issues, as well as mental health issues 17

References 18

Appendices

A. Student Survey 19
B. Student Survey Results 24
C. Advisor Headcount and Roles 32
D. Advisor Survey 34
E. Advisor Survey Results 39
F. Professional Development Resources for Academic Advisors 46
G. NACADA: Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising 48
H. Conceptual Framework for the Academic Advisor’s Handbook 52

Summary and Recommendations

As part of the 2011-2016 Academic Plan, the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering identified the need to review student counselling as an action item within the strategic theme of Student Experience. Dean Cristina Amon struck the Task Force on Academic Advising (TFAA) in the fall of 2015. The TFAA was asked to review academic and student advising and to make key recommendations for future direction.

1. Maintain the current academic advising service structure

The TFAA recommends the combination of centralized and decentralized academic advising services be retained and that continued support be provided for dialogue and cooperation to continually foster consistency and maintain collaborative practices.

2. Replace the term ‘counsellor’ with ‘academic advisor’

The TFAA recommends all staff in academic advising roles be encouraged to adopt ‘advisor’ in their role titles, and where appropriate, ‘advisor’ replace ‘counsellor’ in all modes of communication and publication.

3. Promote and recognize the professionalization of academic advisors

The TFAA recommends academic advisors participate in professional development opportunities in order to provide students with a consistent advising experience across the Faculty.

4. Maintain and enhance developmental advising practices

The TFAA recommends a focus on developmental advising practices be emphasized in professional development and training opportunities for academic advisors.

5. Implement an on-line academic advising platform for students and advisors

The TFAA recommends the Faculty create an in-house academic advising tool to meet our unique and decentralized needs.

6. Create an academic advising steering committee

The TFAA recommends an academic advising steering committee be created under the Vice Dean, Undergraduate to support and coordinate advising delivery and practice within the Faculty.

7. Encourage deeper contextual knowledge of Faculty policy and the student experience

The TFAA recommends advisors have an increased opportunity to engage with students and faculty decision makers in order to foster a more authentic relationship and to provide more relevant and accurate information to students.

8. Promote the benefits and scope of academic advising to students, staff and faculty through a more comprehensive communications plan

The TFAA recommends strategies to increase advisor visibility and to communicate advising services with all years of students be adopted.

9. Identify faculty and other mentors for engineering career related advice

The TFAA recommends current career advising options be better promoted to students and that 1-3 faculty members from each department/program be identified as career and professional advisors. Further engagement with alumni in mentoring relationships should be encouraged.

10. Develop a network of specially trained academic advisors for students encountering sexual violence, harassment or other gender related issues, as well as mental health issues

The TFAA recommends one advisor from each advising area be specially trained in matters that relate to sexual violence awareness, harassment, equity, sexual and gender diversity, and mental health resources on campus.

DEAN'S TASK FORCE MANDATE, AND MEMBERSHIP

Mandate

1. Review and assess the scope and quality of academic advising programs across the Faculty and recommend improvements to the current state. As part of this, consider the role of faculty in providing students with career/professional advising.
2. Review and recommend appropriate and consistent competency and training requirements for academic and student advisors.
3. Review and recommend appropriate use of technology to effectively support academic student advising.

Membership

Don MacMillan, Faculty Registrar (Chair)
Chris Brown, Assistant Registrar, Academic Scheduling
Tom Coyle, Vice Dean, Undergraduate
Shayni Curtis Clarke, Academic Advisor, Civil Engineering
Sherry Dang, Academic Advisor, Engineering Science
Jason Foster, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream and Acting Chair, First Year
Leslie Grife, Assistant Director, First Year Academic Services
Susan Lee, Acting Assistant Director, Student Experience & Teaching Development
Barbara McCann, past Faculty Registrar
Tom Nault, past Faculty Registrar
Helia Safaee, Student, Chemical Engineering
Namya Syal, Student, Chemical Engineering
Micah Stickel, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream and Chair, First Year
Deborah Tihanyi, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream and Director, Engineering Communication Program

Process

The Task Force met regularly between October 2015 and August 2016. The Task Force had three Chairs due to the departure of Tom Nault, Faculty Registrar, the appointment of Barbara McCann as interim Faculty Registrar and then the appointment of Don MacMillan as Faculty Registrar. We conducted a student survey, an advisor survey, and focus groups and consulted with the Faculty's Human Resources unit.

CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Academic advising can broadly be defined as a collaborative relationship between a student and a staff member, in which the student is assisted in making meaningful educational decisions that align with their personal goals, values, abilities, and degree requirements (NACADA, 2003). Staff members in academic advising roles provide advice and guidance in relation to academic policy and procedure, connect students with University and Faculty resources, and engage students in their educational experience through these interactions. Developmental advising

shifts the focus of advising from transactional or prescriptive interactions, based primarily on an exchange of information, towards building relationships where the role of the advisor is that of educator on policy and procedure. In developmental advising, students learn to take ownership in the decision making process.

In 2014, the First Year and the Registrar's Office worked together to draft a mission statement that reflected these priorities. This mission statement directly addressed the issue of terminology (using 'advisor' instead of 'counsellor' where more appropriate), and set clear expectations in approach and standards for student and academic advising in the Faculty. The mission statement draft, as presented to a meeting of Chairs and Directors, is below:

> "The mission of Academic Advising in the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering is to engage students in effectively navigating their educational experience by providing developmental advising that clarifies academic policy and procedure, connects students to appropriate resources, and reinforces our partnership with faculty, staff and the University of Toronto community, while maintaining consistency and transparency across the Faculty."

The two main outcomes from this exercise were the adoption of a model of developmental academic advising embodied in the description above and the clarification of terminology for the role, contrasting the widely understood and accepted function of a counsellor as related to mental health/health care professions.

STUDENT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

An online survey was sent to all currently registered undergraduate degree-seeking students in the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering. The survey remained open to all invited students for 10 days, and at the time of closing had received responses from 11.3% of the population. (The survey can be found in Appendix A; the survey results in Appendix B.) The demographics of the responding sample is representative of our student population based on the following metrics:

- year of study
- international/domestic ratio
- gender ratio
- program of study

The survey was designed to capture student feedback on their use of academic advising resources. The findings fall into two separate areas of feedback: student experience at the academic advising office, and student utilization of academic advising resources. The survey also included an open-ended comment section at the end of the survey.

Nearly 30% of our respondents report never visiting an academic advising office in person. Of those who had visited their academic advisor, almost 75% of respondents said they visited in

person fewer than 3 times. Half of all respondents report waiting 2 or more days to visit their academic advisor during peak periods.

Respondents are typically meeting with academic advisors to discuss academic issues and concerns, such as course add/drop. Among topics discussed with academic advisors, students report that they were least likely to discuss personal issues, although they frequently report discussing referrals to other resources.

The top 5 most frequently discussed topics with academic advisors are:

- Course add/drop
- Help with course selection
- Explanation of academic policies
- PEY
- Referrals to other sources

The topics shift slightly between years of study; for instance, first year students discuss PEY less frequently than second and third year students.

The 5 least frequently discussed topics are:

- Re-enrolment
- Appeals
- Personal/relationship/family
- Financial issues
- Health-related issues

In the open comments section, the most common concern is the need for additional resourcing to meet the needs of 'peak' periods in a timely fashion. Better communication about what services the academic advising offices provide and delivering online content for students are also strong messages delivered in the open comments section.

Student experience at the academic advising office is largely positive: 90% of students feel confident in the information given by their academic advisors, and feel respected by the Faculty's academic advising staff. 87% of students are satisfied with the service received from their academic advisor, and several glowing comments about specific staff members were left in the survey.

The student to advisor ratio varies by department (see Appendix C), and many students report that resources are limited, especially during peak periods.

- 84% of students prefer to receive academic advising services in-person
    - 52% of students prefer walk-in/drop-in advising appointments, while 32% of students would prefer a booked appointment.
    - Despite these preferences, 45% of students report never or rarely using in-person appointments with academic advisors.
- 90% of students report that an online booking system would be helpful.
- 95% of students report never or rarely using the telephone to access academic advising services

These preferences are consistent regardless of frequency of accessing academic advising services.

Students report that they are most likely to go to their professor or the internet for career advice, and academic advisors, family, and friends tied in the ranking of third most trusted sources for career advice. This is still above the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering Career Center, which ranked lowest. In the open-ended question, several respondents mention dissatisfaction with the services provided by the Engineering Career Centre.

The survey results indicate that the quality of academic advising is high, however access to advising during peak periods can be problematic. Most students prefer to meet with an academic advisor in person, and an online booking system would be helpful.

ADVISOR SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

The Task Force also administered an online survey to all advisors. The response rate was 63%. (The advisor headcount can be found in Appendix C; the survey in Appendix D; the survey results in Appendix E.) The survey was designed to capture information regarding workload, accuracy of position description, professional development, student wait times, and advising topics.

The advising workload is highly variable between 'peak' and 'off-peak' seasons. Advisors feel supported by their departments and Faculty to engage in professional development, however most are eager for increased opportunities and higher quality professional development offered at the Faculty or University level.

Academic advisors advise on a large range of topics on a regular basis. Results of this survey indicate that the most frequent issues addressed by academic advisors are:

1. Academic policies
2. Timelines/deadlines
3. Referrals to other resources on campus
4. Health-related issues
5. Personal/family issues

Academic advisors report that they advise about petitions the most frequently.

In terms of carrying out their responsibilities:

- Advisors report that over 50% of students are seen within 1 day and all students are seen within 1 week.
- The majority of advisors feel that their current position description ***does not*** accurately reflect their actual duties.
- The most common initial training techniques for new advisors are job shadowing and a manual created by the prior advisor. Advisors rely on staff, colleagues and their Associate Chair for gaps in policy training.

At the University, the Organizational Development and Learning Centre (ODLC) is mentioned frequently as the source for professional development; workshops attended by advisors include time management, stress management, and delivering bad news. While advisors report very low engagement with other opportunities available through the University and beyond such as additional certification, university-level training and resource sharing communities they note their

preferred method for meeting professional development goals is through engagement in professional communities and national conferences.

The development of a standardized set of guidelines for best practices and strategies is the most common request.

In the survey and in all interactions with advisors, there is broad agreement about the need for a technical solution to deal with appointments, document management, and sharing of selected student information between advisors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1.

Maintain the current academic advising service structure

The Task Force recommends that the combination of centralized and decentralized academic advising services be retained and that continued support be provided for dialogue and cooperation to continually foster consistency and maintain collaborative practices.

The current service structure in the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering for academic advising is both centralized in first year and decentralized in upper years across the programs. Upon admission, newly admitted students are served by either the Faculty's First Year Office (Core 8 and Track One) or the Division of Engineering Science (Engineering Science students). After completion of Year 1, students are then referred to their academic department for all matters of academic advising pertaining to their program. It is also important to note that the Office of the Faculty Registrar (OFR) provides advising in relation to general registrarial matters at the front desk and the financial advisor in the OFR handles all matters related to financial aid and scholarships.

This model allows for a consistent approach to advising across the first year in any program, an important consideration given that over one third of the first year class will seek to transfer to another program after first year. The First Year Office staff and the Division of Engineering Science Year 1 and 2 advisor and the Registrar meet weekly to share best practices and common challenges, and to collaborate in service and programming offerings. In upper years, more program based and specific advising is often required, and the expertise that resides with each departmental advisor is of great benefit to students.

To provide consistency across the Faculty, the advisors meet monthly. These meetings, facilitated by the Associate Registrar, Student Services were previously termed "Counsellors Student Services Meetings". They have been renamed "Academic Advisors Network Meetings", and serve the primary goal of linking the advisors with registrarial practice and policy.

While the service structure should be maintained, 50% of the respondents to the student survey reported a wait time of more than 2 days for an appointment during peak times. This may merit closer examination to determine if there are adequate resources allocated to academic advising across all departments.

Recommendation 2.

Replace the term 'counsellor' with 'academic advisor'

The Task Force recommends that all staff in academic advising roles be encouraged to adopt 'advisor' in their role titles, and where appropriate, 'advisor' replace 'counsellor' in all modes of communication and publication.

Across the University, staff with an academic advising component to their jobs have been given titles which include the term "Counsellor" (e.g., departmental counsellor, first year counsellor, registrar's office counsellor, financial counsellor, career counsellor). However, the term "counsellor" has become most frequently associated with a professional with the training and expertise to provide guidance in regards to personal crises, conflict, disability or mental health issues. Trained counsellors usually have a Master's or Doctoral degree in specialized areas such as counselling psychology or social work. There is a need to distinguish between the services provided by highly specialized and professionally trained counsellors and the services provided to students geared towards providing advice, clarity, and direction in a student's academic career.

Defining and distinguishing between counselling and advising will provide transparency to students who seek either service, and help advisors to better meet students' expectations. It may also promote and encourage students to seek access to academic advisors. As noted in one of the Dean's town hall meetings in 2015, high achieving students may perceive a stigma with "seeking counselling", as they relate the term to a resource to be sought only when one is "in trouble"; they may, therefore, more readily seek out an academic advisor.

Some steps to address this discrepancy have already been implemented. The Office of the Registrar has replaced 'Counsellor' with 'Academic Advisor' wherever appropriate online, with plans to further apply this to communications and publications in the future. Within the First Year Office, the title of 'First Year Counsellor' has been changed to 'First Year Advisor'. Application of this terminology across the Faculty will help in differentiating the specialized roles of advisors from that of counsellors, and promote the understanding of what services academic advisors provide.

Recommendation 3.

Promote and recognize the professionalization of academic advisors

The Task Force recommends that academic advisors participate in professional development opportunities in order to provide students with a consistent advising experience across the Faculty.

As academic advising as a formal practice and terminology is accepted in the Faculty, it is necessary to have a clearly articulated set of competencies so that the student experience is consistent in each advising area. The Task Force recommends that academic advising as a professional practice be recognized, professional development be encouraged, and advising skills and competencies be required on job descriptions where academic advising is a part.

Currently, the Faculty's advisors have a broad range of experience and expertise. Some have graduate degrees, but most have a Bachelor's degree and varying levels of on-the-job experience. The academic fields of 'student services' and 'academic advising' are relatively new in Canada, though in the US there have been specialized graduate programs offered for some time. Professional development for advisors is voluntary and somewhat ad hoc. Few if any Faculty job descriptions require any formal training in the area. Early career academic advisors report 'flying by the seat of their pants' and relying on the kindness of more senior mentor-advisors to help them in their new role.

The Task Force spent a great deal of time discussing the training and professional development needs of academic advisors.

3.1 In the hiring process for advisors, attention should be paid to those individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to professional development either through formal training or non-credit offerings. We need to clearly signal to applicants the importance the Faculty places on continual professional development and its impact on student success.

3.2 Current position descriptions have a lengthy section on 'responsibilities', but do not indicate much if anything in the 'qualifications required' section the types of skills or formal/professional training that would be desirable. We suggest the inclusion of a statement such as "preference will be given to candidates who possess formal or informal training in topics such as: student development, student mental health, conflict resolution and diversity and inclusion."

3.3 For Faculty advisors, there should be broad support for and encouragement of professional development. Managers should recognize the importance of PD for this group and make provision for release time and, where necessary, financial top ups to existing PD funds in recognition that the training is directly related to core job functions and will directly contribute to student success and satisfaction.

3.4 When new academic advisors are hired, they should be made aware of and encouraged to attend PD courses and workshops offered by the University and in the community. These short and longer term professional development opportunities also offer excellent networking opportunities for new professionals.

The Task Force examined a number of these opportunities (more detail is available in Appendix F):

- **University of Toronto, Organizational Development and Learning Centre (ODLC)**: offers short term, ungraded workshops.
- **School of Continuing Studies (SCS)**: offers a wide array of non-credit courses, many of which are applicable to the academic advising skill set.
- **Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)**: offers a M.Ed. in Higher Education in Student Development and Student Services in Postsecondary Education.
- **Seneca College**: offers an on-line 5-course certificate program in Student Affairs and Services.

3.5 Academic advisors should be encouraged to join professional associations that focus on student advising and student development. Both CACUSS (Canadian Association of College and University Students Services) and NACADA (National Academic Advising Association) have annual conferences and excellent online resources for members. The combination of research-based and best practice presentations are excellent ways to allow staff to learn about the field. CACUSS is also an ideal way to make connections with colleagues from across the country.

The Canadian Association of College and University Student Services (CACUSS)

The closest Canadian professional association that deals with academic advising is the Canadian Association of College and University Student Services. CACUSS has provided professional development activities to student services personnel since 1973. In the last year, it introduced an Integrated Academic and Professional Advising Community of Practice to address a growing sub-group within the association that has academic advising as a major portion of their job.

CACUSS

- publishes *Communiqué*, a professional magazine for student services professionals;
- sponsors an Annual Conference and Regional Workshops, which focus on topics of interest to CACUSS's diverse members;
- provides special project grants to promote new programs and research activities and supports the publication of monographs on special projects;
- has resources to assist members with the organization and management of student affairs/services on their campus, such as Institutional Guidelines for Reviews of Student Affairs;
- provides advocacy and assistance on issues that affect the quality of student life on Canadian university and college campuses; and
- recognizes excellence and professional commitment of individual members through recognition and awards.

From: http://www.cacuss.ca/about.htm (March 2016)

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)

There is very little research on academic advising practices in Canada. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) in the US is an association of professional advisors, counselors, faculty, administrators, and students working to enhance the educational development of students. It promotes and supports quality academic advising in institutions of higher education to enhance the educational development of students. NACADA provides a forum for discussion, debate, and the exchange of ideas pertaining to academic advising through numerous activities and publications.

See more at: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/About-Us.aspx#sthash.2VosjY4o.dpuf

From: https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/ (March 2016)

Recommendation 4.

Maintain and enhance developmental advising practices

The Task Force recommends that a focus on developmental advising practices be emphasized in professional development and training opportunities for academic advisors.

Over the past decade, there has been a clear shift in the level and type of service provided to students in interactions with the academic advisors. Owing in part to our Faculty's aim to

enhance the student experience, there has been a growing trend towards fostering students' self-awareness and personal development; that trend is echoed across all departments and divisions in the Faculty.

Transactional advising (providing an answer to a specific question, or solution to a specific problem) should still occur in front-line situations, and front-line student services staff should be empowered to engage in this type of advising. However, the overarching goal of academic advising should be on building relationships with students that can foster their personal and academic growth. Advisors no longer provide the simple rote answer; they provide support and direction while encouraging students to seek information and resources and make decisions on their own. In this way, students are actively engaged in the process and responsible for their own progress and success. (For a more detailed discussion, see Appendix G: NACADA Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising.)

Recommendation 5.

Implement an online academic advising platform for students and advisors

The Task Force recommends that the Faculty create an in-house academic advising platform to meet our unique and decentralized needs, and that a new submission to the Dean's Strategic Fund be prepared to address the development of that platform.

The Task Force repeatedly heard about the lack of a method to systematically follow students through their academic life cycle at the Faculty. First year students are well served by advisors in the First Year Office but then they are handed off to advisors in the departmental offices who have no history of the student. Similarly, the staff in the Registrar's Office have no information trail as to, for example, who has seen the student or what supports such as Accessibility Services have been recommended and put in place.

In 2015, a Dean's Strategic Fund submission to develop an advising platform was put on hold pending the outcome of this Task Force.

The Academic Advising Task Force recommends that the Faculty develop an academic advising platform to provide advisors with a single platform to advise, manage, and provide reporting on students. Implementing this system will allow for better and more proactive advising, which in turn should improve the student experience and continuity of service. The administrative processes of advising, such as scheduling and document/form workflow management, should also be streamlined in this solution to improve access and turnaround time for student requests. Students should be able to access a student view of the academic advising platform for advisement self-service, form submission, and to view academic advising information pertinent to the individual student.

Currently, there is a lack of historical data on students' previous academic advising. In addition, the ability to share academic advising data between departments is limited. In general, academic advisors do not have sufficient technology to support their current processes.

The complete record of a student's history in the Faculty is currently split between several different data sources, including ROSI, Degree Explorer, online petitions, and the academic offense tool. Bringing these systems together would improve the quality of academic advising and minimize the amount of administrative overhead required for academic advisors. External systems may find it difficult to combine information from so many sources; as such, new processes may have to be developed depending on the solution.

Solution Requirements

The platform would:

- be accessible and consistent to multiple levels of stakeholders across the Faculty, such as students, academic advisors, front line staff, financial aid staff, and Registrarial staff
- be provided online to be accessible to all stakeholders
- provide a comprehensive view of the student's academic and non-academic history in the Faculty
- provide proactive advisement to all students similar to the initiative that the First Year Office currently takes, which includes tracking of assignment and test grades, and outreach if grades appear problematic
- allow for notes from the academic advisor to be placed in the new solution, along with communication and follow-up items for students from academic advisors (with the proviso that all notes placed in a student's file are subject to FIPPA access if requested by the student)
- provide facilitation for the administrative aspects of academic advising, such as scheduling appointments, managing documents, moving forms online, and providing student self-service in advising matters
- provide an administrative portal for academic advisors and other staff to manage administrative processes such as form processing, and to provide access and reporting to student records
- integrate with our current repositories for student information, including the petition system, student file, ROSI (or a maintained local copy of student information), as well as with any student information system provided by the Next Generation Student Information System (NGSIS)
- include the framework for a student portal to integrate student tools and focus the student experience, especially if the solution provided is comprised of multiple products
- smoothly integrate after initial configuration to be proactive in its security measures to shield the privacy of student data, especially considering the number of stakeholders involved in the academic advising process

The Task Force examined several off the shelf solutions, which fall broadly into two groups: appointment booking and student advising platforms. Many more systems exist inside of, or rely on, large student information systems such as Ellucian or PeopleSoft; these are not options for integration with ROSI/ACORN. We visited UTM to see a demo of their system and concluded that integration locally would be difficult. We also met with the Registrar of the Faculty of Arts and Science which is in the very early stages of exploring a homegrown system. We concluded that the scale and complexity of their solution (integration with 7 colleges and multiple Faculties), as well as the fact that it will be written in JAVA, make it an unlikely option for our Faculty. There is the potential that several pieces of functionality (portal, communication/notification piece, workflow management) in the admissions process could be repurposed for the academic advising platform.

The Task Force recommends that a new Dean's Strategic Fund submission should be prepared to address the development of the platform.

Recommendation 6.

Create an academic advising steering committee

The Task Force recommends that an academic advising steering committee be created under the Vice Dean, Undergraduate to support and coordinate advising delivery and practice within the Faculty.

Particularly for newly hired advisors, but applicable at all levels, there are several issues. Advisors function in their own departments/division, and may not have the opportunity to learn or interact with the more centralized units or other departments. Important policy and procedure information can be hard to find as it resides in many locations, best practices information may not exist in shareable formats, and at times access to pertinent information can be delayed or the information available can be out of date. Furthermore, new advisors may not know what University-wide information they should be looking for.

An academic advising steering committee should be created to support academic advising as a professional practice in the Faculty. Reporting to the Vice-Dean, Undergraduate, this committee would

- serve as a coordinating body for advising-related initiatives,
- facilitate discussion and work towards standardization of best practices and non-process/student service-driven items,
- coordinate workshops and presentations related to University student services, and
- disseminate relevant ongoing advisor training opportunities available within the University and more broadly.

As a starting point, the committee would

- create and maintain an online "Academic Advisor's Handbook" (see Appendix H for a conceptual framework for such a handbook),
- develop and coordinate a mentoring system for newly hired advisors, and
- coordinate an annual series of University services presentations to all advisors.

Recommendation 7.

Encourage deeper contextual knowledge of Faculty policy and the student experience

The Task Force recommends that advisors have an increased opportunity to engage with students and faculty decision makers in order to foster a more authentic relationship with and provide more relevant and accurate information to students.

Core functions of the academic advisor role are to relay and to explain University policies and procedures to students, and to inform University and Faculty administration of student challenges and concerns. As such, academic advisors act as *de facto* intermediaries between students and the University and Faculty's administration and organizations. When acting in this capacity, advisors may be at a disadvantage because of their reliance on second-hand and derived sources of information. These disadvantages in turn affect the Faculty's ability to support or enhance student experience. Where possible and applicable, Department Chairs, managers, and supervisors should encourage advisors to engage more deeply with activities, meetings, or classes that would provide relevant and beneficial context for their advising role.

Opportunities could include:

- Attending high-impact classes (large enrollment, historically lower average, high drop-out rates)
- Attending Faculty Council meetings
- Attending other Departmental meetings
- Attending and/or assisting with student events such as orientation

Recommendation 8.

Promote the benefits and scope of academic advising to students, staff and faculty through a more comprehensive communications plan

The Task Force recommends that the Faculty adopt strategies to increase advisor visibility and communicate advising services to all undergraduate students.

Despite best efforts from advisors across the Faculty, some students disregard or simply miss targeted messages and other information about the availability and benefits of academic advising. In the student survey, 30% of students replied that they had never seen an academic advisor in person.

Additionally, students are made well aware of the advising resources available to them while in first year through summer transition and orientation programs and through the large common first year courses, but then are not explicitly transitioned to their new academic advisor in second year. Making this transition more explicit throughout and especially towards the end of the first year would create a more seamless transition for students.

Efforts should be made to dispel any sense that students are on their own after first year, as there continues through all 4 years to be exceptional academic advising support. In an effort to address this perceived gap, several strategies have been identified which include a targeted and centralized communications plan, increased visibility of academic advisors at Faculty events including orientation, creation of an advising handbook/resource for students, and improved advising transition support between first and second year.

Recommendation 9.

Identify faculty and other mentors for engineering career related advice

The Task Force recommends that career advising and pathway options be made available and advertised to students.

While career advising (what occurs at the Engineering Career Centre) was deemed outside the scope of the Task Force, the student questionnaire did ask several questions about where students would go to seek advice about careers and/or graduate school. The majority preferred to talk with a professor about career advice. The Task Force recommends that each department/program assign 1-3 professors who would be interested in talking with students about careers and graduate school. This task would be incorporated into the faculty member's workload expectations. The time availability of these professors would be promoted to students through the departmental academic advisor and would include scheduled appointments and some open door hours for drop-ins.

In addition, the Faculty Advancement Office currently has a portfolio of alumni networking opportunities and mentorship events; several departments have partnered with the Office of Advancement to take advantage of these events and to make them more widely accessible to their students. Initiatives such as these should be encouraged. Finally, better exposure and advertising for the services provided through the Engineering Career Centre and the University Career Centre are needed (for example, many students are not aware of the resume and cover letter writing workshops that the two offices provide).

Recommendation 10.

Develop a network of specially trained academic advisors for students encountering sexual violence, harassment or other gender related issues, as well as mental health issues

The Task Force recommends that one academic advisor from each advising area be specially trained in matters that relate to sexual violence awareness, harassment, equity, sexual and gender diversity, and mental health resources on campus.

All academic advisors should be able to identify students in distress and make a referral to the appropriate support service. The University is in the process of creating a "Personal Safety, High Risk & Sexual Violence Prevention & Support Office" which will better coordinate high risk cases, and once that office is in place, it is important to use this resource.

The final report of the "Presidential and Provostial Committee on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence" (2016) recommends "ongoing professional development and education for faculty and staff, including up to date information on appropriate resources, and strategies for how to refer students and employees in need of appropriate supports."

The report identified the current state where the affected party often has to tell their story repeatedly before landing at the correct office. We recommend that every department, the FYO and the OFR should have one staff member identified as the **expert** resource on these issues, and have that person presented to students at departmental welcome and orientation events. These specialized advisors would have specific training provided by University experts; as such, they would be able to assess situations of students in distress and make a speedy referral to the correct university resource-ultimately streamlining the process for students. They would also serve as an excellent local resource for the other academic advisors.

References

Folsom, P., Joslin, J. & Yoder, F. (2005). From advisor training to advisor development: Creating a blueprint for first-year advisors. Retrieved from the *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* Web site, available at: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Training-Blueprint-for-New-Advisors.aspx

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Student Survey

A Task Force to Review Academic and Student Advising has been created by Faculty Council to look at how the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering can best support its students. The focus is on the academic advising/counselling staff that you would find in every department and in the First Year Office. These staff members typically advise on matters such as: course selection, add/drops, petitions, rules and regulations, progress, leaves, PEY, financial concerns, etc. They also provide referrals where appropriate to other University resources.

The survey does not deal with advisors/counsellors that are external to the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering (e.g. Health and Wellness or CAPS).

We would appreciate if you could take 5 minutes to complete this anonymous survey. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

What year are you in?

What program are you in?

I identify my gender as:

Are you an international visa student?

How many times do you estimate that you have used the services of an academic advisor/counsellor?

○	○	○	○	○
Never	1-3 times	4-10 times	11-20 times	More than 20

On average, how long did you have to wait to see an advisor?

Immediately _____

Within 1 day _____

Within 2 days_____

Within 3 days_____

Within 1 week_____

Within 2 weeks_____

Academic Regulations

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following topics?

Help with course selection

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Course add/drop

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Timelines/deadlines

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Explanation of academic policies

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Continuation of Study

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following topics?

Appeals

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Petitions

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Re-enrolment

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Personal Issues

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following topics?

Personal/relationship/family issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Health-related issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Financial issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Referrals to other resources on campus

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Other

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following topics?

Program transfer

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

International exchange

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

PEY

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Career Advice

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Communication Methods

How have you accessed academic advising/counselling services?

Email / Online

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
○	○	○	○	○

In-Person

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
○	○	○	○	○

Phone

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
○	○	○	○	○

Evaluation of Programs/Services Offered

I am satisfied with the service I received from the academic advisor/counsellor.

Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
○	○	○	○	○

I was comfortable talking with the academic advisor/counsellor.

Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
○	○	○	○	○

I felt respected by the academic advisor/counsellor.

Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
○	○	○	○	○

I am confident in the advice I received from the academic advisor/counsellor.

Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
○	○	○	○	○

If you were seeking career advice, or advice about graduate school, who would you most likely consult with? (Select any that apply)

A professor

A teaching assistant

Parents/family

Friends

An academic advisor/counselor

The Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering Career Center

The internet

Other _____

What is your preference for accessing academic advising services?

Walk in/drop in

Booked appointment

Email/online

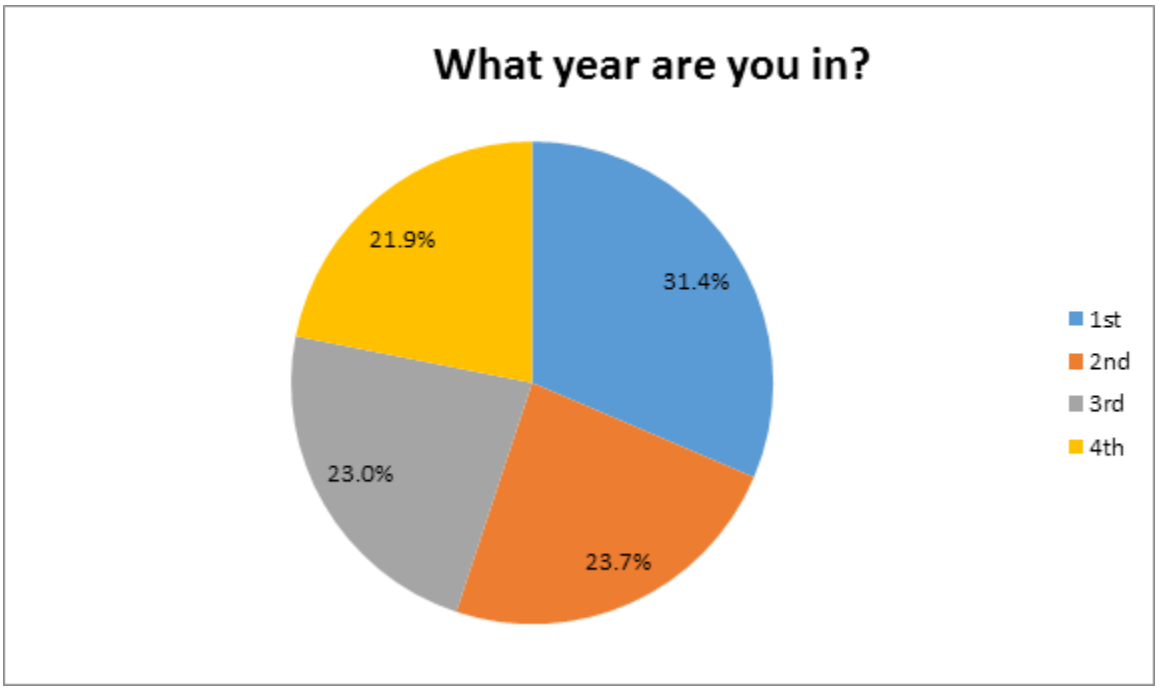
Phone

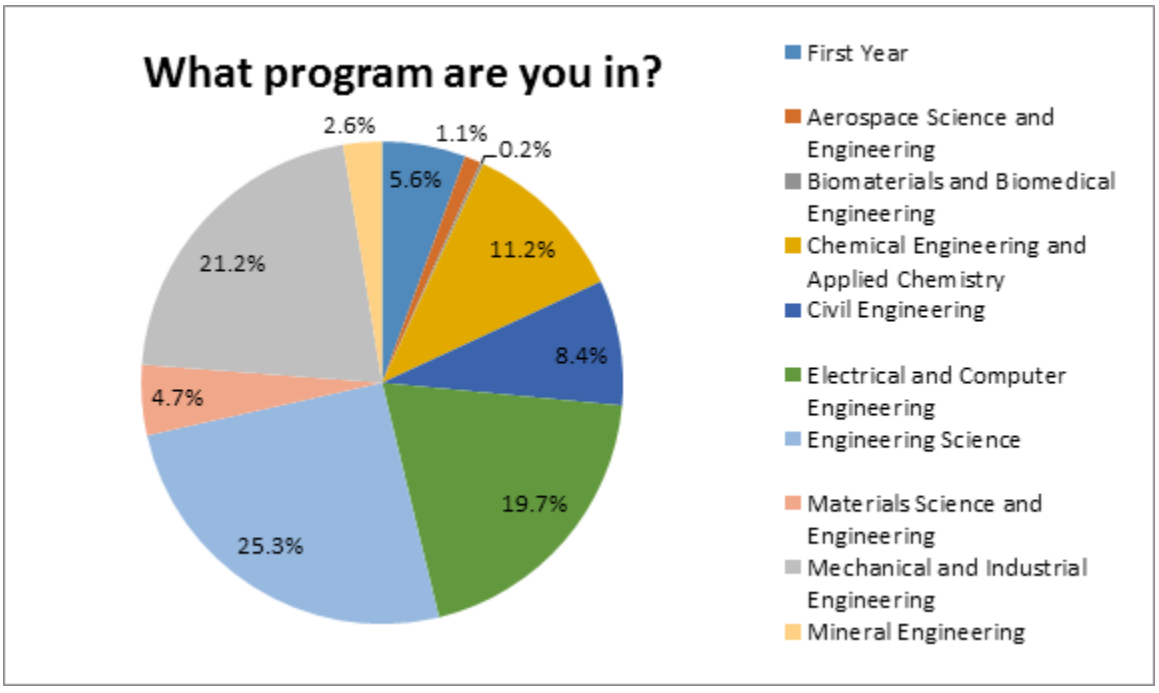
If the Faculty had an on-line system to book an appointment with an advisor/counsellor would this be helpful?

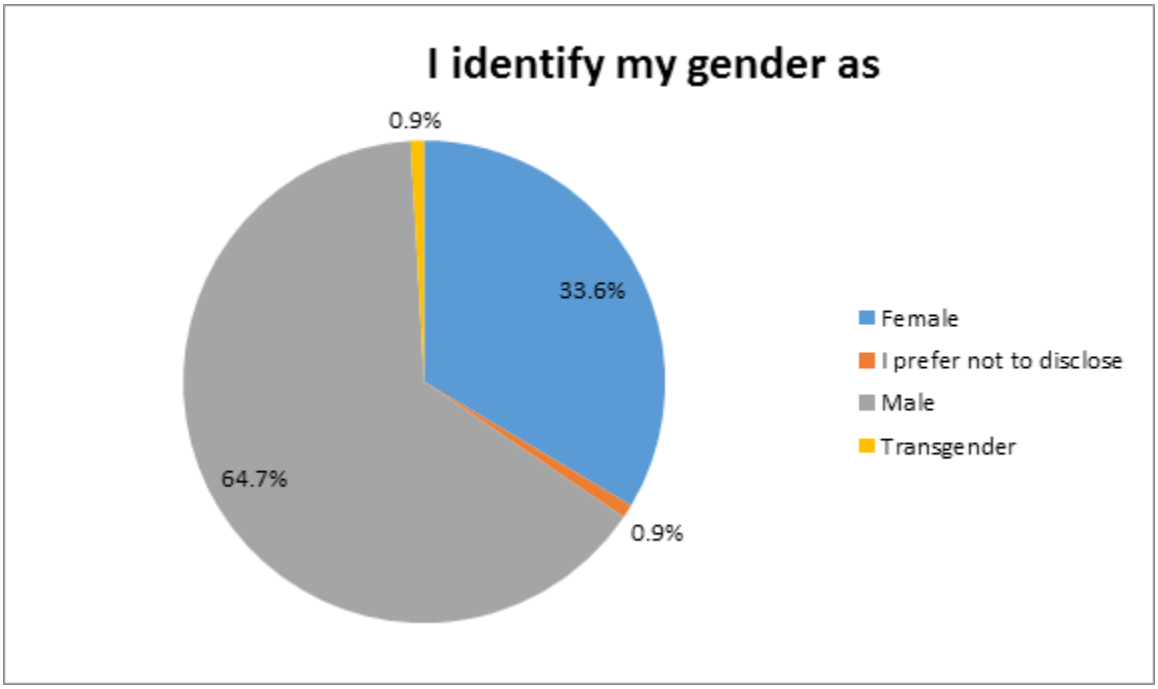
○	○	○
Not at all helpful	Neutral	Very helpful

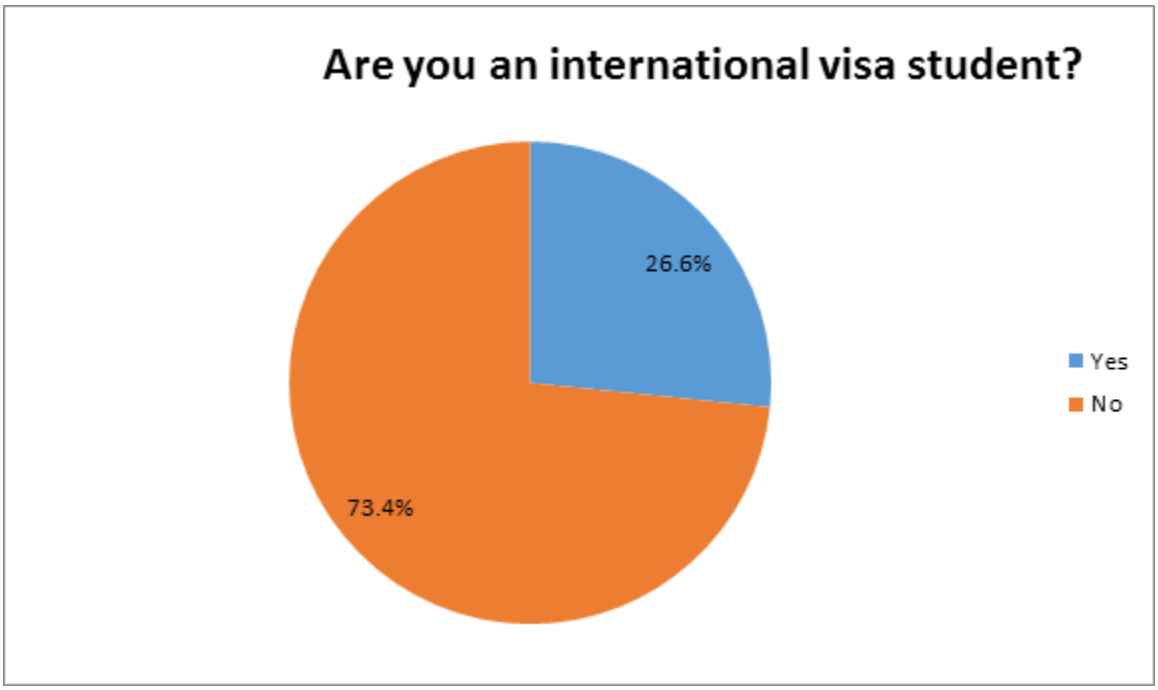
Do you have any other thoughts about academic and student advising at the Faculty that you would like to share with the Task Force?

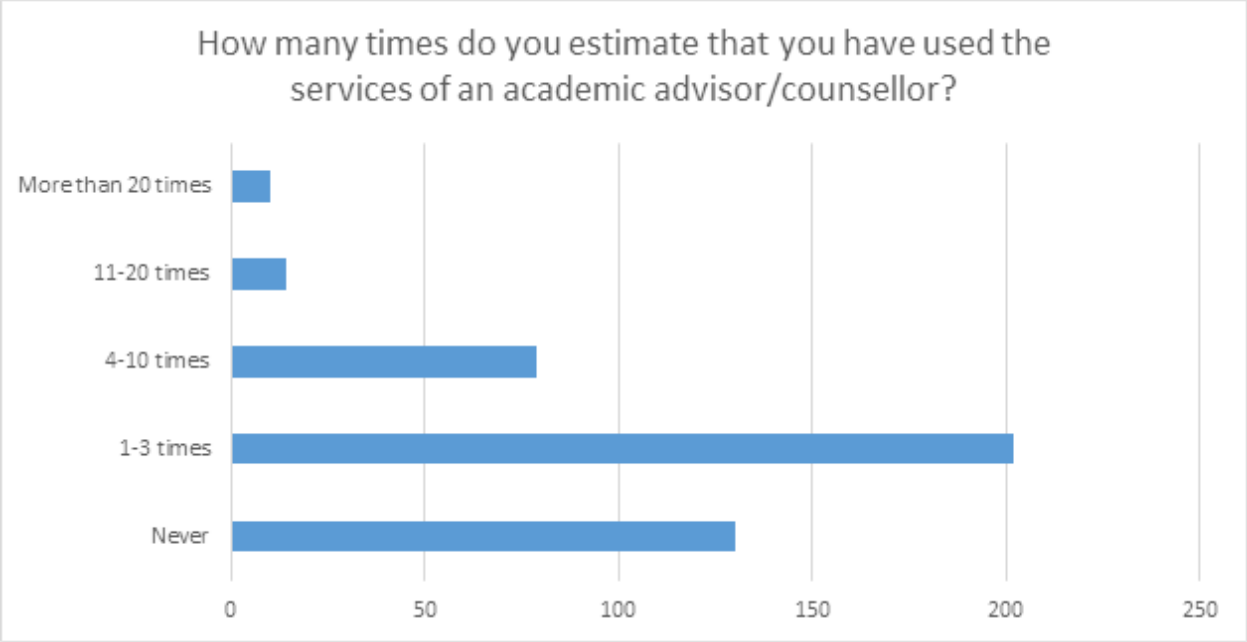
Appendix B: Student Survey Results

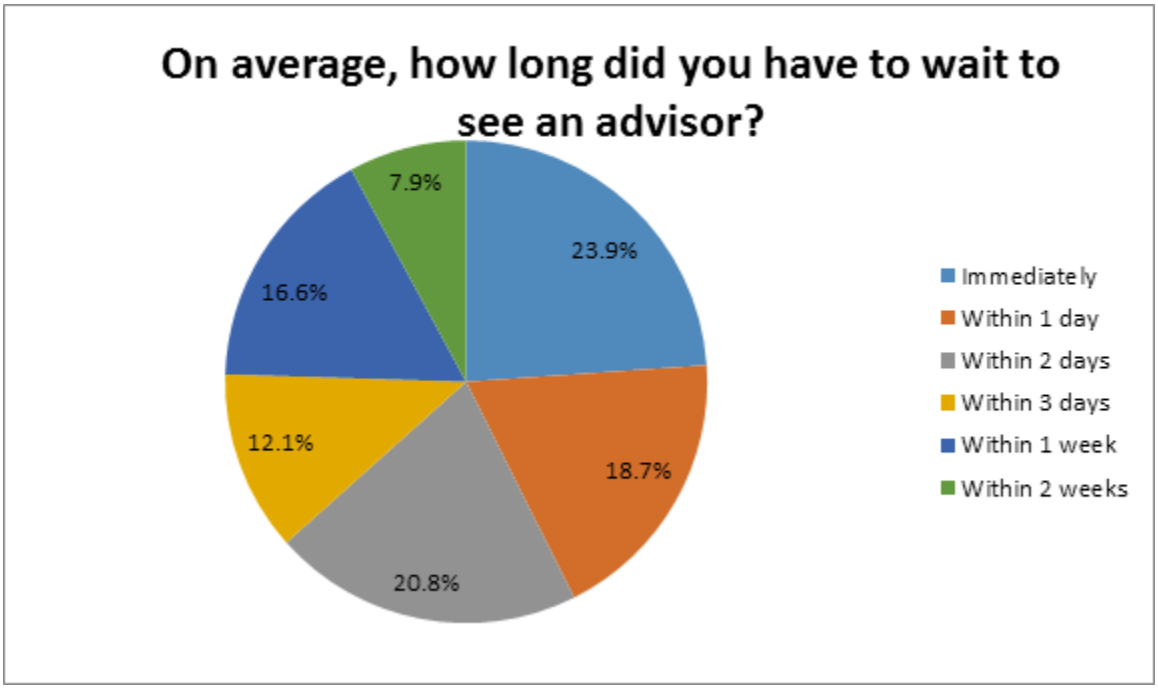


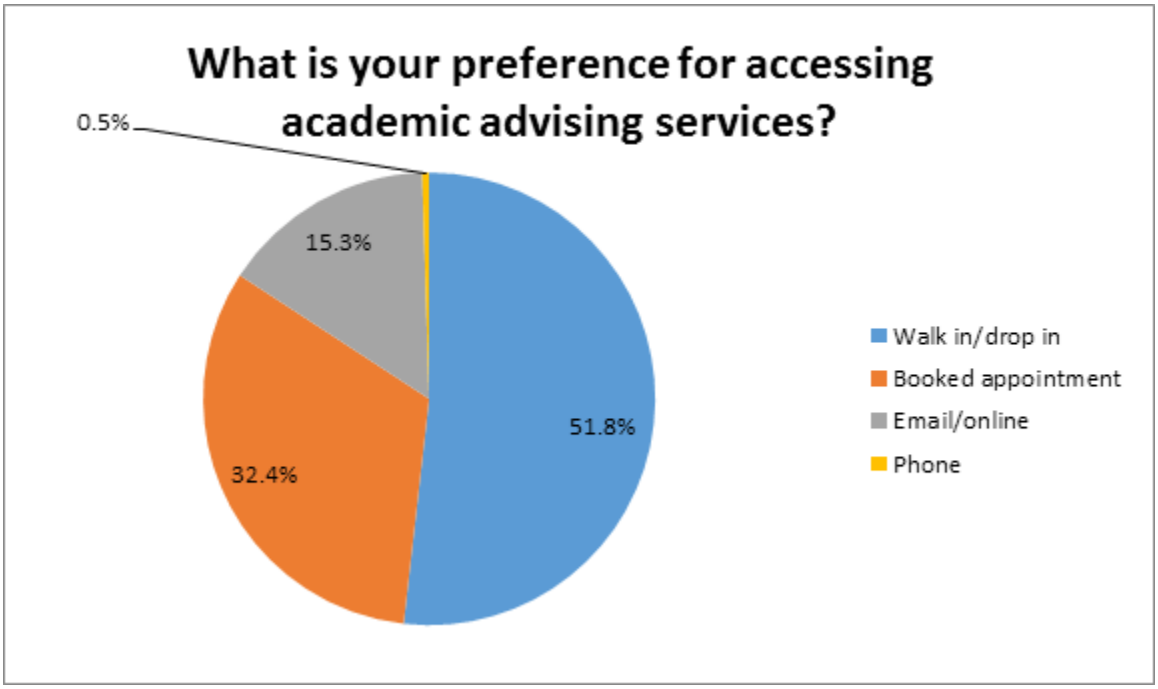


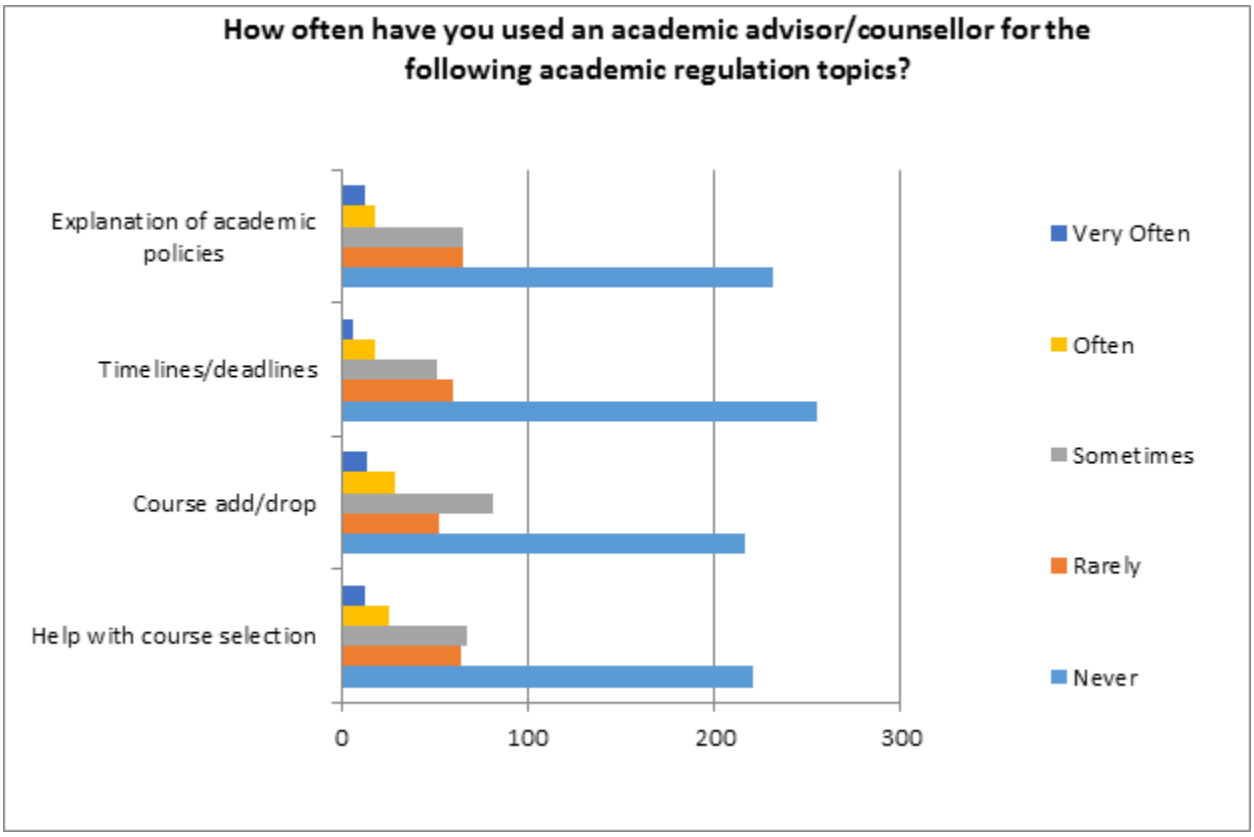

I identify my gender as
0.9%
33.6%
64.7%
0.9%
Female
I prefer not to disclose
Male
Transgender

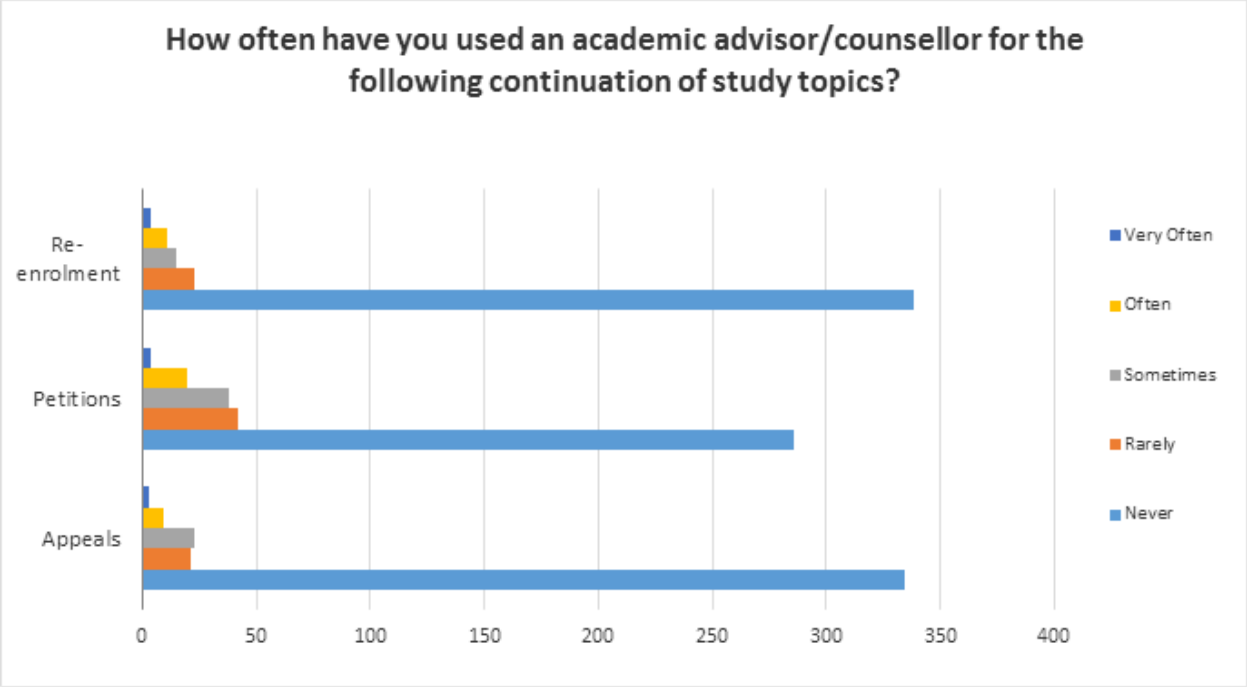

Are you an international visa student?
26.6%
73.4%
Yes
No

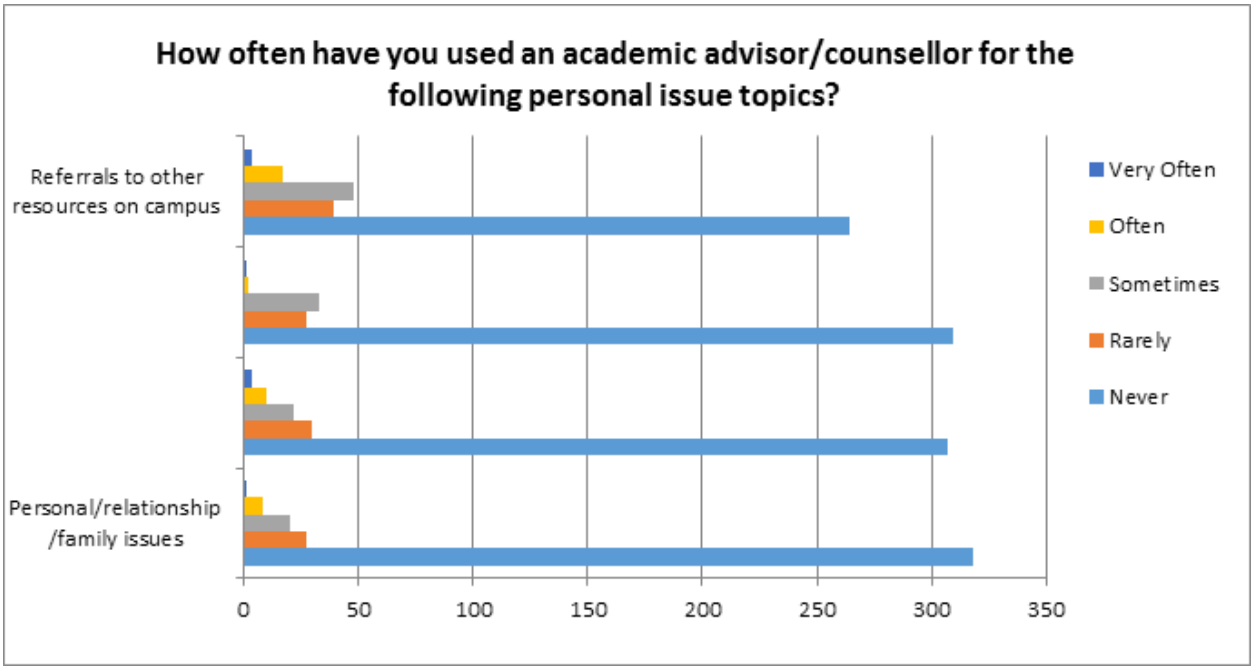

How many times do you estimate that you have used the services of an academic advisor/counsellor?
More than 20 times
11-20 times
4-10 times
1-3 times
Never
0
50
100
150
200
250

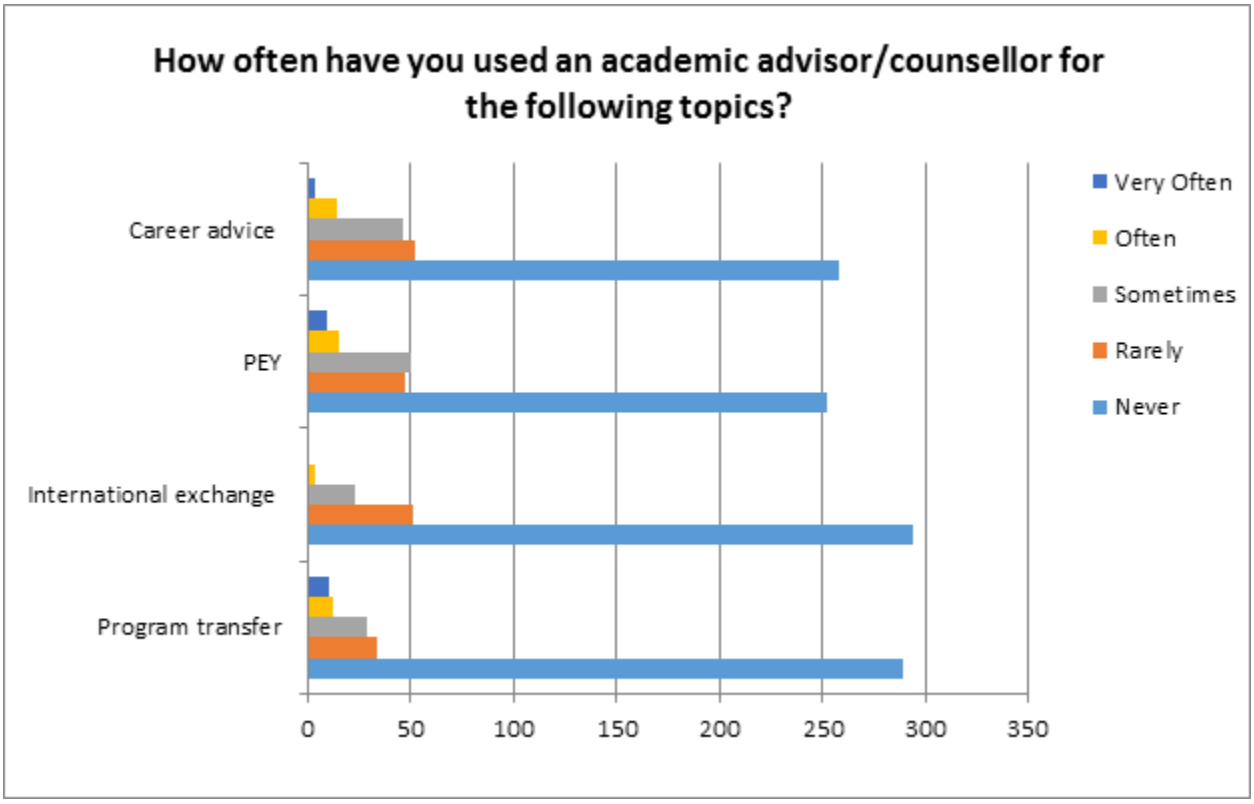

On average, how long did you have to wait to see an advisor?
23.9%
18.7%
20.8%
12.1%
16.6%
7.9%
Immediately
Within 1 day
Within 2 days
Within 3 days
Within 1 week
Within 2 weeks

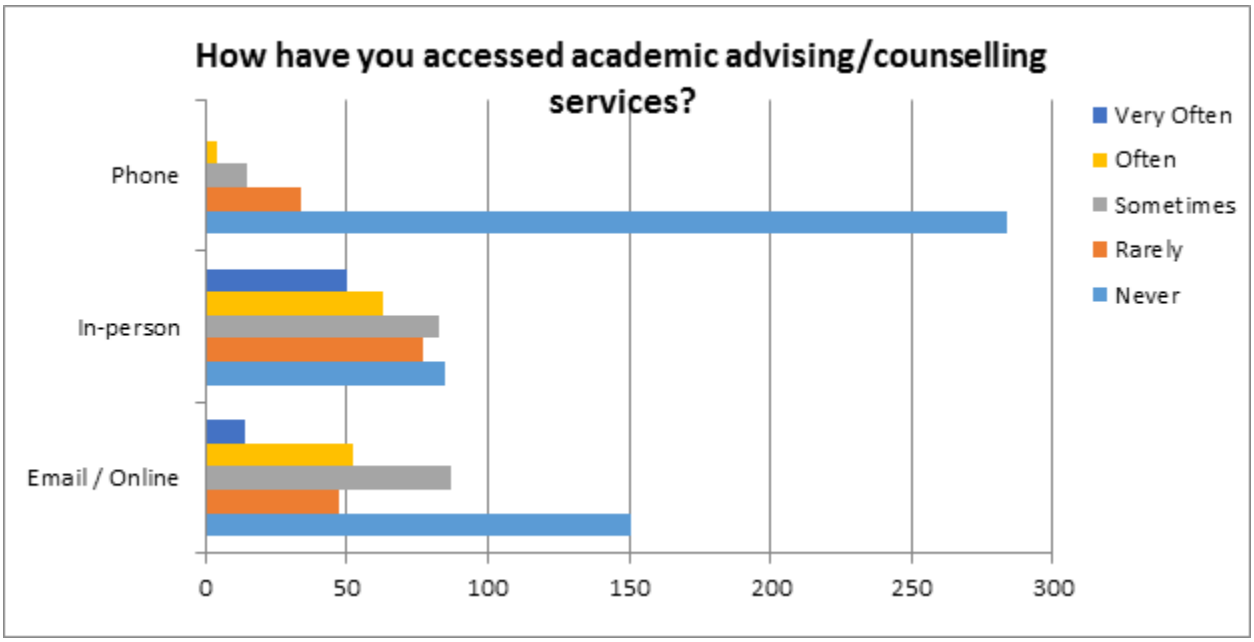

What is your preference for accessing academic advising services?
0.5%
15.3%
51.8%
32.4%
Walk in/drop in
Booked appointment
Email/online
Phone

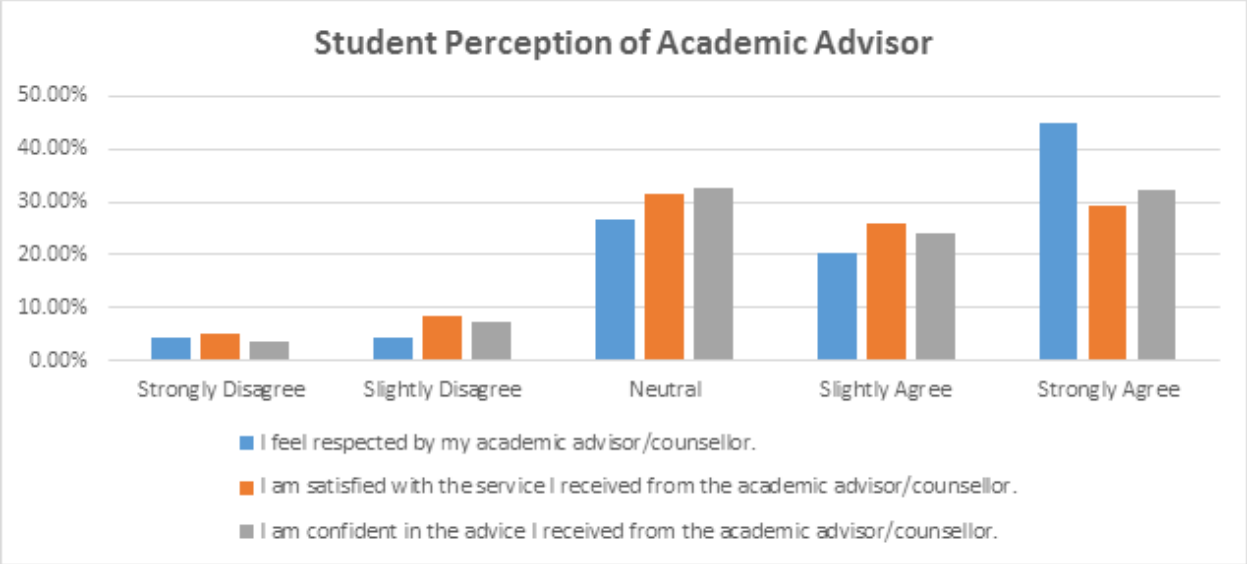

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following academic regulation topics?
Explanation of academic policies
Timelines/deadlines
Course add/drop
Help with course selection
0
100
200
300
Very Often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

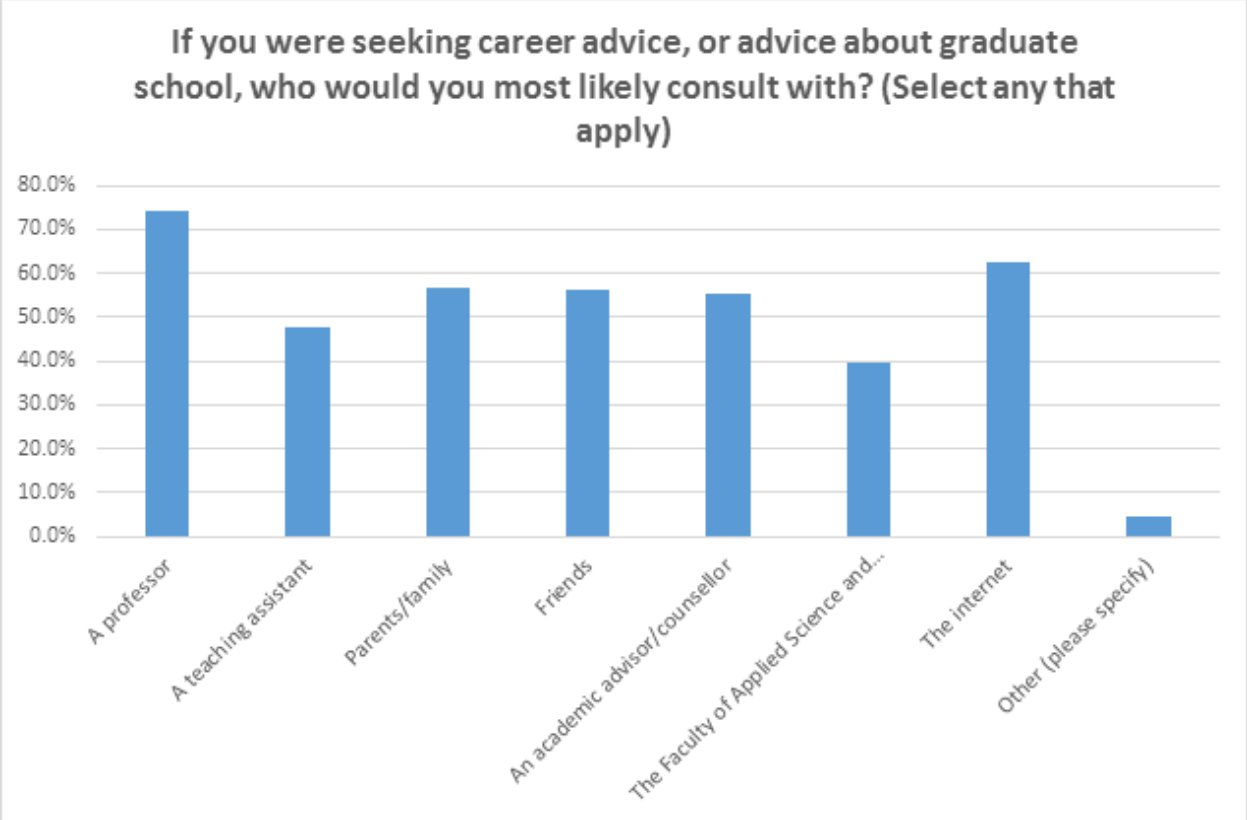

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following continuation of study topics?
Re-enrolment
Petitions
Appeals
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
Very Often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

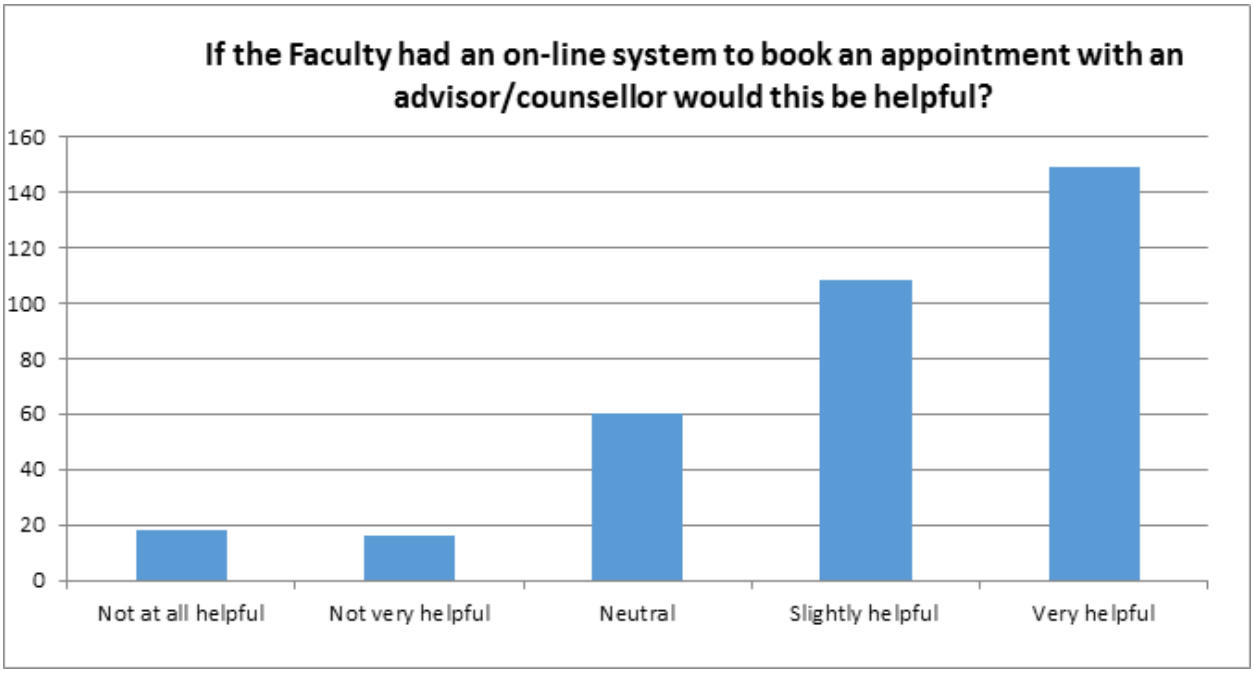

How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following personal issue topics?
Referrals to other resources on campus
Personal/relationship /family issues
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
Very Often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never


How often have you used an academic advisor/counsellor for the following topics?
Career advice
PEY
International exchange
Program transfer
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
Very Often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never


How have you accessed academic advising/counselling services?
Phone
In-person
Email / Online
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
Very Often
Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Never


Student Perception of Academic Advisor
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
Strongly Disagree
Slightly Disagree
Neutral
Slightly Agree
Strongly Agree
I feel respected by my academic advisor/counsellor.
I am satisfied with the service I received from the academic advisor/counsellor.
I am confident in the advice I received from the academic advisor/counsellor.


If you were seeking career advice, or advice about graduate school, who would you most likely consult with? (Select any that apply)
80.0%
70.0%
60.0%
50.0%
40.0%
30.0%
20.0%
10.0%
0.0%
A professor
A teaching assistant
Parents/family
Friends
An academic advisor/counsellor
The Faculty of Applied Science and...
The internet
Other (please specify)


If the Faculty had an on-line system to book an appointment with an advisor/counsellor would this be helpful?
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
Not at all helpful
Not very helpful
Neutral
Slightly helpful
Very helpful

Appendix C: Advisor Headcount and Roles

Advisors in each of the departments/divisions were asked about the number of staff they have doing advising, the percentage of time allocated to advising in his/her job description, and whether or not that percentage accurately reflects the amount of time spent in advising. The results are presented, below. Note that, across the Faculty, the Associate Chairs provide assistance for complex matters.

Dept	Number of students in years 2-4	Number of staff doing advising	Percentage of time devoted to advising per Job Description	Is the percentage accurate?
MIE	1,113 (MEC 740, IND 373)	1 advisor 2 front-line staff	35% Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	This time accurately reflects the sit-down/walk-in student appointments, but in addition there is email advising and proactive email communication advising for the entire MIE student body. Also depends on the time of the year.
CIV/MIN	493 (CIV 406, LME 87)	1 advisor 1 front-line staff	30% Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	We have tried to be more proactive with advising and call in those that are returning PRO2 or continual petitioners on a regular basis so there has been more advising in the last couple of years I would say advising is at least 50% of my day to day.
ECE	1251 (673 Electrical, 578 CPE)	2 advisors 2 front-line staff	1 x 35% 1 x 10% Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	Difficult to estimate as it happens in waves. Some periods are busier than others with heavy or light student traffic.

ENG SCI	997 students	2 advisors 1 front-line staff	1 x 90% (Yr1-2) 1 x 60% (Yr3-4) Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	Yes
CHEM	410	1 advisor 1 front-line staff	Not broken down in job description	I spend ~60% of my job advising. Responding to student emails and drop in appointments, and other day to day student inquiries, do take up the majority of my day.
MSE	139	1 UG advisor	1 x 50%	Too new in position to determine
First Year Office	950	3 advisors 1 front-line staff	1 x 20% 1 X 30% 1 x 60% Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	Yes
FRO	5000	1 Financial Advisor 2 front-line staff	1 x 50% Answer student inquiries in addition to other duties	Yes

Appendix D: Advisor Survey

As part of the Mandate of the Task Force to Review Academic and Student Advising, members of a sub-group have developed a survey for departmental/division advisors in order to assess the scope of advising across the Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering. Your feedback will be used to identify and prioritize enhancements to academic and student advising. It will also help us to identify if there are any training and professional development needs for new and current advisors.

We would appreciate if you could take 15-20 minutes to complete the survey. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Personal Issues

How often do you advise students on the following topics?

Personal/family issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Health-related issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Immediate crisis requiring intervention

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Financial issues

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Referrals to other resources on campus

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Continuation of Study

How often do you advise students on the following topics?

Appeals

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Petitions

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Re-enrolment

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Academic Regulations

How often do you advise students on the following topics?

Course selection

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Course add/drop

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Timelines/deadlines

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Academic policies

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Other

How often do you advise students on the following topics?

Program transfer

○	○	○	○	○

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

International exchange

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

PEY

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Communication Methods

Phone

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

How many students do you advise on a weekly basis during 'peak' times (i.e., beginning of registration, midterms, etc.)?

How often do students seek advising through the following channels?

Email / Online

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

In-Person

○	○	○	○	○
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Number per week _____

How many students do you advise on a weekly basis during 'off-peak' times?

Number per week _____

During peak times, on average, how long do students wait to see an advisor?

Immediately _____

Within 1 day _____

Within 2 days_____

Within 3 days_____

Within 1 week_____

Within 2 weeks_____

Evaluation of Programs/Services Offered

I am satisfied with my ability to provide timely and effective advising given other responsibilities.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

I am aware of other advising practices and models that would enhance the student experience.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

I implement self-care strategies to manage stress related to student advising.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

I receive support to manage stress related to student advising.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

Additional training would be beneficial for my advising responsibilities.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

Professional development opportunities would be beneficial for my advising responsibilities.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

Additional support would be beneficial for my advising responsibilities.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

My current position description accurately reflects my actual duties.

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Strongly Disagree Slightly Disagree Neutral Slightly Agree Strongly Agree

Training and Support

What types of training are provided (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are available to you within your department?

What types of training are provided (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are available to you within the Faculty?

What types of training are provided (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are available to you within the University?

Are you satisfied with the training offered by the University?

Yes No

Are there any training and professional development opportunities that you would like to see?

Are you encouraged and given time to attend training?

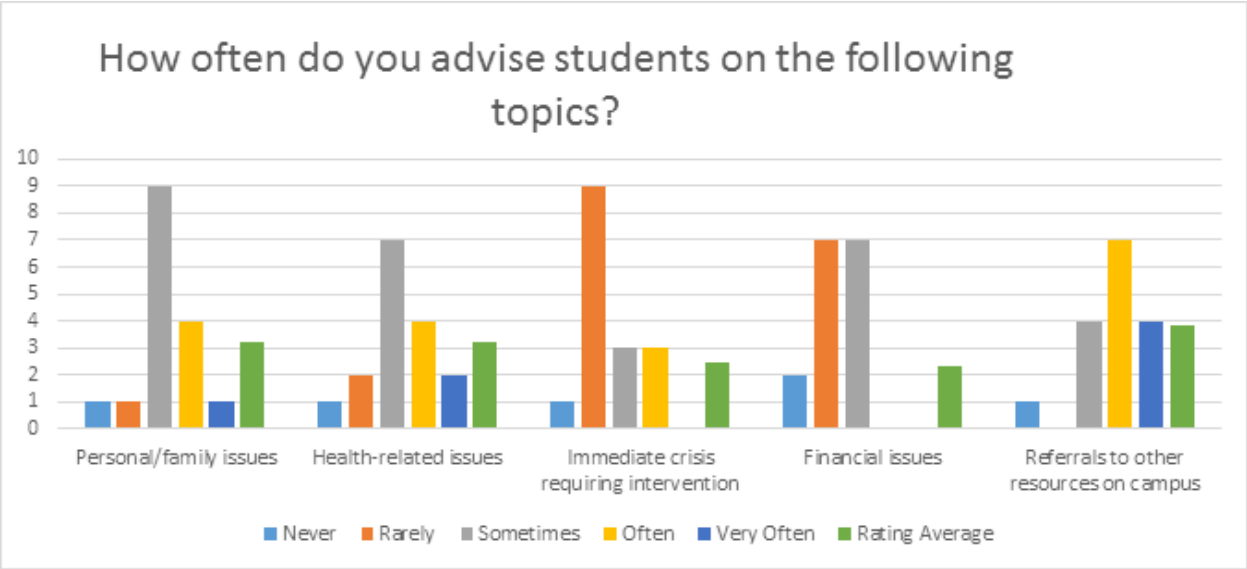
Yes No

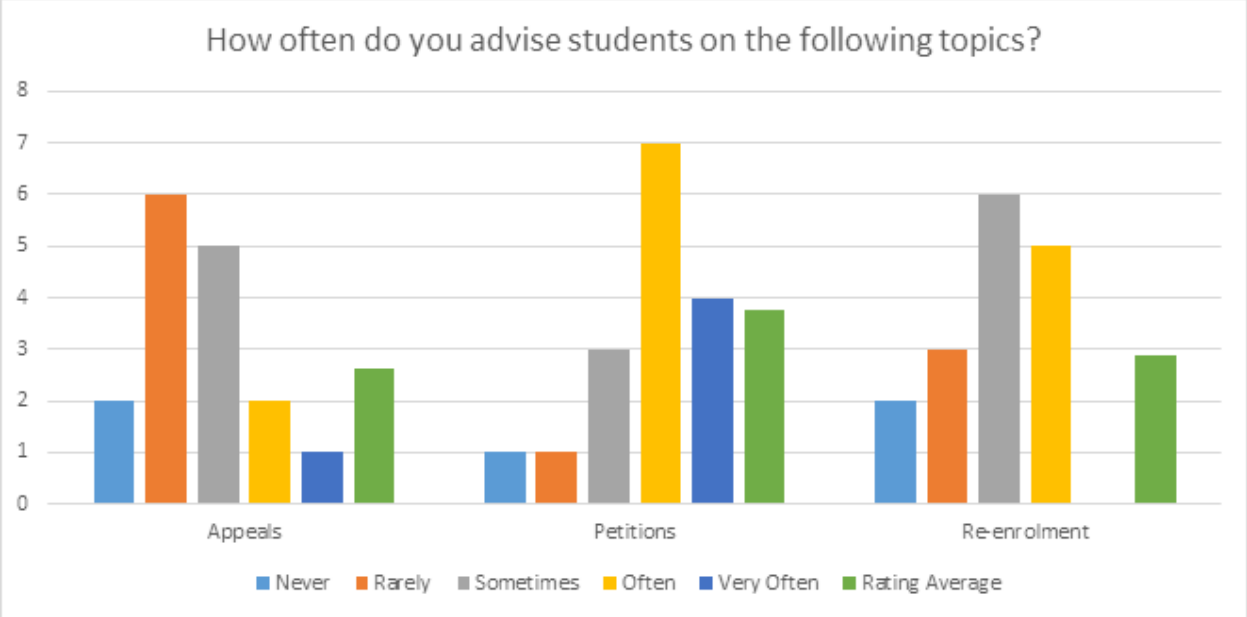
Are you satisfied with the level of support provided given your responsibilities?

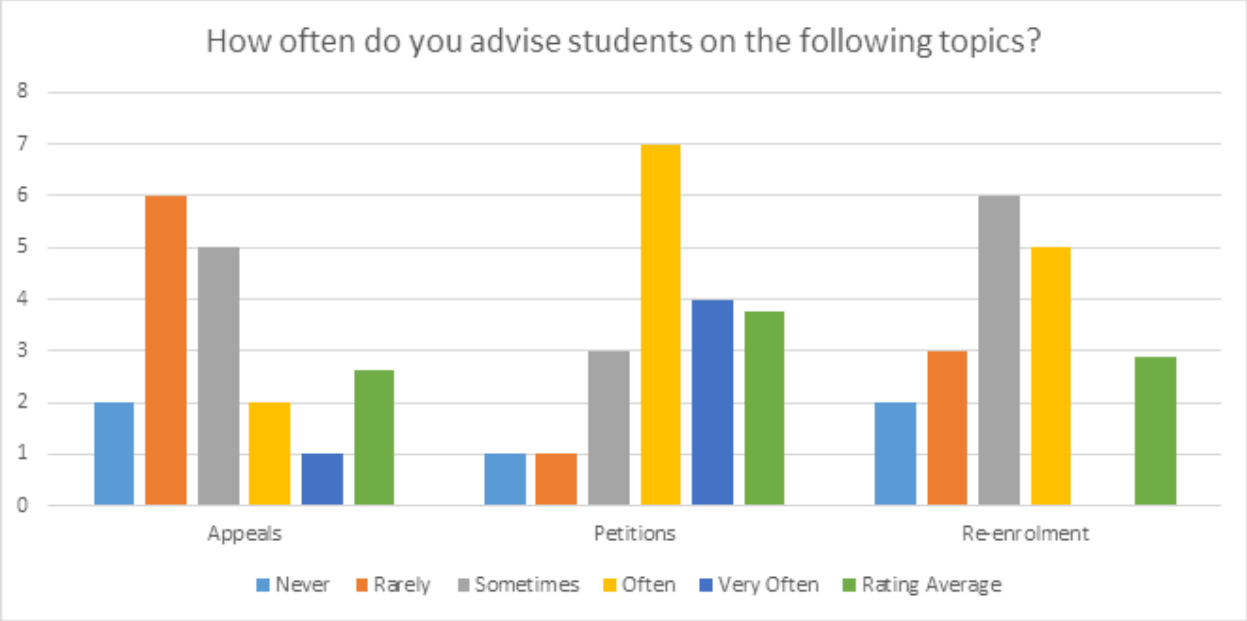
Yes No

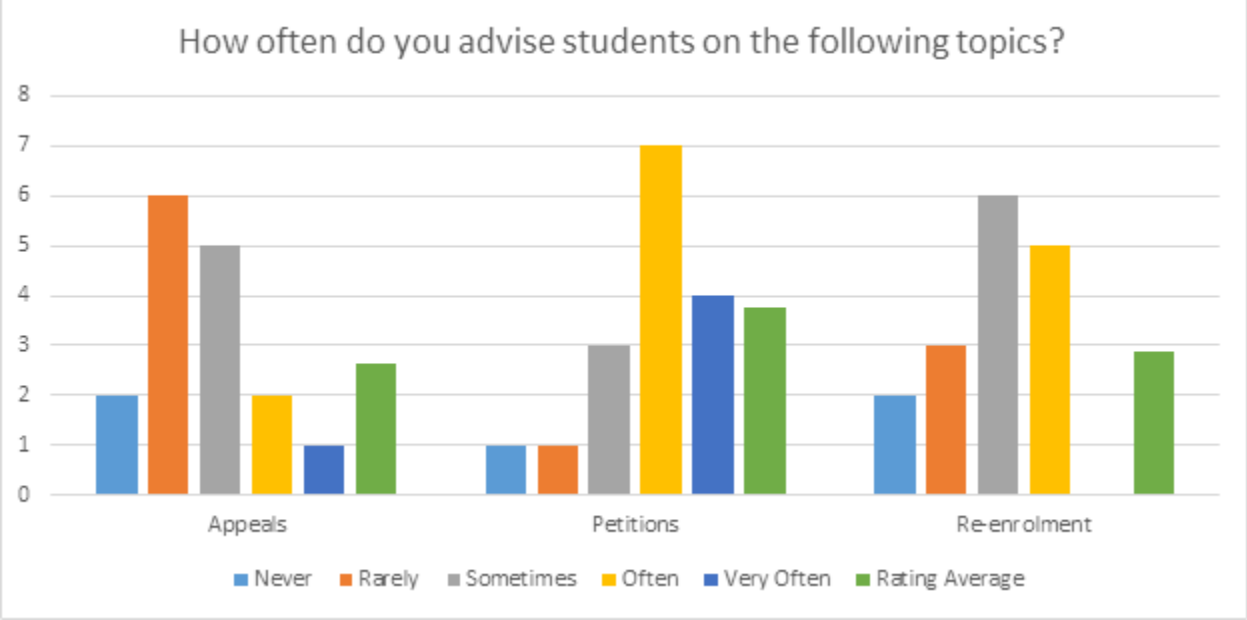
Do you have any other thoughts for the task force?

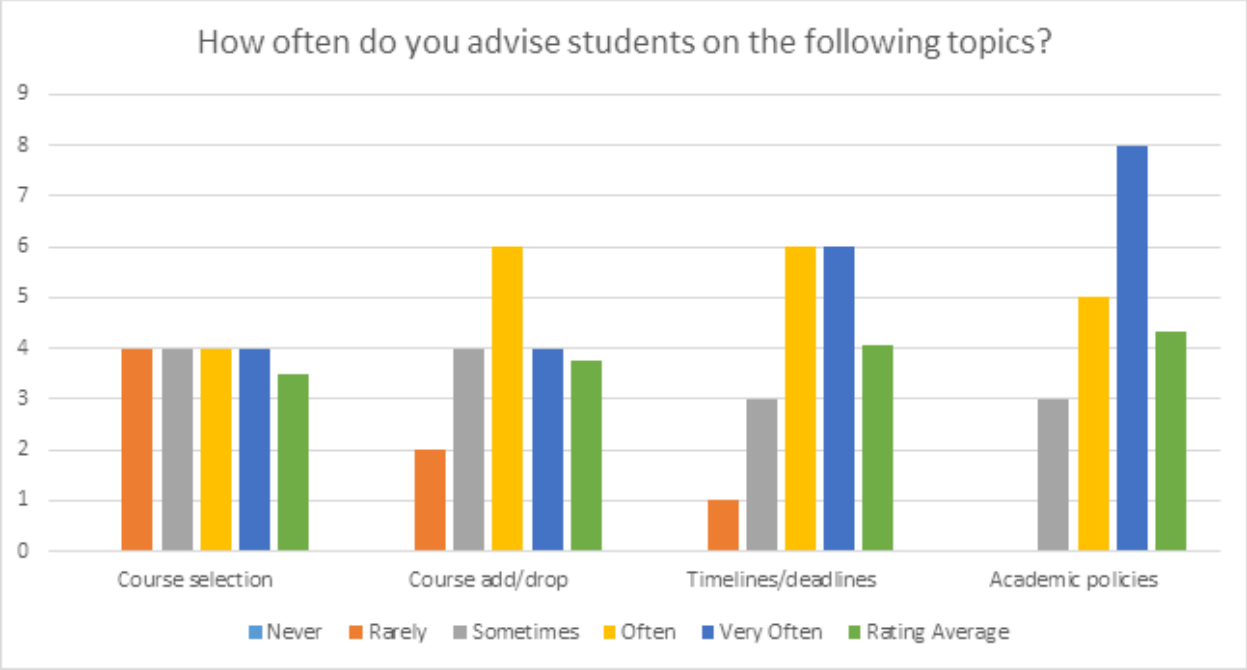
Appendix E: Advisor Survey Results

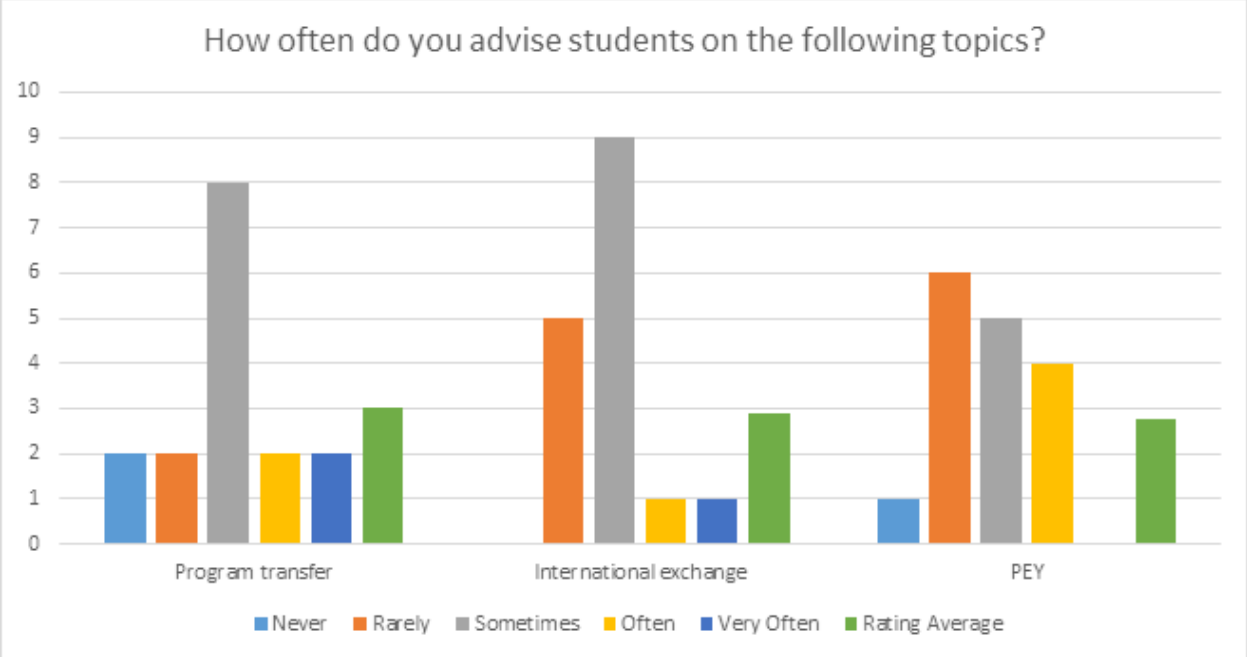


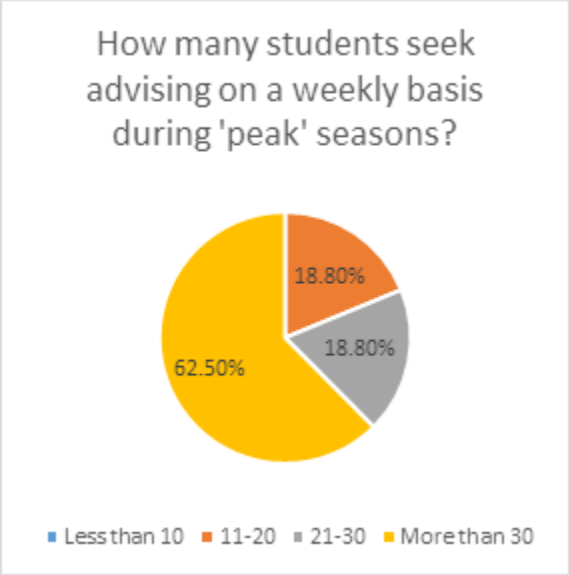


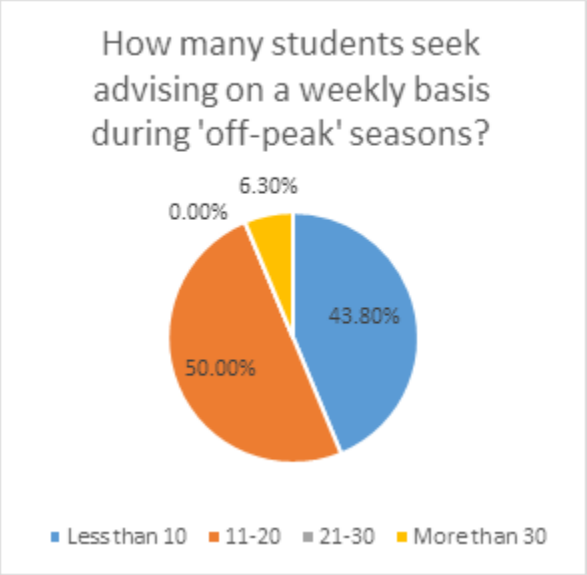

How often do you advise students on the following topics?
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Appeals
Petitions
Re-enrolment
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very Often
Rating Average


How often do you advise students on the following topics?
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Appeals
Petitions
Re-enrolment
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very Often
Rating Average

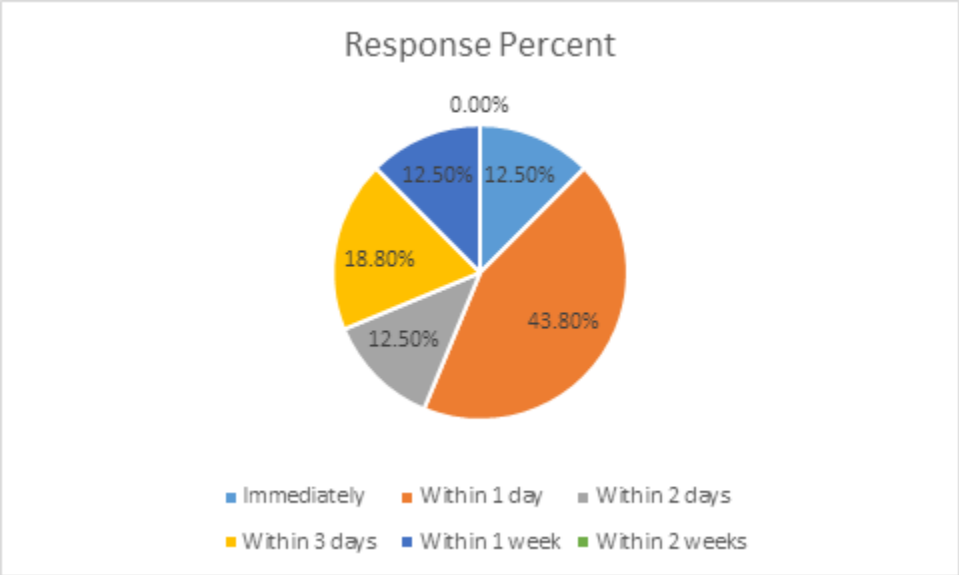

How often do you advise students on the following topics?
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Course selection
Course add/drop
Timelines/deadlines
Academic policies
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very Often
Rating Average


How often do you advise students on the following topics?
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Program transfer
International exchange
PEY
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very Often
Rating Average

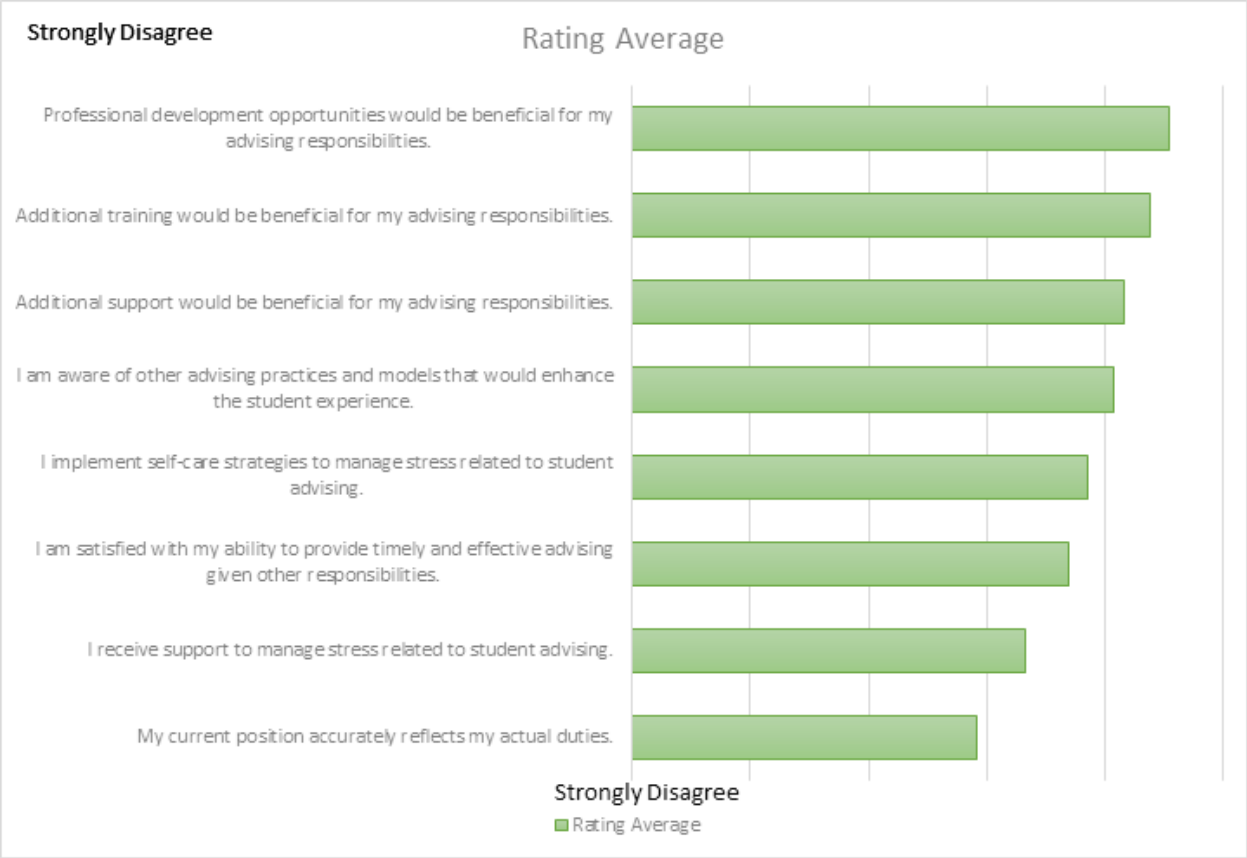


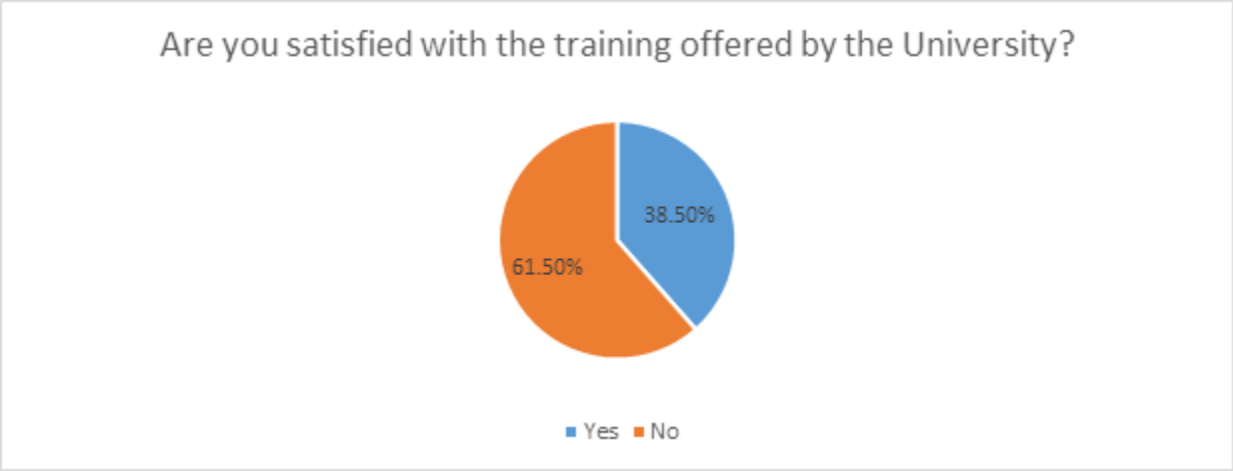


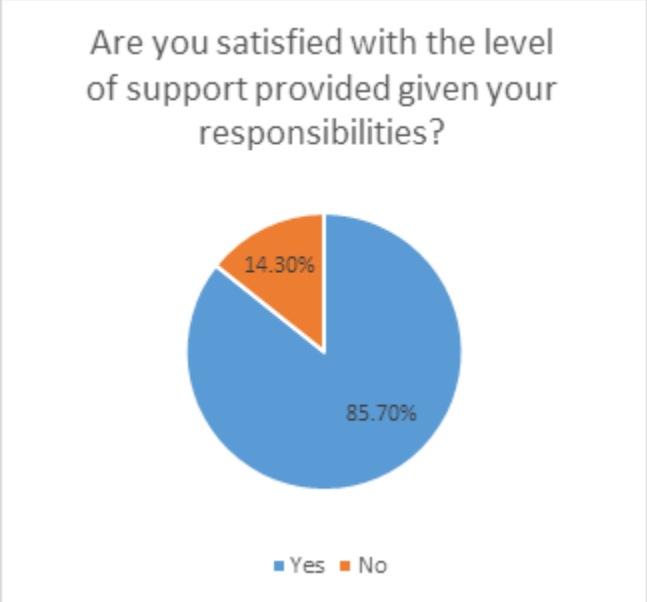
Q8. On average, how long to students wait to see an advisor during 'peak' seasons?



Q9 & Q10. Advisor Self-Evaluation







Q 11. What types of training (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are provided/available to you within your department?

Findings:

* Common initial training techniques are job shadowing, manual created by prior advisor

* Advisors rely on staff/colleagues/associate chair for gaps in policy training

Q 12. What types of training (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are provided/available to you within the faculty?

Findings:

* Engagement & Development Network has high engagement rate with advisors

* Consultation with other members in advising community in faculty mentioned

* Very little training on technical tools provided for academic advisors

Q 13. What types of training (both initially upon appointment and on an ongoing basis) are provided/available to you within the University?

Findings

* OLDC mentioned frequently – have provided workshops on time management, stress management, delivering bad news

* Very low engagement of other opportunities available through the University

* Awareness of other activities on campus not widely mentioned – individual responses mention different opportunities around campus but little consensus other than OLDC

Q15. Are there any training and professional development opportunities that you would like to see?

Findings

* Development of a standardized set of guidelines for best practices and strategies is most common request

* An additional certification or other University-level training and resource sharing community is also frequently mentioned

* Most proposed method for meeting these goals is for advisors to engage in professional communities and national seminars

Appendix F: Professional Development Resources for Academic Advisors

The University of Toronto Organizational Development and Learning Centre (ODLC)

The University of Toronto ODLC offers a number of short term, ungraded courses and workshops. The offerings tend to be quite short in duration (as little as two hours) and are generally free of charge. Individual offerings remain very popular with staff. Many of the topics covered are very applicable to the work undertaken by an academic advisor.

The following is a sample list of recent ODLC offerings:

- Coaching: A Leadership Skill
- Persuasive Communications
- Practicing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace
- Understanding Student Mental Health
- Communication and Conflict
- Identifying and Referring Students in Difficulty
- Supporting Students Demonstrating “Difficult” Behaviour
- Assertiveness: Negotiating Respectful Interpersonal Boundaries
- Customer Service: more than the basics

The University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies (SCS)

The SCS offers a huge array of non-credit courses, many of which are applicable to the academic advising skill set. These courses all have an evaluation component and typically run for 15 or more hours. SCS does not currently offer a certificate specifically in academic advising or student services, however we have had a very preliminary discussion with the current Director of the SCS about the possibility of packaging a Student Services/Advising certificate. The Director of the University ODLC has offered to assist with this exploration.

Courses recently offered include:

- Effective Communication & Negotiation
- Communicating Strategically
- Conflict Management Skills
- Understanding & Managing Conflict
- Critical Thinking: Essentials and Advanced
- Social Media Strategy
- Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Compliance (FIPP)

(See http://learn.utoronto.ca/interactive-course-search#/results)

We should continue discussions with SCS and if it decides to offer a certificate in advising, it could be of great interest to the hundreds of ‘advisors’ of all types within the University, not to mention the other universities and colleges in the region. The University has a staff subsidy of $500 per course; staff can take three or four courses per year. Follow-up is needed with SCS.

Seneca College

Seneca College has developed a 5 course certificate program in Student Affairs and Services. According to their website the fully “online certificate provides […] the knowledge and skills necessary to be an effective practitioner in College and University Student Affairs and Services today. The curriculum offers the opportunity for theory and practice as well as application and refinement.” The courses include:

- Student Development and Student Experience
- Function and Organization in Student Affairs
- Learning and the Student Learner
- Advising and Supporting Students
- Administration and Management in Student Affairs

The program is currently under review with the expectation that it will resume admission in 2017. (See http://www.senecacollege.ca/ce/community/social-services/student-affairs.html)

The Seneca program would be excellent for academic advisors wanting a broad overview of the field. This program has the advantage of being fully online so advisors can complete it at their own pace. Courses cost approximately $350 per course.

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)

For staff seeking a formal degree in the student services field, OISE offers a M.Ed. in Higher Education in Student Development and Student Services in Postsecondary Education.

The Master's program allows students to "acquire knowledge and skills that are evidence and experientially-based to provide leadership in various types of institutions throughout Canada. Graduates will be able to apply theory to meaningful practice and construct, implement, and assess programs and processes that address issues of student growth and development." (See http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/lhae/Programs/Higher_Education/Degrees_Offered/Student_Development_and_Student_Services.html)

Academic Advisors who are considering pursuing a graduate degree should be encouraged to explore this opportunity as it is offered locally, is student service focused and qualifies for financial support (tuition waiver) from the university.

Appendix G: NACADA: STATEMENT OF CORE VALUES OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Core Value 1: Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise.

- Academic advising is an integral part of the educational process and affects students in numerous ways. As advisors enhance student learning and development, advisees have the opportunity to become participants in and contributors to their own education. In one of the most important potential outcomes of this process, academic advising fosters individual potential.
- Regular student contact through in-person appointments, mail, telephone, E-mail, or other computer-mediated systems helps advisors gain meaningful insights into students' diverse academic, social, and personal experiences and needs. Advisors use these insights to assist students as they transition to new academic and social communities, develop sound academic and career goals, and ultimately, become successful learners.
- Advisors recognize and respect that students' diverse backgrounds are comprised of their ethnic and racial heritage, age, gender, sexual orientation, and religion, as well as their physical, learning, and psychological abilities. Advisors help students develop and reinforce realistic self-perceptions and help them use this information in mapping out their futures.
    - Advisors introduce and assist students with their transitions to the academic world by helping them see value in the learning process, gain perspective on the college experience, become more responsible and accountable, set priorities and evaluate their progress, and uphold honesty with themselves and others about their successes and limitations.
    - Advisors encourage self-reliance and support students as they strive to make informed and responsible decisions, set realistic goals, and develop lifelong learning and self-management skills.
    - Advisors respect students' rights to their individual beliefs and opinions.
    - Advisors guide and teach students to understand and apply classroom concepts to everyday life.
    - Advisors help students establish realistic goals and objectives and encourage them to be responsible for their own progress and success.
    - Advisors seek to understand and modify barriers to student progress, identify ineffective and inefficient policies and procedures, and work to effect change. When the needs of students and the institution are in conflict, advisors seek a resolution that is in the best interest of both parties. In cases where the student finds the resolution unsatisfactory, they inform students regarding appropriate grievance procedures.
    - Advisors recognize the changing nature of the college and university environment and diversity within the student body. They acknowledge the changing communication technologies used by students and the resulting new learning environments. They are sensitive to the responsibilities and pressures placed on students to balance course loads, financial and family issues, and interpersonal demands.

- Advisors are knowledgeable and sensitive regarding national, regional, local, and institutional policies and procedures, particularly those governing matters that address harassment, use of technology, personal relationships with students, privacy of student information, and equal opportunity.
- Advisors are encouraged to investigate all available avenues to help students explore academic opportunities.
- Advisors respect student confidentiality rights regarding personal information. Advisors practice with an understanding of the institution's interpretation of applicable laws such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Advisors seek access to and use student information only when the information is relevant to the advising process. Advisors enter or change information on students' records only with appropriate institutional authorization to do so.
- Advisors document advising contacts adequately to meet institutional disclosure guidelines and aid in subsequent advising interactions.

Core Value 2: Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process.

- Academic advisors must develop relationships with personnel critical to student success including those in such diverse areas as admissions, orientation, instruction, financial aid, housing, health services, athletics, academic departments, and the registrar's office. They also must establish relationships with those who can attend to specific physical and educational needs of students, such as personnel in disability services, tutoring, psychological counseling, international study, and career development. Advisors must also direct students, as needed, to experts who specialize in credit transfers, co-curricular programs, and graduation clearance.
- Because of the nature of academic advising, advisors often develop a broad understanding of an institution and a detailed understanding of student needs and the resources available to help students meet those needs. Based upon this understanding:
    - advisors can have an interpretative role with students regarding their interactions with faculty, staff, administrators, and fellow students, and
    - advisors can help the institution's administrators gain a greater understanding of students' needs.
- Students involved in the advising process (such as peer advisors or graduate assistants) must be adequately trained and supervised for adherence to the same policies and practices required of the professional and faculty advisors and other specially trained staff advising in the unit/institution.

Core Value 3: Advisors are responsible to their institutions.

- Advisors work in many types of higher education institutions and abide by the specific policies, procedures, and values of the department and institution in which they work. When circumstances interfere with students' learning and development, advisors advocate for change on the advisees' behalf with the institution's administration, faculty, and staff.
- Advisors keep those not directly involved in the advising process informed and aware of the importance of academic advising in students' lives. They articulate the need for administrative support of advising and related activities.
- Advisors increase their collective professional strength by constructively and respectfully sharing their advising philosophies and techniques with colleagues.
- Advisors respect the opinions of their colleagues; remain neutral when students make comments or express opinions about other faculty or staff; are nonjudgmental about academic programs; and do not impose their personal agendas on students.
- Advisors encourage the use of models for the optimal delivery of academic advising programs within their institutions.
- Advisors recognize their individual roles in the success of their institutions and accept and participate in institutional commitments that can include, but are not limited to, administrative and committee service, teaching, research, and writing.

Core Value 4: Advisors are responsible to higher education in general.

- Advisors accept that one goal of education is to introduce students to the world of ideas in an environment of academic freedom. Advisors demonstrate appreciation for academic freedom.
- Advisors base their work with students on the most relevant theoretical perspectives and practices drawn from the fields of social sciences, the humanities, and education.
- One goal of advising is to establish, between students and advisors, a partnership that will guide students through their academic programs. Advisors help students understand that learning can be used in day-to-day application through exploration, trial and error, challenge, and decision making.
- Advisors advocate for student educational achievement to the highest attainable standards and support student goals as they uphold the educational mission of the institution.
- Advisors advocate for the creation, enhancement, and strengthening of programs and services that recognize and meet student academic needs.

Core Value 5: Advisors are responsible to their educational community.

- Many institutions recognize the importance of integrating classroom learning with community experience, study abroad, and programs that bridge the gap between the academic and off-campus environments. Where such programs exist, advisors help students understand the relationship between the institution and local, regional, national, and international communities.
- Advisors advocate for students who desire to include study abroad or community service learning into their co-curricular college experience, and they make appropriate referrals to enable students to achieve these goals.
- Advisors understand the intricacies of transfer between institutions and make appropriate referrals to enable students to achieve their goals.

Core Value 6: Advisors are responsible for their professional practices and for themselves personally.

- Advisors use the Statement of Core Values to guide their professional actions.
- Advisors seek opportunities to grow professionally. They identify appropriate workshops, classes, literature, research publications, and groups, both inside and outside the institution that can keep their interest high, hone professional skills, and advance expertise within specific areas of interest.
- Advisors seek cross cultural opportunities to interact with and learn more about ethnic communities, racial groups, religions, sexual preferences, genders, and age levels, as well as physical, learning, and psychological abilities and disabilities found among the general student population.
- Advisors recognize that research topics are embedded in academic advising practice and theory. Advisors engage in research and publication related to advising as well as in areas allied with their training and disciplinary backgrounds. Advisors' research agendas safeguard privacy and provide for the humane treatment of subjects.
- Advisors are alert to the demands surrounding their work with students and the necessity of taking care of themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually to best respond to high level demands. They learn how to maintain a 'listening ear' and provide sensitive, timely responses that teach students to accept their responsibilities. Advisors establish and maintain appropriate boundaries, nurture others when necessary, and seek support for themselves both within and outside the institution.
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(Taken from: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-exposition.aspx)

Appendix H: Conceptual Framework for the Academic Advisor's Handbook

Objectives and purposes
Definition of advisors
- Proactive academic advising
- Predictive academic advising

Major overarching roles and responsibilities
Advising process - this is the core of the handbook (this can be organized based on the academic cycle/timeline):
- Scheduling
- Tuition payment
  - Payment methods
    - Fees.utoronto.ca
  - Financial advising
  - Scholarships
  - Government student aid (e.g. OSAP, out of province aid, etc)
  - Bursaries/grants
  - Third-party scholarships
- Midterms
- Final exams
- Promotion regulations (http://www.apsc.utoronto.ca/Calendars/current/Academic_Regulations.html#Note102)
  - Clear academic standing
  - Pro-1 status
  - Pro-2 status
  - RFRG status
  - Impact of each status on University services that students might be linked to
    - Government financial aid
    - Use of on-campus facilities
      - Athletic facilities
      - Computer labs
      - ECF printers
    - Health & Wellness
    - Use of University online services (e.g. ACORN, Blackboard. Utoronto.ca email account, etc.)
  - Petitions
    - Special considerations
    - Final exams
    - Term work
  - Academic Offense procedures
    - Pertinent information for Undergraduate instructors: http://www.undergrad.engineering.utoronto.ca/Assets/UndergradEng+Digital+Assets/Academic+Offence+Procedures+and+Reduction+Suggestions.pdf
    - University policy on Code of behaviour on Academic matters: http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf
    - Academic integrity: http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/
    - Academic Offence tracker: https://www.apsc.utoronto.ca/AOTT/AOHome.aspx.
      - To access the academic offence tracker, instructors simply need to be on the teaching assignment page on ROSI, or you'll have to request for access through Sergei (Engineering IT; sergei@ecf.utoronto.ca).
      - Jan Haugan (Exec Assist, Vice-Dean & Chair 1st Year) is the walking dictionary for all things pertaining to academic offences

and what the exact procedure is. (jan.haugan@utoronto.ca; 416-978-1904).
                - All first year Academic Offences, regardless of weight of assessment, will be reported to the Vice-Dean's office. The Vice-Dean's office will handle everything once the instructor entered the incident into the tracker.
                - All upper year Academic Offences, if weight of assessment is >10%, then it'll be received and processed by the Vice-Dean's office.
                - If <10%, then the Department/Division will handle the incident internally at the department level.
    - Unique student situations and respective resources:
        - Crisis
            - Student Crisis response:
                - Becky Smith
                - Alena Marshall
                - Krystal Arndt
            - Academic progress team:
                - Helen Slade
                - Michael Nicholson
            - Community resources:
                - Good2Talk student helpline 1-866-925-5454; http://www.good2talk.ca/
                - Gerstein Centre Mental Health Crisis line 416-929-5200; http://gersteincentre.org/ http://gersteincentre.org/our-crisis-services/
                    - 24 hours availability
                - Other available resources: http://safety.utoronto.ca/safety-programs-services/.
        - Student visibly upset in your office
        - Parent visibly upset/angry
        - Receiving complaints from students on professors and/or TA's
    - Information on services and supports available to registered students around campus
        - Health and Wellness and embedded Health & Wellness counsellor (Laurie Coleman)
        - International transition Advisor (Asim Ashraf; 416-579-8310; asim.ashraf@utoronto.ca)
        - Accessibility Services
        - Academic Success Centre and embedded learning strategist (Michael Richards)
            - To make an appointment with Michael Richards, students will have to visit the First Year Office (GB170) directly.
            - Eugenia Tsao, is another learning strategist that works quite extensively with the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering. eugenia.tsao@utoronto.ca. Referrals to her can be made by directly emailing her.
        - Centre for International Experience
            - All study permit/visa queries should be directed to the International Immigration Student Advisor at the Centre of International Experience
            - Aziz El Mejdouby (isa.cie@utoronto.ca; 416-978-2038)
        - Campus Police
        - Residence dons

Source: https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Creating-advising-handbook.aspx [retrieval date: June 1, 2016]