

Fall 2008 Academic Advising Survey Results, WSU Pullman

Executive Summary

In fall 2008, a survey of undergraduate academic advising was administered to 5,000 WSU-Pullman campus students, with 1,722 (34%) responses collected. The results show that:

- 38% of the respondents gave a rating of “very satisfied” while another 36% of the respondents gave a rating of “somewhat satisfied” with the quality of academic advising. The average satisfaction rating has grown from 3.35 to 3.95 in the last two years.
- 55% of the respondents gave an A and 28% gave a B to the most recent advising they had received. The overall grading by all respondents was B⁺.
- 56% of the respondents were advised by departmental academic advisors/coordinators, 23% by faculty advisors, and 14% by the Center for Advising and Career Development (CACD) academic advisors.
- Most respondents had positive advising experiences. They understood the purposes of academic advising, and actively prepared for their advising sessions.
- Over 95% of the respondents said they met their advisors in person, 71% said they had academic advising through email correspondence, and 26% by phone.
- 3 to 1 was the ratio of positive to negative comments about academic advisors. WSU academic advisors are largely described as *helpful, knowledgeable, friendly/nice, good/great, accessible, caring/encouraging, and informative*.
- Responses to open-ended items suggest that advisors were overloaded. Respondents said that they were rushed and did not have enough time to have questions answered.
- The most frequently mentioned suggestions for improving WSU academic advising were to get more advisors and allow more time to meet with advisors.
- Respondents of lower class standing were more satisfied with the quality of advising than respondents of higher class standing. Students not yet certified in a major were more satisfied than students who were certified in a major.

Introduction

Sponsored by the Provost's Office and the Division of Student Affairs, Equity and Diversity, Institutional Research conducted a survey of undergraduate academic advising on the Pullman campus during the spring pre-registration period (November, 2008). The purpose of the survey was: (1) to evaluate student experience with academic advising; (2) to compare overall student satisfaction with academic advising in recent surveys; and (3) to identify areas where improvement is needed. A previous advising consultant's report (Vowell, 2006) recommended changes for WSU and as a result, the Center for Advising and Career Development (CACD) developed a university wide definition of advising, raised awareness of the importance of academic advising, and introduced mandatory training of academic advisors. This survey assesses the impacts of those changes.

Data and Methods

The population of the survey was undergraduate students on the Pullman campus who were at least 18 years of age at the time of survey. A stratified sample of 5,000 students was randomly selected from the population. The sample resembles the population in a number of ways – class standing, gender, race/ethnicity, and certified major. Demographic distribution of the respondents roughly corresponds to that of the population and sample except that female students had a higher response rate than male, Asian and International students had higher response rates than the other race/ethnicity groups, and Black students had a much lower response rate than the other race/ethnicity (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographics of Population, Sample and Respondents

Student Demographics	Student Population		Survey Sample		Respondents	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
FRESHMAN (0 - 29.5 SEM HRS)	4,052	32.3%	1,616	32.3%	566	32.9%
SOPHOMORE (30 - 59.5 SEM HRS)	2,812	22.4%	1,121	22.4%	350	20.3%
JUNIOR (60 - 89.5 SEM HRS)	2,805	22.4%	1,119	22.4%	423	24.6%
SENIOR (90+ SEM HRS)	2,868	22.9%	1,144	22.9%	383	22.2%
TOTAL	12,537	100.0%	5,000	100.0%	1,722	100.0%
FEMALE	5,809	46.3%	2,330	46.6%	961	55.8%
MALE	6,728	53.7%	2,670	53.4%	761	44.2%
TOTAL	12,537	100.0%	5,000	100.0%	1,722	100.0%
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	167	1.3%	67	1.3%	21	1.2%
ASIAN; NAT HAWAIIAN; OR PAC ISLD	846	6.7%	341	6.8%	136	7.9%
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	307	2.4%	129	2.6%	26	1.5%
HISPANIC; LATINO; OR SPAN ORIGIN	606	4.8%	252	5.0%	88	5.1%
INTERNATIONAL	405	3.2%	147	2.9%	58	3.4%
WHITE	9,487	75.7%	3,779	75.6%	1,294	75.1%
NOT INDICATED	719	5.7%	285	5.7%	99	5.7%
TOTAL	12,537	100.0%	5,000	100.0%	1,722	100.0%
CERTIFIED MAJORS	4,971	39.7%	2,033	40.7%	720	41.8%
NON-CERTIFIED	7,566	60.3%	2,967	59.3%	1,002	58.2%
TOTAL	12,537	100.0%	5,000	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

The sample and respondents represented undergraduate students on Pullman campus who received academic advising from ten colleges and the Center for Advising and Career Development (CACD), although the sample was not stratified on advising college/center.

College/center affiliation was determined by the source of advising for individual students. Colleges of Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy and Nursing have relatively small sample sizes as these were either professional programs and/or programs located on the Spokane campus. Pullman students advised by pre-nursing advising program were considered students of the College of Nursing.

Table 2. Distribution of Population, Sample and Respondents by Advising College/Center

Advising College/Center	Student Population		Survey Sample		Respondents	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
College of Agricultural Human and Natural Resource Sciences	1,181	9.4%	471	9.4%	169	9.8%
College of Business	1,378	11.0%	556	11.1%	188	10.9%
College of Education	941	7.5%	378	7.6%	134	7.8%
College of Engineering and Architecture	2,087	16.6%	823	16.5%	284	16.5%
College of Liberal Arts	2,323	18.5%	924	18.5%	324	18.8%
College of Nursing	249	2.0%	89	1.8%	35	2.0%
College of Pharmacy	23	0.2%	9	0.2%	4	0.2%
College of Sciences	1,441	11.5%	602	12.0%	253	14.7%
College of Veterinary Medicine	126	1.0%	47	0.9%	20	1.2%
College of Communication	777	6.2%	308	6.2%	98	5.7%
Center for Advising and Career Development	2,003	16.0%	790	15.8%	213	12.4%
Missing	8	0.1%	3	0.1%	0	0.0%
Total	12,537	100.0%	5,000	100.0%	1,722	100.0%

The survey (Appendix A) used several items from the *Survey of Academic Advising at WSU Vancouver* developed by the Retention Taskforce at WSU Vancouver and two items from *Washington State University Student Experience Surveys* developed by Dr. Don Dillman. The survey was administered using the online tool Survey Monkey. The non-ordered response options were randomized so as to minimize selection bias. The survey was conducted at a period of time when most students were meeting or had just met with their academic advisors for pre-registration advising. When the survey was closed on December 15, there were 1,722 usable responses collected; representing an overall response rate of 34.4%.

Response rates varied among students of different class standings. The highest response rate was seen in juniors (37.8%), and the lowest in sophomores (31.2%). Response rates for freshmen and seniors were 35.0% and 33.5% respectively. For the purpose of this survey, class standing was defined by the number of credit hours a student completed instead of the actual time a student stayed at WSU. Males and females responded to the survey at different rates (28.8% males; 41.2% females). Among the race/ethnicity groups, International, and Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students had higher response rates of 39.5% and 39.9% respectively. Black or African American students were underrepresented in the survey due to a low response rate of 20.2% (Table 3). Chi-square tests found significant difference in response rates between male and female students. No significant difference was found in response rates between certified and non-certified students, or among students of various class standing and race/ethnicity (Appendix B).

Table 3. Sample Size and Response Rates

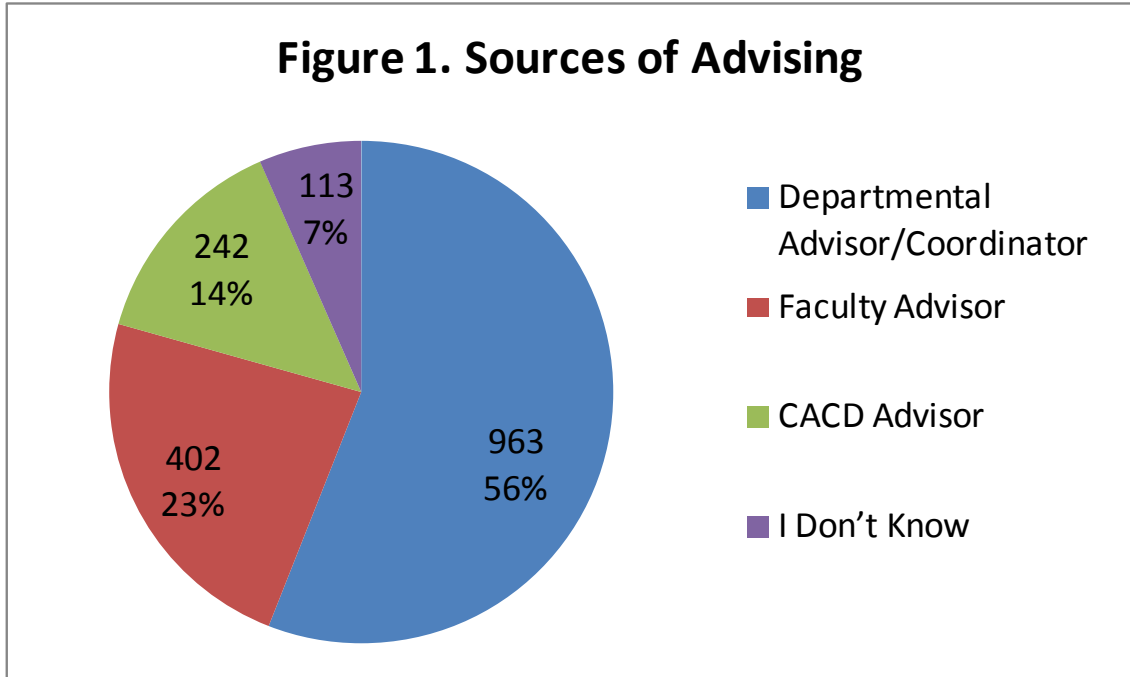
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A main purpose of this survey was to measure respondent satisfaction with the quality of advising using a 5 point Likert-type scale, which response options of very dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, neutral, somewhat satisfied, and very satisfied. Numerical values were assigned to the nominal responses so as to make them ordinal. The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied to determine whether respondents of different groups are equal in their satisfaction rating. Statistical significance was set at a 95 percent confidence level, and alpha was adjusted for the number of tests using a Bonferroni adjustment.

Further analyses were conducted to compare satisfaction rating of respondents of different advising college/center or race/ethnicity. Once Kruskal-Wallis H test found statistically significant difference among the groups, both the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test and AVONA with Tukey post hoc tests were used to compare the difference between the satisfaction rating of any two advising college/center or race/ethnicity. The results from both tests are very similar. Again, statistical significance was set at a 95 percent confidence level. The alpha for Mann-Whitney U test was adjusted for the number of tests conducted. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was used because of the value of the satisfaction variable was not normally distributed. However, the results from the parametric ANOVA Tukey post hoc test were very similar to those from Mann-Whitney U tests. For the purpose of simplicity, ANOVA Tukey post hoc test results will be reported instead of Mann-Whitney U test results.

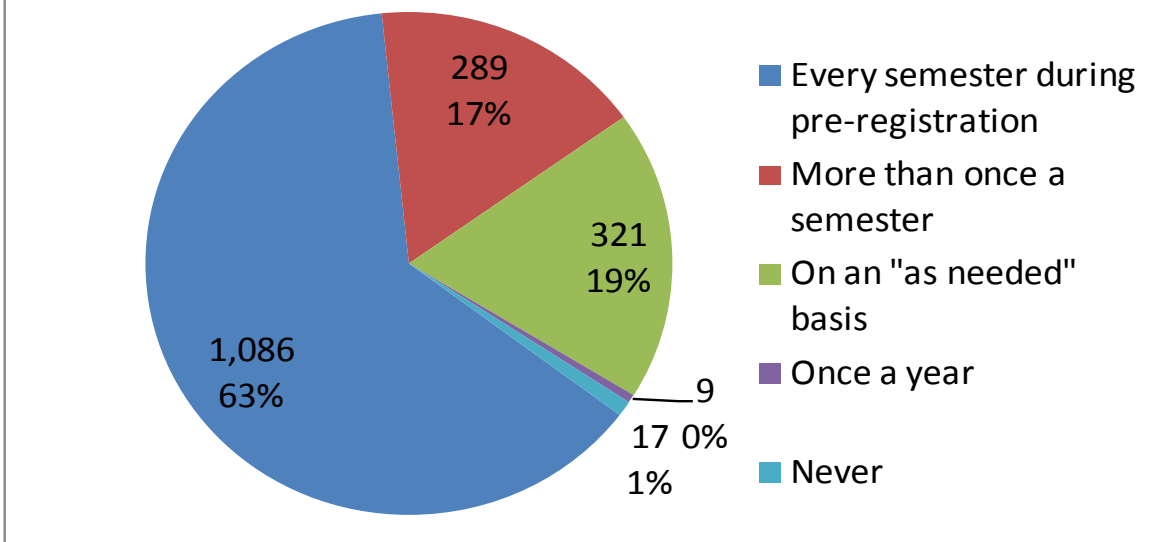
Findings

Nearly 56% of the respondents reported that they were advised by departmental academic advisors/coordinators, 23% by faculty advisors, and 14% by CACD academic advisors. About 6.6% of the respondents did not know who their advisors were (Figure 1).



The majority of the respondents reported using academic advising during pre-registration, a busy time for academic advisors. About 63% of the respondents reported using academic advising every semester during preregistration advising, and 18.6% reported using it on an “as needed” basis (only when they have questions). Another 16.8% indicated that they met their academic advisors more than once a semester. Only 1% reported that they had never used academic advising (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Frequencies of Advising



Over 95% of the respondents claimed to have met their advisors in-person during one-on-one advising sessions. This is not surprising as students are required to get an advisor’s approval before registration. Email contact is the second most popular method of advising as 71% of the respondents indicated that their academic advising was conducted through email. Nearly 26% of the respondents claimed to receive advising by phone calls while 14% responded that they received advising through group advising sessions (Table 4).

Table 4. Methods of Advising

Methods of Advising	Yes		No		Missing	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
We meet in-person during one-on-one advising sessions.	1,643	95.4%	70	4.1%	9	0.5%
I send my advisor emails when I have questions.	1,222	71.0%	433	25.1%	67	3.9%
I call my advisor when I have questions.	443	25.7%	1,167	67.8%	112	6.5%
We meet in-person during group advising sessions.	244	14.2%	1,361	79.0%	117	6.8%

Nearly 85% (1,460) of the respondents indicated that they knew and went on to provide their advisor’s name. About 15% (262) of the respondents said they did not know an advisor’s name.

Students claimed to seek academic advising for a variety of reasons. Nearly 93% of the respondents sought advising when selecting courses. Table 5 shows that other top reasons were all related to academic progress and career opportunities. Only 40% of the respondents sought advising when a work, family or academic problem arises. Nearly 27% of the respondents asked their advisors for information about other campus resources, such as tutoring, counseling and disability services. Other frequently mentioned reasons for seeking advising include: plan schedule, study abroad, liked engagement of advisor, and ROTC requirements.

Table 5. Reasons for Seeking Academic Advising

Reasons for Seeking Advising	Yes	No	I Don't Know
Select courses for upcoming semester(s).	92.8%	6.0%	0.5%
Get my advising hold lifted.	91.4%	4.8%	3.3%
Develop a plan to achieve my academic and career goals.	88.2%	10.2%	1.3%
To receive clear advising information prior to pre-registration.	79.4%	16.9%	2.6%
Get information about specific classes or instructions (e.g., course content, which ones are harder vs. easier, etc).	78.2%	18.9%	2.2%
Go over my Degree Audit Report (DARS) to identify university, college, and major requirements.	75.6%	17.8%	5.7%
Get information about potential career, graduate school, and/or internship opportunities.	61.3%	34.1%	3.8%
To discuss options when a problem or challenge arise (e.g., work, family, academic).	40.1%	53.7%	5.3%
Get information about other campus resources (e.g., tutoring, counseling, disability services).	26.9%	68.9%	3.1%

* The percentage does not total 100. Up to 1.1% of the respondents skipped the question.

Students performed many preparatory activities before meeting with their advisors. Table 6 shows that most respondents actively prepared for their advising sessions. Over 90% of the respondents said they accessed the *MyWSU* web portal to view their registration time and holds. Almost 89% deliberately identified their academic and career goals. More than 82% of the respondents indicated looking at the online course schedules and identified courses to take, and 71% said they read the course catalog to become familiar with university, college, and major requirements. Nearly 66% of the respondents mentioned viewing their Degree Audit Reports (DARS). Other preparatory activities mentioned by some respondents include: plan schedule ahead of time, talk to other people (professors, friends, etc.), and utilize schedule surfer.

Table 6. Student Preparation for Advising

Preparatory Activities	Yes	No	I Don't Know
Accessing <i>MyWSU</i> to view my registration time and holds.	90.5%	7.7%	1.3%
Identifying my academic and career goals	88.6%	9.2%	1.7%
Looking at the online course schedule and identify courses to take in the upcoming semester.	82.2%	16.0%	1.4%
Reading the course catalog to become familiar with university, college, and major requirements.	71.3%	26.0%	1.6%
Viewing my Degree Audit Report (DARS).	65.7%	28.5%	4.9%

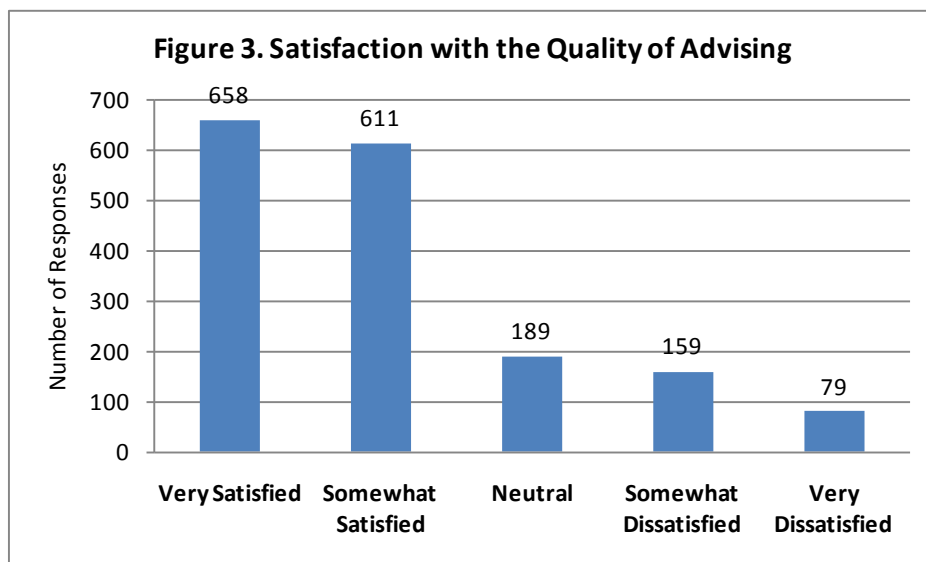
* The percentage does not total 100. Up to 1.2% of the respondents skipped the question.

The survey respondents rated eleven positive descriptions about their advisors on a 5-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Over 75% of the respondents agreed (“Strongly Agree” and “Somewhat Agree” combined) that their advisors had knowledge of general education requirements, department requirements, and career information, and 74% agreed that their advisors gave them accurate information. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents agreed that their advisors were accessible, and 64.4% agreed that their advisors gave them enough time during advising sessions. Nearly 59% of the respondents agreed that their advisors considered their interests, values, and abilities, and 57% agreed that their advisors helped them clearly define academic and career goals. Nearly 53% of the respondents agreed that their advisors were persons they would approach for help if they were struggling academically, and 52.6% agreed

that their advisors provide them with information (e.g., about graduate school, internship, and/or networking opportunities) that would help them achieve their career goals. Forty-nine percent of the respondents agreed that their advisors helped them if they were considering other majors, and 26.5% agreed that their advisors helped them seek out opportunities to further achieve their career and educational goals (e.g., by attending campus events, workshops, and networking opportunities). Finally, 41% of the respondents agreed that their advisors actively monitored their progress in achieving their educational and career goals. Respondents who did not agree with the descriptions include respondents who remained neutral, somewhat disagreed, and strongly disagreed (See Appendix C for details).

Respondents also rated seven positive descriptions about their advising experience on a 5-point scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Over 79% of the respondents said they agreed that they understood the purpose of departmental (major) requirements, and 70% of the respondents indicated that the advising process is easy to understand. About 68% of the respondents indicated that they understood the purpose of college requirements. Another 68% of the respondents agreed that advising sessions were long enough to address all of their advising concerns. Over 63% of the respondents indicated that they understood the purpose of university general education requirements. About 54% of the respondents knew who to contact to get different questions answered. Only 49.7% of the respondents agreed that it was easy to read and understand their Degree Audit Reports (DARS). Respondents who did not agree with the descriptions include respondents who remained neutral, somewhat disagreed, and strongly disagreed (See Appendix D for details).

Dr. Don Dillman gave permission for this survey to use two items from his *Washington State University Student Experience Surveys*. The first item asks how satisfied a student was with the quality of the advising s/he received as a WSU student. Generally speaking, respondents indicated they were reasonably satisfied with the quality of WSU’s academic advising (Figure 3). Over 38% (658) of the respondents indicated very satisfied, and another 35.5% (611) of the respondents said somewhat satisfied.



When the satisfaction levels were converted into a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 represented very satisfied and 1 represented very dissatisfied), the average satisfaction rating was 3.95. Using the same item in his surveys, Dillman (2006) found an average satisfaction rating between 3.30 and 3.35 in his 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2006 surveys. In his 2005 survey, Dillman used the scale in a different direction (where 1 represented very satisfied and 5 represented very dissatisfied) and found an average rating of 2.83. By calculating in the same direction, the average Fall 2008 satisfaction rating was 2.05, which seemed more positive than 2.83. In his surveys, Dillman (2008) experimented with mixed modes (e.g., internet, mail, telephone) of survey, various versions of the same item, and different measures.

Further exploration of the responses found there were differences in average satisfaction rating among race/ethnicity. Average satisfaction ratings ranged from 3.70 for International students to 4.21 for Hispanic students (Table 7). A Kruskal-Wallis H test found significant difference in satisfaction rating by race/ethnicity, and Mann-Whitney U test found that Hispanic students and International students are significantly different in satisfaction rating. However, ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests did not find any significant difference between any two race/ethnicity groups (See Appendix E).

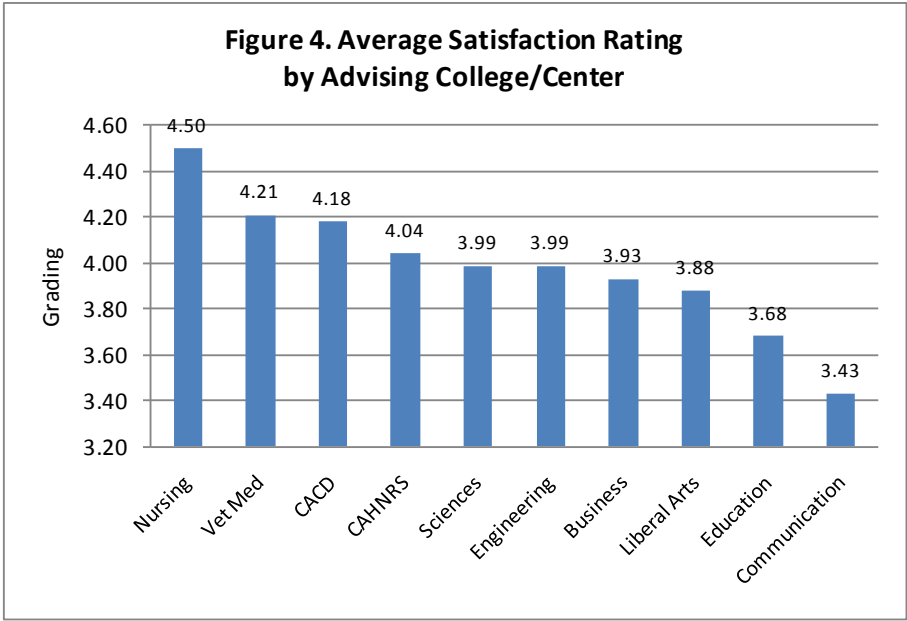
Table 7. Average Satisfaction Rating by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	N	% Satisfied	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hispanic; Latino; or Span Origin	86	82.6%	4.21	.922
American Indian or Alaska Native	21	76.2%	4.05	.973
White	1,276	74.9%	3.95	1.152
Black or African American	26	73.1%	3.88	1.395
Asian; Nat Hawaiian; or Pac Isld	134	70.9%	3.81	1.105
International	57	66.7%	3.70	1.017
Not Indicated	96	77.1%	4.04	1.151
Total	1,696	74.8%	3.95	1.137

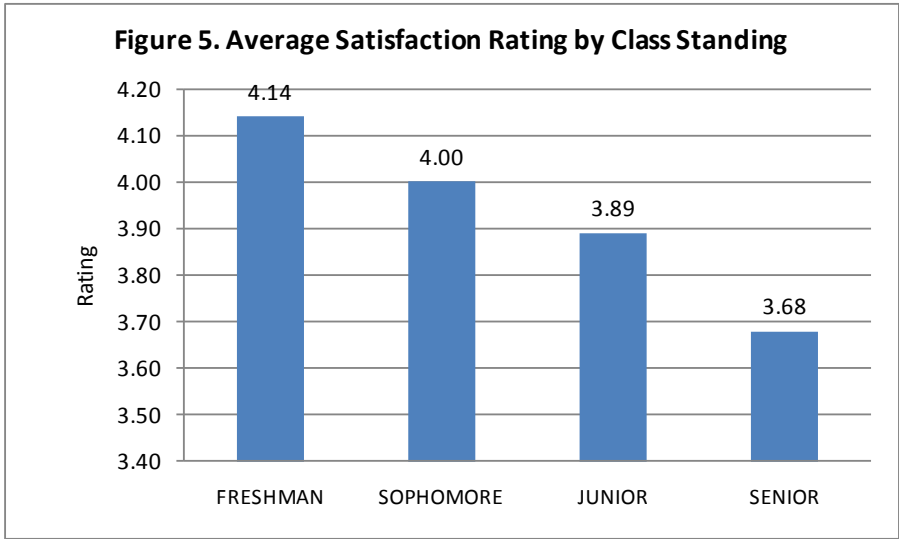
Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 14.145, df = 6, Asymp. Sig. =.028

The average satisfaction rating also differs significantly by advising college/center (Kruskal-Wallis H test p-value = .000). Respondents in the College of Communication gave the lowest satisfaction rating. Respondents in the College of Nursing gave the highest rating. ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests found that the average satisfaction rating by respondents in Communication is significantly lower than that in all other college/center except Education and Vet Med. Furthermore, the average satisfaction rating by respondents in Education was found to be significantly lower than that in Nursing and CACD (Figure 4, also see Appendixes F and G).

Although differences in satisfaction rating between some advising college/center have been found statistically significant by both Mann-Whitney U tests and ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests, the practical differences are minimal. The GLM ANOVA model reported $R^2 = 0.023$, which suggests that advising college/center only explains about two percent of variance in satisfaction rating.

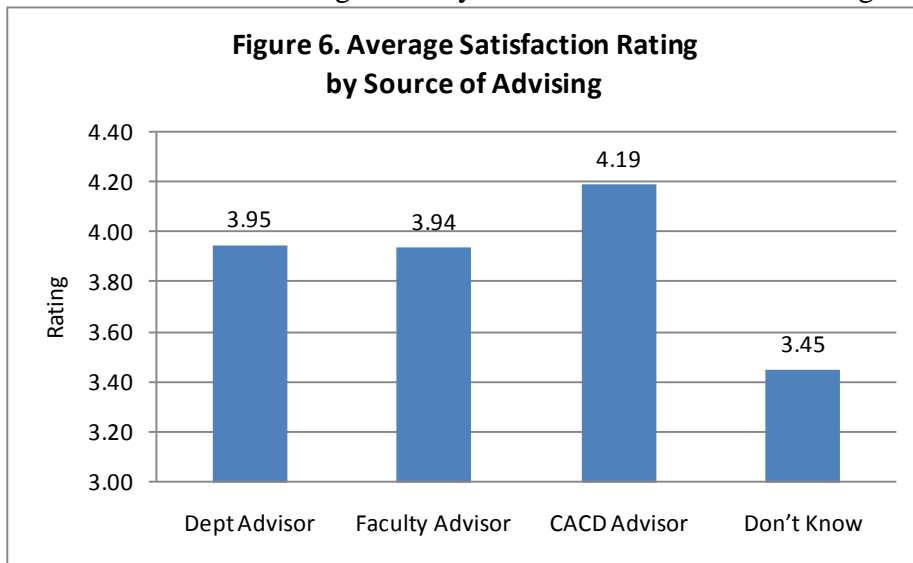


Average satisfaction rating also differs significantly by class standing (Kruskal-Wallis H test p-value = .000). Respondents of higher class standing were less satisfied with the quality of academic advising than respondents of lower class standing (Figure 5, also see Appendix H). ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests found significant differences between Seniors and respondents of all the other three class standings, and between Freshmen and Juniors (Appendix I).



Certified majors are typically students of higher class standings, that is, juniors and seniors. Overall, satisfaction ratings of non-certified majors are higher than that of certified majors. The average satisfaction rating of the 710 certified majors was 3.78, compared with an average 4.07 of the 986 non-certified majors. An independent samples t-test found the difference to be statistically significant (p-value = .000).

On average, respondents advised by departmental academic advisors/coordinators and respondents advised by faculty advisors were not significantly different with a satisfaction rating of 3.94 and 3.95 respectively. Respondents not knowing who their advisors were gave the lowest satisfaction rating (Figure 6, also see Appendixes J and K). ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests found that the average satisfaction rating by respondents receiving CACD advising is significantly higher than all the other three groups, and the average satisfaction rating by respondents who did not know who their advisors were is significantly lower than all the other three groups.



The higher average satisfaction rating by respondents receiving CACD advising may not be sufficient to lead to a conclusion that CACD advisors were better than department advisors and faculty advisors. Almost 94% of respondents receiving CACD advising were freshmen and sophomores who were more satisfied than juniors and seniors. Table 8 shows that respondents became less satisfied with the quality of academic advising the longer they stayed at WSU. This may suggest that students of higher class standing have different advising needs and/or they have different standards when judging advising quality.

Table 8. Percentage of Satisfaction by Advising College/Center and Class Standing

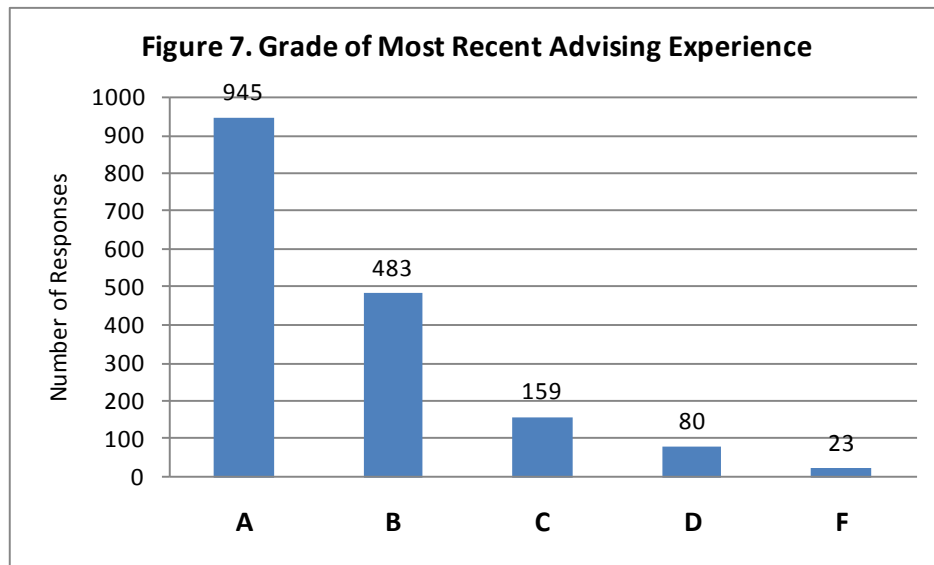
Advising College/Center	Freshman		Sophomore		Junior		Senior		All Class Standing	
	N	% Satisfied	N	% Satisfied	N	% Satisfied	N	% Satisfied	N	% Satisfied
College of Agricultural Human and Natural Resource Sciences	62	74.2%	35	74.3%	43	88.4%	28	75.0%	168	78.0%
College of Business	27	70.4%	45	75.6%	60	81.7%	53	66.0%	185	74.1%
College of Education	45	77.8%	27	70.4%	33	57.6%	28	71.4%	133	69.9%
College of Engineering and Architecture	86	81.4%	46	82.6%	70	71.4%	77	72.7%	279	76.7%
College of Liberal Arts	63	79.4%	68	72.1%	107	73.8%	80	65.0%	318	72.3%
College of Nursing	11	90.9%	13	92.3%	8	75.0%	2	100.0%	34	88.2%
College of Pharmacy	1	100.0%	3	100.0%	0		0		4	100.0%
College of Sciences	82	80.5%	38	78.9%	59	72.9%	70	62.9%	249	73.5%
College of Veterinary Medicine	7	85.7%	5	100.0%	2	100.0%	5	80.0%	19	89.5%
College of Communication	13	76.9%	27	59.3%	28	42.9%	29	69.0%	97	59.8%
Center for Advising and Career Development	158	84.2%	39	82.1%	9	55.6%	4	50.0%	210	81.9%
Total	555	80.4%	346	76.3%	419	72.3%	376	68.1%	1,696	74.8%

The average satisfaction rating of the 403 transfer students (3.97) was slightly lower than that of the 1,293 native (non-transfer) students (3.88). However, Kruskal-Wallis H test p-value of 0.130 and independent samples t-test p-value of 0.217 suggest that difference between the two is not statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level (see Appendix L).

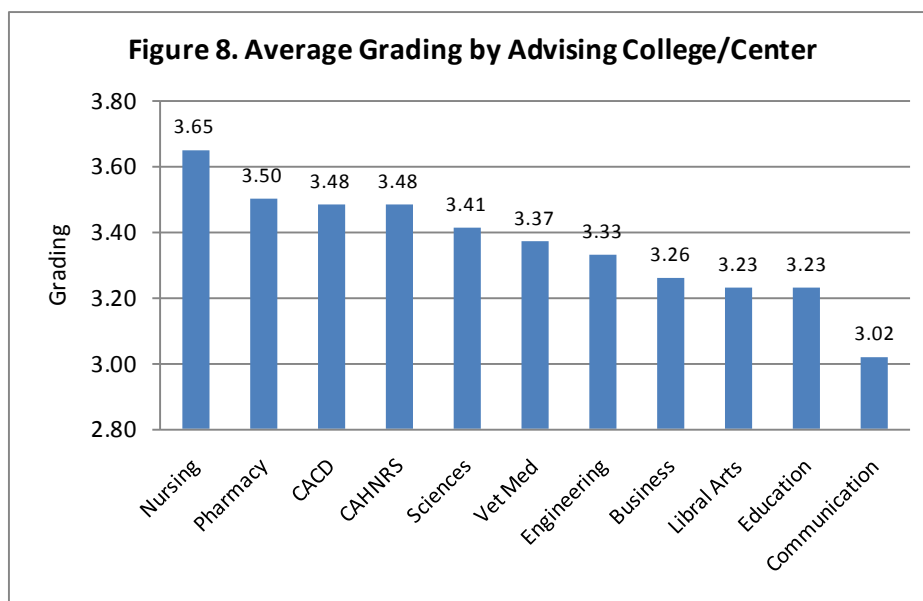
Cumulative GPA was used as a proxy of student academic performance. Respondents were categorized into three groups by their academic performance, below 2.0, between 2.0 and 3.0, or above 3.0. The average satisfaction ratings (3.90, 3.98, and 3.94) were very close. Kruskal-Wallis H test p-value of 0.691 and p-values of ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests suggest that there is no statistically significant difference between any two of these groups (Appendixes M and N).

In addition to the item on satisfaction with the quality of advising, the surveys also asked respondents to give a grade of A, B, C, D, or F to the most recent academic advising they received at WSU. About 55% (945) of the respondents gave an A and another 28% (483) gave a B. Only 1.3% of the respondents gave an F (Figure 7). When the grade system was converted into a scale of 0 to 4 (where A is 4 and F is 0), the average grading is 3.33 (equivalent of B⁺).

Respondents' satisfaction rating and the grading of their advising experience are strongly correlated ($r = 0.715$). Respondents who were satisfied with the quality of academic advising tended to give a higher grade to their most recent advising experience.



Respondents gave an average grading of 3.33 to their recent advising experience. Broken down by advising college/center, respondents who gave a higher satisfaction rating also gave a higher grade to their most recent advising experience (Figure 8). Kruskal-Wallis H test (p-value = 0.000) found that advising college/center makes difference in respondents' grading of their advising experience (Appendix O). ANOVA Tukey post hoc tests found that Communication is significantly different from Nursing, CACD, CAHNRS, and Sciences (Appendix P).



The survey asked students to use their own words to describe their advisors. This was the second item borrowed from Dillman’s surveys. The responses were first coded into five categories, and later combined into broad themes. The item collected 3,508 coded responses, which did not include irrelevant or neutral comments such as “I have too many to generalize about them” and “Getting through what they have to get through”. Table 9 lists the top positive and top negative responses each accounting for 3% or more of the total coded responses. In every 4 coded responses that describe academic advisors, 3 were positive and only 1 was negative.

Table 9. Coded Responses – “Describe your advisor”

Positive			Negative		
Response	N	% of All Responses	Response	N	% of All Responses
Helpful	671	19.1%	Busy	207	5.9%
Knowledgeable	337	9.6%	Not helpful	189	5.4%
Friendly/Nice	293	8.3%	Hard to contact	139	4.0%
Good/Great	236	6.7%	Not Knowledgeable	133	3.8%
Accessible	202	5.8%			
Caring/Encouraging	199	5.7%			
Informative	113	3.2%			
Total Positive	2,653	75.6%	Total Negative	855	24.4%

Positive to Negative Ratio = 3:1

At the end of the survey, students were asked to suggest up to three things that WSU needed to do to improve undergraduate academic advising. More than 1,200 (70%) students answered this question and provided 3,408 coded responses in 34 categories. Table 10 lists the top 18 suggestions, each accounting for 2% or more of the total coded responses.

Table 10. Suggestions for Improving Academic Advising

Order	Suggestions for Improvement	Counts	Percent
1	Get more advisors/ allow more time to meet with advisors	361	14.7%
2	Make sure advisor is appropriate to intended major/ knowledgeable/ trained	215	8.8%
3	More personable communication by advisor	195	8.0%
4	Simplify process of meeting/ accessing advisor	162	6.6%
5	Improve awareness of advising/ reminders/ communication between advisor and student	122	5.0%
6	Require more advising meetings	116	4.7%
7	Simplify DARS	90	3.7%
8	Inform students about careers/ internships / life planning	80	3.3%
9	Make sure advisors are up to date and knowledgeable about general and major requirements	78	3.2%
10	Alternative methods to the advising process/ new ideas	76	3.1%
11	Clarify details of specifics (writing portfolio, requirements, etc.)	76	3.1%
12	Inform students about scholarships/ study abroad/ clubs/ other majors, minors	69	2.8%
13	More efficient use of technology	69	2.8%
14	Have advisors explain more about classes/ teachers/ workloads	67	2.7%
15	Simplify registration process	59	2.4%
16	Create long-term plans, schedule mapping, schedule options	54	2.2%
17	Improve communication between advisors from other departments	52	2.1%
18	Have same advisor, or make it easier to switch advisors	49	2.0%

Conclusions

Overall, respondents were reasonably satisfied with the academic advising received at WSU. The average satisfaction rating was 3.95 on a scale of 1 to 5. Respondents gave an average grade of B⁺ to the quality of the most recent academic advising they received. In an open-ended question, respondents commented positively about academic advisors and the ratio of positive to negative comments was 3 to 1. Most respondents had positive advising experiences, had a good understanding of the purposes of academic advising, and actively prepared for advising sessions. Academic advisors were largely described as *helpful, knowledgeable, friendly/nice, good/great, accessible, caring/encouraging, and informative*.

The question about satisfaction with the quality of academic advising was asked in each of Dillman's surveys from 2002 to 2006. According to Dillman, "Though some of the wording was different between surveys, the mean ratings are comparable. The first three waves of data collection showed relatively similar mean ratings of around 3.3 on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating a neither positive nor negative response. The fourth wave showed more positive ratings than the previous years and the fifth wave showed greater negative ratings." An average rating of 3.95 in this survey may suggest that student satisfaction with the quality of academic advising has improved in the last two years.

About 63% of the respondents indicated they met their advisors every semester during pre-registration advising. Some respondents who complained said that they did not have enough time for questions. Such words as *busy*, *overloaded*, and *rushed* have been used frequently to describe academic advisors. Not surprisingly, the top suggestions were to *get more advisors/allow more time to meet with advisors*.

Respondents advised by CACD advisors seemed to be more satisfied with the quality of advising and graded their most recent advising experience higher than respondents advised by departmental advisors and faculty advisors. About 73% of the respondents advised by CACD academic advisors were freshmen, and more respondents in higher class standing were advised by department advisors and faculty advisors (Table 8). Class standing and certified major status make significant differences in respondents' satisfaction with academic advising. The difference in advising satisfaction between certified majors and non-certified majors may be due to the different advising needs that certified majors have as well as their higher expectations and not necessarily due to quality of advising.

International students, on average, were least satisfied with the quality of academic advising, and they gave the lowest grading to their most recent advising experience. On the other hand, Hispanic students were not only most satisfied with the quality of academic advising, but they also gave the highest grading to their most recent advising experience. Respondents in the College of Communication, on average, were less satisfied with academic advising than respondents in most other colleges or advising center. However, these observed differences are not statistically significant.

Less than half of the respondents used advising to seek options when a work, family or academic problem arises or when they need information about other campus resources, such as tutoring, counseling and disability services. Students may not be fully informed about the role of academic advisors and may need to be encouraged to seek help from advisors if they encounter any problems that affect their academic progress at WSU. Academic advisors may not be able to answer all questions, but students indicated they appreciated their advisors' understanding and willingness to help. When describing their advisors, many respondents were grateful that their advisors referred them to other resources.

This survey has some limitations. As with most surveys, the validity is weak. The insincerity of the survey format puts a strain on validity. It is difficult to grasp a person's feelings in terms of a dichotomy such as "agree/disagree" as it is only an approximate indicator of what we have in mind when we create the questions. In order to continue assessment of advising through survey research it will be important to conduct a validity study of the survey and revise survey items in order to obtain more variability in the responses. Another limitation of the study is the lack of information on non-respondents. A more aggressive follow up with non-respondents can ease the criticisms of the representativeness of the responses and the ability to generalize the results to the entire undergraduate population.

Quanhua Zhou, Administrative Planning Analyst
Fran Hermanson, Associate Director
March, 2009

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Appendices

Appendix A. Survey Questionnaire

1. Welcome

Welcome to the academic advising survey!

It will take about 15 minutes to complete all the 12 questions in this survey. Your responses will be held completely confidential by the Office of Institutional Research. Your participation is voluntary. If you prefer not to answer a question or a particular part of a question, skip it and go on to the next.

If you have any questions, please email me at qzhou6@wsu.edu or call me at 335-5789.

Thank you.

Quanhua Zhou (pronounced Chenwa)
Academic Programs Analyst
Office of Institutional Research

Please enter your 5-digit access code we emailed to you.

2. Background Information

Academic advising is an educational process that facilitates students' understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education. It fosters intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning.

The University has a responsibility to support quality academic advising by creating a structure that facilitates excellent advising, maintaining and promoting developmental advising that contributes to students' ability to be responsible for their own decisions and educational plans, facilitating professional development training and support for advisors, and assessing the effectiveness of advising with the goal of continuous improvement.

As you complete this survey, you will be asked to reflect on your role in the advising process, and your advisor's role. Knowing how you perceive academic advising and your experiences with your advisor(s) will help us understand how academic advising could be improved to support your persistence toward graduation.

3. Section 1 - Some Basic Questions

We would like to begin by asking a few basic questions about your advising experience. Read each question carefully and choose the option that describes you best.

Q1. From whom are you currently receiving academic advising?

- Student Advising and Learning Center (SALC) Academic Advisor
- Departmental Academic Advisor/Coordinator
- Faculty Advisor
- I Don't Know

4. Q2

Q2. How often do you meet with your academic advisor?

- Never
- On an "as needed" basis (only when I have questions)
- Once a year
- Every semester during pre-registration advising
- More than once a semester

5. Q3

Q3. How do you and your advisor meet to conduct academic advising? (Please check an answer to EACH of the following.)

	Yes	No
I send my advisor emails when I have questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I call my advisor when I have questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We meet in-person during one-on-one advising sessions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We meet in-person during group advising sessions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Q4

Q4. Do you know the name of your most recent advisor? If you know, please provide his/her name in the box below.

- No. I don't know.
- Yes. I do, and ...

his/her name is

7. Section 2 - The Purpose of Advising

Different people see their advisors for different purposes. Please indicate whether EACH statement applies to you when you seek advising.

Q5. I seek advising in order to	Yes	No	Don't Know
Develop a plan to achieve my academic and career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get information about other campus resources (e.g., tutoring, counseling, disability services).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get information about potential career, graduate school, and/or internship opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get information about specific classes or instructions (e.g., course content, which ones are harder vs. easier, etc).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Get my advising hold lifted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go over my Degree Audit Report (DARS) to identify university, college, and major requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Select courses for upcoming semester(s).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To discuss options when a problem or challenge arise (e.g., work, family, academic).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To receive clear advising information prior to pre-registration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other reason (please specify)			

8. Section 3 - Your Role in Advising Process

Different students prepare for advising in different ways. Please indicate whether EACH statement describes how you prepare for advising.

Q6. I prepare for advising by	Yes	No	Don't Know
Looking at the online course schedule and identify courses to take in the upcoming semester.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Viewing my Degree Audit Report (DARS).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying my academic and career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessing MyWSU to view my registration time and holds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading the course catalog to become familiar with university, college, and major requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other preparatory activities (please specify)			

9. Section 4 - Your Advisor's Role in Advising

In this section, we want to learn a little more about your perceptions of your advisor's role in the advising process. Please indicate your level of agreement to EACH of the following statements about your advisor.

Q7. My advisor	1.Strongly Disagree	2.	3.	4.	5.Strongly Agree
Helps me if I was considering other major.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is accessible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Considers my interests, values, and abilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Actively monitors my progress in achieving my educational and career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps me clearly define academic and career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has knowledge of general education requirements, department requirements, and career information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gives me accurate information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is a person I would approach for help if I were struggling academically.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides me with information (e.g., about graduate school, internship, and/or networking opportunities) that will help me achieve my career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps me seek out opportunities to further achieve my career and educational goals (e.g., by attending campus events, workshops, and networking opportunities).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Has enough time for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Section 5 - Your Thoughts on Advising Process

In this section, we want to learn a little more about your thoughts on the advising process at WSU-Pullman.

Q8. Read carefully EACH of the following statements about your advising experience and indicate your level of agreement.

	1.Strongly Disagree	2.	3.	4.	5.Strongly Agree
Advising sessions are long enough to address all of my advising concerns.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know who to contact to get different questions answered (for example, regarding financial aid, course planning, tutoring, career counseling, etc.).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the purpose of college requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the purpose of departmental (major) requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the purpose of university general education requirements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to read and understand my Degree Audit Report (DARS).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The advising process is easy to understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. Section 6 - Final Thoughts

In the final section, we have a few last questions about your overall impression of academic advising at WSU-Pullman. Read each question carefully and answer it as directed.

Q9. How satisfied are you with the quality of the advising you have received as a WSU student? (Choose one that best describes your satisfaction level.)

5. Very Satisfied
 4. Somewhat Satisfied
 3. Neutral
 2. Somewhat Dissatisfied
 1. Very Dissatisfied

12. Q10

Q10. This question is very important to our research. In your own words, how would you describe your academic advisor(s)?

13. Q11

Q11. How would you grade the most recent advising you have received?

A
 B
 C
 D
 F

14. Q12

Q12. Please suggest a few things WSU should do to improve its academic advising.

Suggestion1

Suggestion2

Suggestion3

15. Thank you

Thank you very much for your participation in this important assessment of academic advising at WSU-Pullman. We wish you a wonderful semester.

Appendix B. Chi-Square Tests of Response Rates

Student Demographics	Survey Sample		Respondents		
	N	Percent	N	Percent	Expected N
FRESHMAN (0 - 29.5 SEM HRS)	1,616	32.3%	566	32.9%	556
SOPHOMORE (30 - 59.5 SEM HRS)	1,121	22.4%	350	20.3%	386
JUNIOR (60 - 89.5 SEM HRS)	1,119	22.4%	423	24.6%	386
SENIOR (90+ SEM HRS)	1,144	22.9%	383	22.2%	394
* Chi-Square =5.584, df =3, Asymp. Sig. = .134					
FEMALE	2,330	46.6%	961	55.8%	802
MALE	2,670	53.4%	761	44.2%	920
* Chi-Square =58.663, df =1, Asymp. Sig. = .000					
AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE	67	1.3%	21	1.2%	22
ASIAN; NAT HAWAIIAN; OR PAC ISLD	341	6.8%	136	7.9%	117
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	129	2.6%	26	1.5%	45
HISPANIC; LATINO; OR SPAN ORIGIN	252	5.0%	88	5.1%	86
INTERNATIONAL	147	2.9%	58	3.4%	50
WHITE	3,779	75.6%	1,294	75.1%	1,303
NOT INDICATED	285	5.7%	99	5.7%	98
* Chi-Square =12.392, df =6, Asymp. Sig. = .054					
CERTIFIED MAJORS	2,033	40.7%	720	41.8%	701
NON-CERTIFIED	2,967	59.3%	1,002	58.2%	1,021
* Chi-Square =.882, df =1, Asymp. Sig. = .348					

Appendix C. View of Academic Advisors

My Advisor	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing
Has knowledge of general education requirements, department requirements, and career information.	46.1%	29.3%	12.2%	5.2%	6.0%	1.1%
Gives me accurate information.	41.9%	32.1%	12.4%	6.7%	5.6%	1.3%
Is accessible.	36.7%	32.3%	16.6%	8.1%	5.2%	1.2%
Has enough time for me.	36.1%	28.3%	19.1%	9.6%	5.6%	1.2%
Considers my interests, values, and abilities.	29.3%	29.3%	22.4%	10.6%	7.0%	1.5%
Helps me clearly define academic and career goals.	27.1%	29.7%	24.1%	10.9%	7.0%	1.3%
Is a person I would approach for help if I were struggling academically.	28.0%	24.7%	20.2%	15.4%	10.5%	1.2%
Provides me with information (e.g., about graduate school, internship, and/or networking opportunities) that will help me achieve my career goals.	26.6%	26.0%	24.3%	12.9%	8.8%	1.5%
Helps me if I was considering other major.	23.9%	25.1%	33.7%	9.3%	5.9%	2.1%
Helps me seek out opportunities to further achieve my career and educational goals (e.g., by attending campus events, workshops, and networking opportunities).	21.4%	25.1%	26.9%	15.9%	9.2%	1.5%
Actively monitors my progress in achieving my educational and career goals.	17.1%	23.9%	33.8%	14.9%	8.9%	1.3%

Appendix D. View of Advising Experience

Thoughts on Advising Process	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Missing
I understand the purpose of departmental (major) requirements.	39.7%	39.4%	10.7%	4.4%	3.9%	1.9%
The advising process is easy to understand.	34.1%	36.1%	17.0%	6.7%	4.2%	1.9%
I understand the purpose of college requirements.	32.1%	35.8%	17.4%	7.4%	4.6%	1.7%
Advising sessions are long enough to address all of my advising concerns.	38.6%	29.5%	16.3%	7.8%	6.0%	1.8%
I understand the purpose of university general education requirements.	28.7%	34.6%	18.1%	9.8%	6.7%	2.3%
I know who to contact to get different questions answered (for example, regarding financial aid, course planning, tutoring, career counseling, etc.).	25.4%	28.7%	22.6%	14.3%	7.1%	1.8%
It is easy to read and understand my Degree Audit Report (DARS).	21.2%	28.5%	25.1%	15.7%	7.1%	2.4%

Appendix E. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Satisfaction Rating by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	American Indian	Not Indicated	White	Black	Asian & Pacific Islander	International
Hispanic	0.997	0.995	0.383	0.862	0.151	0.121
American Indian		1.000	1.000	0.999	0.976	0.897
Not Indicated			0.988	0.996	0.743	0.555
White				1.000	0.841	0.673
Black					1.000	0.994
Asian & Pacific Islander						0.996

Appendix F. Average Satisfaction Rating by Advising College/Center

Advising College/Center	N	% Satisfied	Mean	Std. Deviation
College of Nursing	34	88.2%	4.50	.788
College of Veterinary Medicine	19	89.5%	4.21	1.228
Center for Advising and Career Development	210	81.9%	4.18	.991
College of Agricultural Human and Natural Resource Sciences	168	78.0%	4.04	1.123
College of Sciences	249	73.5%	3.99	1.178
College of Engineering and Architecture	279	76.7%	3.99	1.040
College of Business	185	74.1%	3.93	1.016
College of Liberal Arts	318	72.3%	3.88	1.231
College of Education	133	69.9%	3.68	1.191
College of Communication	97	59.8%	3.43	1.290
College of Pharmacy*	4	100.0%	4.25	0.5
Total	1,692	74.8%	3.95	1.137

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 50.447, df = 9, Asymp. Sig. = .000 (*Pharmacy not included in the test)

Appendix G. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Satisfaction Rating by Advising College/Center

Advising College/Center	Vet Med	CACD	CAHNRS	Sciences	Engineering	Business	Libral Arts	Education	Communication
Nursing	0.998	0.908	0.527	0.321	0.303	0.192	0.085	0.007*	0.000*
Vet Med		1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.994	0.979	0.692	0.175
CACD			0.983	0.783	0.738	0.492	0.101	0.003*	0.000*
CAHNRS				1.000	1.000	0.998	0.928	0.159	0.001*
Sciences					1.000	1.000	0.988	0.243	0.002*
Engineering						1.000	0.988	0.229	0.001*
Business							1.000	0.662	0.019*
Libral Arts								0.790	0.024*
Education									0.872

Appendix H. Average Satisfaction Rating by Class Standing

Class Standing	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
FRESHMAN (0 - 29.5 SEM HRS)	555	4.14	0.964
SOPHOMORE (30 - 59.5 SEM HRS)	346	4.00	1.082
JUNIOR (60 - 89.5 SEM HRS)	419	3.89	1.176
SENIOR (90+ SEM HRS)	376	3.68	1.310
TOTAL	1,696	3.95	1.137

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 25.298, df = 3, Asymp. Sig. =.000

Appendix I. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Satisfaction Rating by Class Standing

Class Standing	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
Freshman	0.262	0.004*	0.000*
Sophomore		0.554	0.001*
Junior			0.044*

Appendix J. Average Satisfaction Rating by Source of Advising

Source of Advising	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Departmental Academic Advisor/Coordinator	949	3.95	1.133
Faculty Advisor	393	3.94	1.167
I Don't Know	111	3.45	1.306
Center for Advising and Career Development (CACD) Academic Advisor	241	4.19	0.929
Missing	2	5.00	0
TOTAL	1,696	3.95	1.137

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 25.989, df = 3, Asymp. Sig. =.000

Appendix K. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Satisfaction Rating by Source of Advising

Source of Advising	Faculty Advisor	CACD Advisor	Don't Know
Dept Advisor	1.000	0.015*	0.000*
Faculty Advisor		0.035*	0.000*
CACD Advisor			0.000*

Appendix L. Average Satisfaction Rating by Entering Status

Entering Status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Native	1293	3.97	1.128
Transfer	403	3.88	1.161
TOTAL	1,696	3.95	1.137

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 2.296, df = 1, Asymp. Sig. =.130

Appendix M. Average Satisfaction Rating by GPA Group

GPA	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
<2.0	80	3.90	1.121
2.0 - 2.99	623	3.98	1.126
>3.0	987	3.94	1.144
NA	6	3.50	1.378
TOTAL	1,696	3.95	1.137

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = .739, df = 2, Asymp. Sig. =.691

Appendix N. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Satisfaction Rating by GPA Group

GPA	2.0-2.99	<2.0
>3.0	0.936	0.992
2.0-2.99		0.889

Appendix O. Average Grading by Advising College/Center

Advising College/Center	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
College of Nursing	34	3.65	.774
College of Agricultural Human and Natural Resource Sciences	168	3.48	.847
Center for Advising and Career Development	208	3.48	.755
College of Sciences	247	3.41	.905
College of Veterinary Medicine	19	3.37	1.012
College of Engineering and Architecture	278	3.33	.903
College of Business	185	3.26	.834
College of Liberal Arts	317	3.23	1.087
College of Education	133	3.23	.910
College of Communication	97	3.02	1.041
College of Pharmacy*	4	3.50	.577
Total	1,690	3.33	.926

Kruskal-Wallis Test: Chi-Square = 34.174, df = 9, Asymp. Sig. =.000

Appendix P. ANOVA Tukey Post Hoc Test P-values for Comparing Grading by Advising College/Center

Advising College/Cent	Vet Med	CACD	CAHNRS	Sciences	Engineering	Business	Libral Arts	Education	Communication
Nursing	0.993	0.996	0.996	0.945	0.736	0.485	0.287	0.377	0.027*
Vet Med		1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.917
CACD			1.000	1.000	0.874	0.454	0.087	0.334	0.003*
CAHNRS				1.000	0.892	0.536	0.145	0.401	0.005*
Sciences					0.998	0.878	0.414	0.747	0.019*
Engineering						0.999	0.943	0.989	0.125
Business							1.000	1.000	0.564
Libral Arts								1.000	0.694
Education									0.851