

INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTIVE 8-7

April 3, 2006

Title: Student Academic Advisement Program

I. Purpose

This directive delineates the policy, philosophy, responsibilities, and procedures for student academic advisement.

II. Policy

It is the policy of Piedmont Technical College that its faculty and designated staff serve as academic advisors to students.

III. Statement of Philosophy and Principles

A. Philosophy

At Piedmont Technical College academic advising is viewed as a continuous interactive process involving students and advisors to clarify educational and life goals. It involves the student's entire college experience--from intake to goal attainment. It is an instructional process that enables students to become self-sufficient and take ownership of their own education by considering the major dynamics of their lives and helping them organize their educational process.

This directive outlines the procedures for conducting an effective advisement and counseling program.

B. Core Beliefs

1. Student advisees

- a. Have a desire to learn.
- b. Can be successful based upon their individual goals and efforts.
- c. Should learn to make informed educational decisions.
- d. Can be responsible for their behavior and decisions.
- e. Have varied learning needs.
- f. Need to feel empowered to become successful.
- g. Hold their beliefs and opinions, which deserve respect.

2. Advisors

- a. Encourage self-reliance by helping students
 - (1) Set realistic goals.
 - (2) Make informed, responsible decisions.
 - (3) Develop thinking, learning, and life management skills.
 - (4) Develop positive self-perceptions of themselves as learners.
- b. Develop an on-going, positive relationship with advisees

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- c. Assess and use information about student attitudes, motivation, and strengths along with objective assessment information.
 - d. Provide students with accurate and timely information.
 - e. Identify barriers to student progress and work toward change.
 - f. Are advocates for students
 - g. Respect students' rights to their individual beliefs and opinions.
 - h. Respond to the changing nature of a diverse college environment with flexibility and innovation (as, offering varied office hours, acknowledging the special needs of all students and the pressures on them, etc.)
 - i. Respect the rights of students to have personal information kept confidential, sharing that information only when both the advisor and student believe that information is relevant.
 - j. Respect opinions and expertise of colleagues (ex. model professionalism by maintaining a respectful attitude)
 - k. Abide by the academic advising philosophy, core beliefs, policies, and procedures of the college.
 - l. Keep advising skills honed by taking advantage of professional development opportunities.
3. Administrators are responsible for adequate resources, training, structure, and information and for an evaluation system that results in continuous improvement of advising.

IV. Responsibilities

Division deans, department heads, instructors, Student Development and County Center staffs, Transfer Coordinator and the Director of Academic Advisement share responsibility for implementing an effective academic advisement program.

A. Division Deans are responsible for:

- 1. Assuring that the policy and procedures outlined are implemented in a coordinated and consistent manner.
- 2. Providing for appropriate planning and recognition of this activity through the faculty performance management system.
- 3. Assessing the appropriateness and quality of advisor/advisee contacts in consultation with the appropriate Department Head and Director of Academic Advisement.
- 4. Ensuring the attendance in training sessions for new faculty advisors.
- 5. Serving as an academic advisor to designated students (varies among divisions).

B. Department Heads are responsible for:

- 1. Assuring that advisors contact new advisees during their first term, initiate advisement sessions at least once per semester, and have an opportunity to develop personal links structured toward student success.
- 2. Alerting faculty advisors to changes in procedures and course requirements which impact student advisement.
- 3. Assuring that advisors in their area follow departmental procedures for academic advisement. Such documentation provides consistency, continuity, and a basis for evaluation.
- 4. Providing training of new faculty advisors in departmental procedures.

5. Serving as an advisor.
 6. Maintaining the quality of advisement within the department by continually evaluating policies, procedures, and feedback information such as student satisfaction surveys and consulting with the Director of Academic Advisement.
- C. The Director of Academic Advisement is responsible for coordinating a college-wide system for academic advisement by
1. Working closely with the Dean of Enrollment Services, Registrar, and the Dean of Students, and other key college personnel to ensure that processes and procedures provide students with a smooth path from enrollment until goal attainment.
 2. Providing for training of new faculty advisors in groups and in individual sessions.
 3. Serving as an Enrollment Advisor during peak periods of registration for new students.
 4. Establishing and maintaining a master list of assigned advisors with input from department heads and deans.
 5. Coordinating with department heads and program coordinators to keep online advising guides current, accurate, and complete.
 6. Maintaining the *Advisor's Handbook* and the Academic Advisement web page, providing updates as needed.
 7. Coordinating with division deans and county center deans to provide on-going training for academic and county center advisors.
 8. Coordinating efforts of a college-wide academic advisement work team.
 9. Keeping abreast of trends and practices in academic advisement.
 10. Monitoring quality in one-to-one and small group sessions with advisors.
 11. Communicating changes in policies and procedures related to academic advisement.
- D. Enrollment Center Advisors are responsible for advising first-time entering students in the Enrollment Center by
1. Discussing career goals, educational plans, work and family commitments, and support services.
 2. Interpreting test scores and helping students select appropriate courses to satisfy college and program requirements.
 3. Helping students understand different methods of course delivery.
 4. Using correct procedures to register students.
 5. Reviewing student responsibilities in the advisement process and ways to connect with the assigned advisor.
 6. Explaining financial opportunities and processes for applying for aid.
 7. Ensuring new students receive orientation to the college through an online session or with an orientation leader.
 8. Following up on the progress of first-term advisees and intervening when necessary.
 9. Participating in advisor training and briefings.
 10. Following all administrative procedures.

- E. Student Success Center staff are responsible for
 1. Serving as Enrollment Center advisors.
 2. Counseling students on academic probation and advising them concerning procedures.
 3. Serving as advisors for designated groups of students.
- F. Student Records is responsible for
 1. Placing students on academic probation based upon current school policy.
 2. Informing counselors, deans, department heads, and county center staff of students on academic probation.
 3. Evaluating transcripts and informing incoming students of transfer credit and academic advisor contact information.
 4. Providing information to faculty, deans, and students about upcoming conversions of “I” and “CF” grades.
 5. Assisting in training advisors.
 6. Providing reports to advisors of students who register online.
 7. Providing academic advisors with periodic reports.
 8. Counseling students on academic probation and advising them about procedures and options.
- G. The Transfer Coordinator is responsible for
 1. Coordinating with the Director of Academic Advisement the distribution of information needed by faculty and staff to provide academic advisement to students interested in transferring.
 2. Coordinating with the Director of Academic Advisement any training of faculty and staff related to advising students planning to transfer.
- H. Faculty (Academic) Advisors are responsible for
 1. Publishing times of availability for advisement sessions each term.
 2. Initiating contact with new advisees.
 3. Keeping complete and accurate advising records within an advising folder or online.
 4. Helping students understand different methods of course delivery.
 5. Reviewing the advisor-advisee relationship, emphasizing students’ responsibilities in the advisement process.
 6. Helping students select appropriate courses to satisfy program and college requirements.
 7. Using correct procedures to register students.
 8. Approving course schedules for students registering online.
 9. Assuring that advisees have completed all courses required for graduation and submitting notification of potential graduates to the Registrar.
 10. Explaining academic procedures and college policies (i.e. standards of academic progress, grading policies, discipline codes, etc.)
 11. Referring students to appropriate college support services (ex. Student Success Center, Tutoring Center, etc.) in cases where career uncertainty or academic, attitudinal, attendance, or personal problems require intervention.
 12. Following up on student problems and progress.
 13. Participating in advisor training and briefings.

- I. The Director of Financial Aid is responsible for
 - 1. Informing the Director of Academic Advisement of current financial aid regulations as they relate to academic advisement.
 - 2. Providing training as needed for advisors.
 - 3. Serving as a resource to advisors when specific student issues arise that could affect financial aid eligibility.
- J. County Center Deans and Educational Support Coordinators (ESCs) are responsible for
 - 1. Coordinating the placement testing of county center students and ensuring that scores are routed immediately to the Assessment Coordinator.
 - 2. Discussing career goals, educational plans, work and family commitments, and support services.
 - 3. Interpreting test scores and helping students select appropriate courses to satisfy college and program requirements.
 - 4. Helping students understand different methods of course delivery.
 - 5. Using correct procedures to register students.
 - 6. Reviewing students' responsibilities in the academic advisement process and ways to connect with their assigned academic advisor.
 - 7. Explaining financial opportunities and processes for applying for aid.
 - 8. Ensuring that students complete an online orientation to the college and to the PTC Pathway.
 - 9. Serving as an academic advisor.
 - 10. Coordinating the advisement responsibilities of county center coordinators and faculty designated as academic advisors to students at the county centers.
 - 11. Participating in advisor training and briefings.

V. Procedures

A. Lex Walters Campus

- 1. Entering freshmen:
 - a. Assessment Center issues placement testing information to the Enrollment Center.
 - b. Enrollment Center Advisors follow responsibilities outlined in section IV- D.
 - c. Academic Advisors follow up with their assigned advisees by assuming responsibilities outlined in section IV-H.
- 2. Entering transfer students:
 - a. Student Records evaluates transcripts and posts transfer credits awarded.
 - b. The Registrar informs students of their assigned advisor's name.
 - c. Enrollment Center Staff provide key information about the enrollment process, including orientation and financial aid.
- 3. Re-admit students:
 - a. When students return to the college after a year or more and are continuing in the same program of study, they are assigned to the previous advisor, or if that advisor is no longer available, to an advisor based on the list of advisor assignments.
 - b. Re-admit students changing to a new program are assigned to an advisor in that program. Depending on the availability of the assigned advisor and the

closeness to the beginning of the semester, the first term schedule may be completed in the Enrollment Center or at any county center.

4. Transient, dual enrollment, and early admit students are advised and registered by Enrollment Center Advisors.
 5. Continuing Students:
 - a. During open registration periods, all Academic Advisors initiate advisement sessions and make themselves available for advising appointments.
 - b. All advisors maintain a list of assigned advisees who have been enrolled in the Enrollment Center or at a County Center and follow procedures outlined in Section IV- H.
- B. County Centers
1. Entering students take the placement test and meet with a County Center Advisor to discuss educational plans, select classes, register, and receive an orientation to the college. They are assigned an advisor based on their curriculum and their primary campus.
 2. Transient, dual enrollment, early admit, and continuing students are advised and registered by a designated County Center Advisor who follows responsibilities outlined in section IV-J.
- C. Distance Learning Students
1. Students enrolled in Associate of Arts or Science at a Distance have an advisor designated by the Dean of the GETS Division.
 2. In all other programs, students who take the majority of their course work through DL formats are assigned an advisor based on the master list of advisor assignments.

VI. Training of Faculty Advisors:

A prerequisite to good academic advisement is effective, practical training (initially and ongoing) of advisors.

- A. To provide for this need, training should expose each new advisor to the following:
1. Career Tracks online, Advising Guides, course scheduling (semester and annual), and prerequisite course information within the major, as well as departmental procedures regarding the advising process.
 2. Orientation to support services available to students, including but not be limited to
 - a. Admissions requirements and procedures
 - b. Counseling services
 - c. Tutoring Center activities
 - d. Financial aid opportunities
 - e. Online orientation to the college and to the PTC Pathway
 3. Developmental education requirements. Particular emphasis should be an interpretation of test results, sequencing of developmental education courses, and follow-up to ensure completion of courses.
 4. Use of computer software for advising and registering students.
 5. Use of proper forms, available information, and steps to complete the advisement/registration process, and to trigger timely intervention for students who need help.

- B. Training of advisors is the joint responsibility of Deans, Department Heads, Director of Academic Advisement, Dean of Enrollment Services and Registrar.
1. Deans will
 - a. Schedule at least one mid-term meeting with new faculty advisors during the advisor training period to discuss progress of training.
 - b. At the end of the faculty advisors' training, ask each faculty advisor to evaluate understanding of advisement processes and practices by completing the attached Advisor Training Checklist. (See Attachment A)
 - c. Review the completed checklist and contact the appropriate Department Head or Director of Academic Advisement if a need for action is indicated.
 2. The Department Head will
 - a. Provide training in departmental procedures and information about the curriculum, job outlook, volunteer and intern opportunities, and other such program-specific issues.
 - b. Evaluate advisement practices of individual advisors and provide guidance when necessary.
 3. The Director of Academic Advisement in conjunction with the Dean of Enrollment Services and Registrar will
 - a. Plan, coordinate, and schedule professional development programs on academic advisement for all advisors.
 - b. Consult with Academic, Enrollment Center, and County Center advisors on an on-going basis when issues arise.
 - c. Keep information current on the Academic Advisement web site and in the *Advisor's Handbook*.

VII. Evaluation of Advisement:

Some measures of the effectiveness of academic advisement can be gained by student evaluation of the process. To gain this insight,

- A. The Director of Academic Advisement in conjunction with the Director of Institutional Research will
 1. Administer periodic surveys to represent a cross-section of the college's student body.
 2. Tally and summarize the surveys and forward the results to the appropriate Deans and Department Heads.
- B. Deans and Department Heads will
 1. Use the results of surveys to evaluate the advisement performance and, if necessary, take measures to improve indicated weaknesses.
 2. Evaluate advisors in their area based on established criteria and documentation submitted by advisors during performance reviews.

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**ADVISOR TRAINING CHECKLIST
NEW ADVISORS**

To provide me with the information I need to advise students, my department head and the Director of Academic Advisement have explained or otherwise made me aware of each of the following:

- | | Advisor's Initials |
|---|--------------------|
| 1. Job duties as an advisor as contained in my job description and applicable institutional directives. | _____ |
| 2. The information requirements of advising: | |
| a) guidelines for scheduling classes | _____ |
| b) forms students use to drop/add or withdraw from classes | _____ |
| c) forms for curriculum change | _____ |
| d) pertinent dates and deadlines | _____ |
| e) maintaining advisement records | _____ |
| f) placement testing information | _____ |
| g) computer training for advising & registering students | _____ |
| h) standards of academic progress | _____ |
| 3. The roles of | |
| a) Enrollment Center | _____ |
| b) Student Records Office | _____ |
| c) Business Office | _____ |
| d) Campus Shop | _____ |
| e) Assessment Center | _____ |
| 4. The types of support services available to students from | |
| a) the Student Success Center | _____ |
| b) the Tutoring Center | _____ |
| c) the Financial Aid Office | _____ |
| d) Developmental & Transitional Studies | _____ |
| e) WIA | _____ |
| 5. Aids to accurate advisement: | |
| a) Use of Career Tracks | _____ |
| b) Use of Advising Guides | _____ |
| d) Ability to perform a degree audit | _____ |

- 6. Procedures for students
 - a) on academic probation _____
 - b) withdrawing from the college _____
 - c) nearing graduation _____

- 7. Degree, diploma, & certificate requirements to include
 - a) required courses and their sequence _____
 - b) emphasis and elective options _____
 - c) prerequisite & co-requisite course information _____
 - d) scheduling _____
 - e) developmental education requirements
 - 1) interpretation of test results _____
 - 2) sequence of developmental education courses _____
 - f) course substitution guidelines _____

- 8. Transfer opportunities to 4-year institutions _____