An Examination of the Academic Advising Process in the College of Education as Perceived by Undergraduate Students, and the Advisement Center's Pursuit to Provide Quality Academic Advising

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UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS, AND THE ADVISEMENT CENTER'S PURSUIT
TO PROVIDE QUALITY ACADEMIC ADVISING

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The hardwork, energy, and commitment put into this thesis is dedicated to my brothers and nephew who were victims of crime in our violent society......

Steven Carter 1964 - 1990
Dwight Carter 1966 - 1996
Demond Kittrell 1972 - 1993

......and to my sister, Maria “Tina” Kittrell who continues to fight against the on-going pains and ailments of Lupus.
Acknowledgements

Undertaking the writing of this study, particularly since this is my first major publication, has been a challenging task. I thank my spouse, Jerry and my children, Demetrius, Kittrella, and Stephanie for their patience and understanding. In addition, I owe a debt of gratitude to Ms. Mildred M. Pate for assisting me with organizing my ideas and editing this study for publication.
ABSTRACT

This study contains a review of research which differs and/or coincides with present findings on academic advising. It includes an examination of the College of Education Academic Advisement Services based on students’ perceptions.

In this study the Review of Literature covers five main categories, Essential Nature of Advising, Faculty versus Professional Advisors, Roles of the Advisors and Advisees, Developmental Advising - The Solution, and Establishing the Center.

The results section of this study covers three main categories, Advisors Advising, Advisors Educating, and the Advisement Center Services which contained questions and responses from the survey. Also, four open-ended questions will be presented individually. Under the category Advisor Advising are the subcategories, Academic Challenges, Academic Time Constraints, and Academic Responsibility; under the category Advisors Educating are the subcategories, Academic Improvements, and Academic Requirements; and under the category Advisement Center Services are the subcategories, Academic Advisors Limiting, Academic Advisors Referring, and Academic Rating of Professional Advisors and the Advisement Center. Each subcategory will contain questions from the survey. Academic advising tasks, developmental advising strategies, and effective advising methods will be noted as well as suggestions to improve services.
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College of Education Academic Advising Process

Essential Nature of Advising

Academic advising is considered one of the most important elements in higher education. The extreme care that professional advisors should exercise becomes pertinent in the liaison for achieving institutional, departmental, and student goals. One of the hallmarks of academic advising is to connect the student to the university.

A definition of academic advising is:

Advising is a series of activities undertaken by two principals, advisor and advisee, to accomplish the advisee’s [and to some extent the institution’s] goals for progress through a complex learning experience. The advisor is the institutional representative charged with aiding the advisee in formulating those goals and in making reasonable, systematic progress to achieve them. Academic advising refers to an advisor assisting students in specific academic matters such as course selection, programming, dropping and adding courses, and advice rendered to advisees concerning academic programs (Waggenpack & Hensley, 1992, p. 18).
Crockett (1978) explains academic advising as assisting students to realize the maximum educational benefits available to them by helping them to better understand themselves and to learn to use the resources of the institution to meet their special educational needs.

More broadly defined, academic advising is “a developmental process which assists students in the clarification of their goals and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals. This is an on-going process of clarification, evaluation, reclarification, and reevaluation” (NACADA, 1983, as cited in Koerin, 1991, p. 324).

Creamer and Atwell (1984) believe academic advising has been a topic of study and concern in higher education for a long time. They also agree that literally everyone agrees on the importance of good advising adds to effective student decision making; however, there is less agreement on the essential nature of advising.

Although academic advising is an integral part of academic success, confusion and misconceptions still haunt the process of academic advising. On the other hand, academic advising is recognized as one of the factors which contributes to higher retention rates at most universities. Koerin asserts that:

Academic advising has been ‘rediscovered’ within the last several years, emerging as a topic of particular interest in relation to student academic performance, satisfaction, and attrition. Student affairs has often shown interest in advising, but academic administrators have now also begun
to recognize its importance as a means of achieving institutional goals.

Despite this awareness, creating an institutional climate where advising is a valued component of the academic experience is no easy task (Koerin, 1991, p. 323).

A second point that Koerin makes is that one of the barriers to effective advising has been "the lack of consensus on what advising is and should be" (p.324). Koerin further notes that an effective academic advising program cannot be developed in an institution that has not articulated a common understanding of advising.

Faculty versus Professional Advisors

Historically, faculty members have served as the student’s official academic advisor; however, as advising has become a more detailed and time-consuming process, the trend has begun to shift from them to professional advisors. In addition, Grites, Hornbuckle, Mahoney, & Borgard (as cited in Trombley, 1984) postulate that academic advising has become a more complex process, with students demanding a more personalized advising relationship. The faculty are unable to be as effective as professional advisors because of the demand of teaching, research, and professional development.

Hence, effective academic advising becomes difficult with peak periods, as advisees prepare for their next term. Both the advisor and advisee feel pressed for time and overwhelmed. Historically, faculty members offices’ have long lines of students waiting to be advised. Today, during peak advisement periods, if appointments are not
issued to students, advisement centers can become just as crowded, where all seats are taken, students are standing and even sitting on the floor waiting to see an advisor. Literature supports the notion that academic advising can be hectic.

Due to the large number of students wanting walk-in advisement during these times, students often endure a lengthy wait before seeing an advisor. When students leave the center, they often feel rushed, and the added delay of completing even [a] simple form may have seemed an imposition (Severy, Lee, Carodine, Powers & Mason, 1994, p. 122).

Perhaps the reason faculty were assigned advising responsibilities was due to the following previous research on how the characteristics of advising parallel those of teaching. Although some critics support that the parallelism is strong, others feel that the similarities go unnoticed. Ryan (1992), for example, has argued that, “Few writers have fully explored the notion of advising as teaching, and none have outlined the possible parallels between characteristics of effective teaching and exemplary advising practices” (p. 4).

According to McAnulty, O’Conner, & Sklare (as cited in Frost, 1989), “the advisor is a teacher and supporter who encourages the student’s independent behavior. Research has shown that students and advisors prefer a system that allows them to share the responsibilities” (p.18).
Six factors of teaching and advising are compared in Table 2. The comparison provides an opportunity for advisors to see the differences between advising and teaching.

Table 2

Are Advising and Teaching Different?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Advising</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Primarily Cognitive</td>
<td>Primarily Affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Primarily Groups</td>
<td>Usually Individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Presentational</td>
<td>Relational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Primarily Cognitive Growth</td>
<td>Growth along several dimensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Usually one way</td>
<td>Two way (Collaborative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>Academic Discipline</td>
<td>Situational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(King, 1997 Freshman Year Experience National Conference)

Looking at Table 2, the first domain under teaching is labeled “primarily cognitive”, which means that students are thinking or are mentally involved to acquire knowledge. The primary domain under advising is “primarily affective” which means values, interests, and attitudes. However, in the advising process, students are doing more than discussing values and relaying interests. They have to utilize cognitive skills in an effort to acknowledge and understand reasons why the university’s policies are in place. “Usually individually” is used under the topic delivery; however, in various occasions
there are times when advising is given in the form of group advising. In delivery skills the primary use for teaching is presentational; however, during advisement advisors not only present information, but also seek assurance that students are comprehending the information being presented. Examples are when an advisor informs a student he/she must earn an “A” and two “B’s” in order to qualify for the Teacher Education Program (TEP) or demonstrates how to calculate their GPA to determine their eligibility. In outcomes, under teaching, students mostly experience cognitive growth in the classroom setting; however, in the advising relationship growth is experienced in various dimensions, such as the development of autonomy, maturity, decision-making, etc.

Ryan (1992) asserts that, “Students should be [able] to actively participate in the advising meeting as they would in a classroom, working with their advisors to develop educational and personal objectives and to explore ideas and options” (p. 6).

Since some faculty enjoy and value their academic advising role, the shift to professional advisors is not always readily accepted. Current literature is now addressing the pros and cons of using faculty advisors versus professional advisors.

In some cases due to institutional demands, advisement responsibilities have been shifted to professional advisors because faculty responsibilities have increased to include more involvement with accreditation, curriculum concerns of departmental programs, concerns to conduct research and publish articles, quality of teaching, etc.
Some faculty regard advising as purely administrative, trivial, and not at all contributing toward their professional growth, salary increments, promotions in rank, or tenure decisions. Advising is a time consuming activity and the faculty member regards this time as better used in committee work, making improvements in instruction, doing research, and publishing, so advising tends to be neglected, hurried or simply not done (Teague & Grites as cited in King, 1988, p. 142).

To further examine this controversy, King’s (1988) “Advising Delivery Systems” indicates that both professional and faculty advisors have strengths and weaknesses that they bring into the advising process. As strengths, professional advisors bring access and availability to students. King notes that “they are generally housed in a central location, spend a full day in their offices, and devote the majority of their time to providing academic advising to students” (p. 144). Third on the list is their knowledge of student development theory and knowledge of services on campus. Because King believes that when a professional advisor gains knowledge in student development theory through his/her training, then this can be used as a strength. Also noted is a second positive feature, which is their knowledge of human development theories. Professional advisors can be particularly helpful to their advisees in coping with issues related to personal and career development. Fourth, King indicates that advisors are knowledgeable of services on and off campus and are more likely to possess good referral skills. Yet, another
strength is that professional advisors are usually program neutral, meaning they are less biased toward a particular major than a faculty member might be of that discipline, therefore, less likely to try to influence students’ program or course selections.

King (1988) also indicates weaknesses, such as professional advisors do not possess an in-depth knowledge of courses, programs and educational and career opportunities in a given discipline like that of a faculty advisor.

One of the strengths Crockett (1985); Landry (1981); Larsen and Brown (1983); and Teague (1977) list in favor of faculty includes their knowledge of advising issues related to their discipline. King (1988) supports that faculty advisors generally can give students detailed information which relates to courses and programs which are in their department. King adds, “they (faculty) can provide the rationale for course/program requirements, and are knowledgeable about educational and career opportunities related to their field” (p. 142). For example, in the College of Education all of the faculty are aware that students need to earn and maintain a 2.50 GPA for any educational program.

King lists one critical faculty weakness as their lack of knowledge of student development theory:

They (faculty) sometimes may be less helpful to students when dealing with advising issues related to personal and career development. They are also often less knowledgeable than other types of advisors about other campus resources, and therefore less effective in referring students to those resources (King, 1988, p. 143).
Table 3 contrasts characteristics that describe the general personality traits of faculty members and professional advisors.

Table 3  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Advisors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>Good Listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td>Tolerant of Other Point of Views</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(King, 1997 Freshmen Year Experience National Conference)

These personality traits describe the faculty members as a figure who focuses on a particular discipline, while the advisors’ traits describes one who focuses more on working with people in general.

When Dr. Wall retired as director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies, he provided his personal perspectives on faculty advising:

I think it’s fairly a universal belief throughout academe in this country that faculty advisors feel most comfortable and do their best work with students interested in the faculty member’s area of expertise, especially students at the junior-senior level who are enrolled in the faculty member’s major

(Wall, 1988, p. 67).
Wall also emphasizes that professional advisors are here to stay because higher education and choices confronting students have grown so complex that it demands specialists who can help students sort out what they want to do. However, faculty must “not be divorced” from academic advising. Wall adds, “The advising system that cultivates the faculty as colleagues rather than as adversaries will enjoy much greater health” (p. 69).

Teague (as cited in Creamer and Atwell, 1984) conducted a study to determine which advisement system worked better for the students, a general faculty-student advisement system or a professional counselor’s system. Four models were examined, a professional counselor model, a counselor-faculty combination model, (where the counselor does most of the advising), a faculty-counselor combination model, (the faculty does most of the advising), and a teacher-only model. Teague found student satisfaction to be highest in the professional counselor model and lowest in the counselor-faculty combination model.

Yet another study indicates that the number of advisees the faculty have and other factors contribute to the success of advisement. The results of a study by Eddy and Essarum (1989), conducted at one of the world’s largest universities, indicates that faculty advisement of students needed to be improved and that students perceived their advisement needs differently from the faculty. They discovered that one of the problems was the faculty/student ratio; there were more than 7,000 students per faculty member.
The major findings of their study suggest the following:

Faculty advisors have a serious concern with students who have graduated and are seeking employment. Faculty advisors need to assist the students with career/vocational planning. The findings also indicate that the greatest needs centered on the advising functions which would give direction to the total education experience (i.e., academic, career and life goals) and the need for advisors to serve as students’ personal references for prospective employers and/or graduate school (Eddy and Essarum, 1989, p. 12).

Literature supports that precise and professional advising is the key, and Creamer and Atwell (1984) postulate that, “The central issue is not so much who advises as whether the plan guarantees positive effects on the achievement of students goals” (p. 18). There is still much research needed to fully explore these controversial issues, problems, and solutions related to professional and faculty advisors.

Roles of the Advisors and Advisees

Some university officials and students still have questions, such as what does academic advising include, what is the advisor’s role, what is the advisee’s role and what types of services are available at the advisement centers? In the advising process advisors generally help students define goals, give individual attention to determine academic direction, and provide them with information, such as what required classes and prerequisites are necessary to make progress in their major, scheduling concerns, class load issues, etc.
Nevertheless, there are difficulties in clearly defining the academic advisors' role and job responsibilities.

Moreover, adding to the confusion is the diversity which exists in the roles of academic advisors from campus to campus; therefore, job responsibilities are not necessarily consistent. For example, in addition to advising, an academic advisor's role in a small community college could include wearing multiple hats, such as providing information about career opportunities, job placement, tutorial assistance, and registration.

Furthermore, many freshmen students who are unfamiliar with and new to higher education enter the advisor/advisee relationship with the idea of equating the advisor's role with that of their high school counselor's. It is not until advisees have met with their advisor numerous times that they realize that advisement is a relationship, which involves two individuals communicating and actively participating in the relationship. To set a foundation for that common understanding, the National Association of Academic Advising (NACADA) has established eight goals which define the role of effective academic advisors:

1. Assist students in self-understanding and self-acceptance (value clarification, understanding abilities, interests, limitations).

2. Assist students in their consideration of life goals by relating interests, skills, abilities, and values to careers, the world of work, and the nature and purpose of higher education.
3. Assist students in developing an educational plan consistent with life goals and objectives.

4. Assist students in developing decision-making skills.

5. Provide accurate information about institutional policies, procedures, resources, and programs.

6. Make referrals to other institutional or community services.

7. Assist students in evaluation or reevaluation of progress toward established goals and educational plans.

8. Provide information about students to the institution, colleges, and/or academic departments (Crockett, 1988, p. 59).

Although NACADA has established goals for effective advising, there still seems to be a lack of understanding of where the limits are for academic advisors. Advisors need to know what their responsibilities are in order to be effective and productive members of the university, to be an asset to the college or department, and to be successful in helping the students they serve. It is in these areas that this study addresses, clarifies, and defines the responsibilities and roles of an advisor and the advisee.

Advisors are responsible

• for involving others, when appropriate in the advising process,

• to the college or university in which they work,

• to higher education generally,
• to their professional role as advisors and to themselves personally.

In addition, the advisees

• can be responsible for their own behavior;
• can be successful based upon their individual goals and efforts;
• have a desire to learn;
• learning needs vary according to individual skills, goals, and experiences;
• hold their own beliefs and opinions. (NACADA, 1994, p. 5-7).

Many advisees are unaware that they have responsibilities in the advising process. These students enter the advising process believing that advisors should assume all advising responsibilities. According to Trombley (1984), today’s students expect more. They expect advisors to not only assist them in integrating academic opportunities but also with personal issues, capabilities, and goals. Ediger (1992) provides some insight into the personal issues by stating:

Advisors do not dictate problems or solutions, but assist students to clarify, select, and test a solution. Advisors know when a student needs further referral to one specifically trained to counsel and guide. Personal problems
faced by students include rejection by parent(s), brothers, or sisters; lack of
money and job; loss of a fiancé; pending divorce in the home setting;
unemployment by one or both parents; death or illness in the family or
of a loved one; feelings of depression and the futility of life; low grades
and grade point average; poor health; extreme competition in the
university setting; or being in trouble with the law (p. 365).
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Developmental Advising — The Solution

In addition to personal situations that impact academic performance, students are at different stages of development. Thus, the ability of the academic advisor to determine the developmental stage of the student becomes important because each student is unique and generally makes academic decisions based on their developmental status. The human development theories provide the necessary framework for advisors to put the developmental stage or level of maturity of the student into context, which helps the advisor to better serve the student. For example, some students are pressured to choose a particular major primarily because of the number of family members who have studied that field. On the other hand, there are students who refuse to succumb to family pressure and study what they are interested in and believe they will do well in. One of the differences in the two students is their maturity levels. Advisors are better prepared to advise students when advisors have been educated in the various human development theories and professionally trained in utilizing developmental strategies.

According to Roberta Flaherty, Executive Director of NACADA, (personal communication, February 12, 1997) in the early 1970's Academic Advising moved from being just procedures, such as enrollment, signing a form, and registering for classes to a
developmental process, a process that looks at student development in relation to
decision-making skills, retention, etc. Flaherty further explains that Academic Advising
and Developmental Advising have been used interchangeably, but the fact is that
Academic Advising has evolved into Developmental Academic Advising.

According to Gordon (1988), developmental advising is considered the vehicle in
higher education that is most likely to succeed in providing the personalization students
want in advising. Gordon created a table (see Table 1) of examples of advising tasks with
corresponding developmental advising strategies which clarifies how the two processes
differ.
Table 1

*Developmental Advising
Advising Tasks and Developmental Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advising Tasks</th>
<th>Developmental Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advising:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advising:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Convey general academic information&quot;</td>
<td>- Convey information in context of student’s relationship with the institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Convey procedural information&quot;</td>
<td>- Monitor students’ knowledge and understanding of campus resources and his/her ability to access them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Monitor academic progress&quot;</td>
<td>- Help students understand reasons for certain institutional and advising policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Record student contacts in record&quot;</td>
<td>- Act as student’s advocate when appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Assist students with faculty contact&quot;</td>
<td><strong>Scheduling:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Instruct students in appeal procedure&quot;</td>
<td>- Approach scheduling process as an opportunity to increase knowledge and develop skills rather than a one-time event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Enforce academic standards&quot;</td>
<td>- Help a student schedule in terms of personal abilities and goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hold regular office hours&quot;</td>
<td>- Interpret tests in clear and a sensitive manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Monitor student comments and refer concerns to proper source&quot;</td>
<td>- Use holistic approach to formulating schedules so that an appreciation for an integrated program is developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Scheduling:** | **Procedural:** |
| Pre-schedule student for next term | - Maintain records with understanding that they are personal and confidential |
| Interpret test results and institutional requirements | - Students’ problems may sometimes be resolved through paper transactions |
| Monitor course selection | **Counseling:** |
| Explain curricular intricacies and major requirements | - Help students assess their values, interests, abilities and goals |
| Assess appropriateness of course schedule | - Help students relate their personal strengths and limitations to academic and career opportunities |
| | - Refer students to relevant human, printed and computer resources |
| | - Assist with decision making and the establishment of a realistic action plan based on students’ unique needs |

*(Gordon, 1988, p. 116).*
Literature supports that the theoretical basis of academic advising comes from developmental theories. Gordon (1988) indicates that when advisors advise from a developmental approach, it requires "knowledge and understanding of student and adult development theory and of how theoretical frameworks can provide a foundation for effective advising strategies and techniques" (p. 107). Developmental advising is defined as:

........................ first, a process--something going on or proceeding.

This type of advising reflects the idea of movement, action, and progression. Developmental advising is more accurately understood as an orientation rather than a method or system (Raushi, 1993, p. 6).

In addition, Raushi believes that if advisors advise from a developmental perspective, it is like viewing students at work on life tasks in the context of their whole life settings, including their college experiences.

Furthermore, because developmental advising is rooted in the human developmental theory, advisors are able to connect theoretical aspects with practical application. When advisors are knowledgeable of psychosocial, cognitive, maturity and typological theories associated with human development, generally they can apply strategies that will foster students’ continued development. Knowledge of developmental issues provides the opportunity for the academic advisor to assist students in such a way that students can increase the likelihood of academic success.
Researchers such as Pascarella & Terenzini (1991) and Gordon (1988) have recognized Chickering’s psychosocial theory as one which is useful in describing student development in the higher education setting. Gordon (1988) indicates that developmental theories have “significant merit as a theory base for developmental academic advising.” Gordon points out that Chickering’s psychosocial theory gives focus to the college years as a time of development. Chickering’s seven vectors are:

1. **Developing Competence** - increased skills in intellectual, physical, and social competence lead to a sense of confidence that one is capable of handling and mastering a range of tasks.

2. **Managing Emotions** - increasing awareness of one’s feelings which allows flexible control and expression.

3. **Developing Autonomy** - confronting a series of issues which ultimately lead to the recognition of one’s independence.

4. **Establishing Identity** - integrating the many facets of one’s experience and negotiating a realistic and stable self-image.

5. **Freeing Interpersonal Relationships** - increasing tolerance and acceptance of differences between individuals and increasing capacity for mature and intimate relationships.

6. **Developing Purpose** - assessing and clarifying interests, educational and career options, and lifestyle preferences and integrating those factors in setting coherent direction for one’s life.
7. **Developing Integrity** - defining a set of values that guides one’s actions

(Gordon, 1988, p. 109).

Gordon (1988) explains that although all of the vectors can serve as a focus for the delivery of academic advising, the three key vectors, developing competence, developing autonomy, and developing purpose can provide the basis for a strong developmental advising program.

Yet, another way of viewing developmental advising:

Developmental advising is based on equal and shared problem solving between student and advisor. Students rate as important (as) the advisor (in) allowing them to make decisions on their own when presented with options (Winston & Sandor, 1984, p. 3).

Knowing the history of academic advising, the current developmental advising focus, the roles and responsibilities of the advisor and the advisee, and effective advising techniques will clarify some of the different expectations that both the advisors and advisees bring to the advising process. Moreover, knowing this information should give advisors the opportunity to focus on components needed to develop and implement successful advising programs. Advisors have an overview of where advising was (tasks oriented) to where advising is (developmental strategies), and now should explore the question, “Where do we go from here?” It will also help the institution define and outline factors which are needed to develop effective advisement programs that will contribute to high retention.
Glennen, Farren, Vowell, and Black (as cited in Tinto, 1988) agree that “effective advising plays the central role in the development of effective retention programs” (p. 25). In a study of other institutional characteristics, Forrest (1985) found that a group of nine institutions with the most comprehensive set of orientation and advising programs had a graduation rate nine percent higher than that of a group of nine institutions with the least comprehensive programs.

As professional advisors assume the role of academic advising responsibilities, administrations in higher education are strongly supporting the establishment of advisement centers on campuses. Wall (1988) states that, “The phenomenon of the advising center has become so commonplace that colleges and universities without some type of advising center have become a dwindling minority” (p. 5). Koerin (1991) emphasizes that university administrators and student affairs professionals focus on effective academic advising in their efforts to retain students and maintain the university’s positive image.

Establishing the Center

Flickinger (1989) postulates that, “Advisement centers, like successful businesses, have to involve themselves in successful marketing principles. Certain factors such as image, location, service, advertising, and innovative problem solving are important elements in determining success of advising centers in higher education” (p. 85). Research does not identify the exact elements which constitute an effective advisement center because the centers are established based on various university variables and
perhaps this supports that there are no problems with establishing a Center. According to Dr. Wesley Habley, (personal communication, October 17, 1996) there is no cookbook for setting up and creating an advisement center. He further explains that the standards are based on the university’s mission, goals, size, location, and diversity. Some advisement centers offer additional services such as tutoring, workshops on study skills, and career counseling, etc. Dr. Wall (1988) declares that, “An advisement center benefits from a staff with a wide range of academic backgrounds” (p.10). Flickinger (1989) supports that, “The busier centers had created the perception that they had something the students needed or wanted. It appeared that the more services they offered, the busier they were” (p. 84).

The following six elements have been outlined as guidelines needed to establish an advisement center.

1. Administrative Support
2. Development of Institutional Advising Policy
3. Selection and Training of Advisors
4. Recognition/Reward System
6. Assessment of Effectiveness

(King, 1997 Freshman Year Experience National Conference).
Although each element is independent, all are critical in designing an effective program and having a successful center. However, if one element is excluded, the program or center is in jeopardy of having deficiencies because all of the elements are needed to establish a successful center.

Universities are moving toward specialized centers. The centers are generally student-centered and are designed to create an environment that encourages students to actively participate in the advising process. Since Georgia Southern University’s goals include having a positive image and maintaining high student retention rate, the university provides students with an individual professional or faculty advisor and the administration has supported the establishment of four professional academic advisement centers.

Georgia Southern University has approximately 14,000 students enrolled, who are serviced in one of four advisement centers or the departments and is expanding to a centralized advisement system. Georgia Southern is a university that believes advising is not just an advisor’s responsibility:

Georgia Southern makes every effort to provide students with quality academic advising. Students must ultimately be responsible for their own choices, their own program selection and their own deadlines......

(Georgia Southern University 1996-1997 General Catalog p. 25).

As a part of the mission, the administration at Georgia Southern University supports the goal of providing students with a nurturing environment which fosters academic
excellence; therefore, as a part of this effort, the advisement centers are strongly supported. Another part of the mission is to graduate students who are knowledgeable, clear-thinking, articulate, and effective in problem-solving. Having one-on-one contact with an advisor contributes to the mission. Moreover, academic advisement centers’ professional goals parallel these same qualities and encourage students to become actively involved in the advising process.

In 1982, (the Academic Advisement Center), Georgia Southern University’s first academic advisement center was established for undeclared majors with advisors advising approximately 870 students; today approximately 1,676 students are advised in that facility. There are approximately five professional advisors and 25 faculty advisors. The College of Business Advisement Center was established in 1988 with professional advisors advising approximately 1,300 students; today three professional advisors and 12 faculty advisors advise approximately 2,100 students. The College of Education Advisement Center was established in 1991 with advisors advising approximately 600 students; today six professional advisors advise approximately 1,700 students. In August of 1996 the College of Health and Professional Studies Advisement Center was established with professional advisors advising approximately 300 students; today three professional advisor are advising approximately 800 students. The growth of advisement centers is consistent with the growth of the institution, which had an enrollment of 6,830 in 1982 and at the time of this study, the enrollment has grown to 14,000 students.
Georgia Southern University's advisement centers offer the service of providing students with one-on-one contact and are usually open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Some centers extend hours to 6:30 p.m. during peak advisement times to accommodate non-traditional and athlete students. Having the advisors available nine hours a day is another variable which contributes to the administrators’ goal of developing a nurturing campus environment. Georgia Southern University currently has the four specialized centers and anticipates opening two other centers, one for the College of Science and Technology majors and one for the College of Liberal Arts and Social Science majors.

Focusing on the College of Education services, these include advising all undergraduate and post baccalaureate students who plan to pursue teaching as their career. The center has six professional advisors and no faculty advisors. The advising process includes assisting students with defining what discipline or area of education they want to study, helping the students with feeling comfortable when they consult with professional advisors, demonstrating to the students that advisors are genuine and sincere in wanting to help with their academic concerns, etc.

Each quarter professional advisors in the College of Education are responsible for advising approximately 300 to 350 students. The advising responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- discussing what classes are needed to progress in the program of study,
- discussing course descriptions,
- communicating the complexity of taking various courses concurrently,
-articulating requirements needed to qualify for TEP,

- monitoring students' progress to maintain TEP status,

-equating transfer courses as needed for the program of study,

-teaching students how to calculate grade point average (GPA),

- articulating what grades are needed to earn a 2.50,

-evaluating whether it is wise for a student to drop/add a course,

-referring students to other departments, such as Counseling Center, Career Services, etc.,

- communicating what students need to do in order to clear for graduation,

-reviewing students' file for satisfactory completion of departmental, university, and state requirements needed to graduate, such as earning a passing score on the Teacher's Certification Test (TCT),

- clearing the student to graduate.

The rationale for the above expectations stems from experience as a professional advisor and advising students who have verbally expressed such concerns during advisement sessions. In the College of Education, the role and responsibilities of the advisor are, perhaps, ambiguous to the advisees. In fact, the students are unaware of their expectations as an advisee.
The primary purposes for conducting this research were to determine what aspects of the College of Education Advisement Center services were and were not meeting their advisees needs, to learn what students want or expect from their advisors, to clarify their perceptions of the Center's services, and to provide students the opportunity to evaluate the Advisement Center services. Issues examined include whether students were aware of advisors' limitations and what their expectations as advisees were, as well as to clarify expectations of both advisors and advisees.

Therefore, the following research questions were investigated:

1. Do the College of Education advisees.....

   1A. *want advisors to commend them when they achieve academic accomplishments and probe them to find what happens or contributes to failure?*

   1B. *feel too rushed during advisement sessions, and want to see extended hours at the advisement center?*

   1C. *support that advisors should assume all responsibilities for advising, as if the students have no knowledge about their program of study; therefore, tell the student what classes to take?*
1D. •expect the advisors to provide ways or tips on how to raise grades, such as strategies on how to study, how to calculate grade point average (GPA), etc.?
1E. •know whether the students are currently in the TEP Program, know what the current requirements are to be in the TEP, and feel that standards should be raised?
1F. •expect advisors to tell them the reputation of professors, such as who is easy, not so easy, and difficult?

2. Will a higher percentage of advisees indicate preference for a professional advisor or a faculty member?
3. Will a higher percentage of advisees believe advisors will refer them to another department when needed?
4. Will a higher percentage of advisees value the services at the advisement?
5. The majority of the participants have been asked to list the subject they plan to teach.
6. Will the advisees indicate that advisors have given them useful information about classes, and professors?
7. Will the advisees indicate future expectations, services or programs they would like the Center to implement?
8. Will the advisees be able to indicate what issues they believe advisors should provide more help?

The research questions are presented in one of the three main categories: Advisors Advising, Advisors Educating, or Advisement Center Services. Under the category
Advisors Advising are research questions 1A, 1B, and 1C. Under the category Advisors Educating are the research questions 1D and 1E. Under the last category Advisement Center Services are the research questions 1F, 2, 3 and 4. Research questions 5, 6, 7, and 8 represent the four open-ended questions that are on the questionnaire. They will not be presented in a category, but will be addressed individually and results presented in a table.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Method

Participants

The participants were 569 of the 1,700 undergraduate students served by the College of Education Advisement Center. Of the 1,700 undergraduate students, upperclassmen represent the majority of the students in the population sample reflected in this study. The 33.4% represents an adequate and high enough percentage of participants to validate the study. Of the respondents, 54.1% (308 students) were seniors, 17.4% (99 students) were juniors, 13.0% (74 students) were sophomores, 14.1% (80 students) were freshmen, and 1.4% (8 students) were post baccalaureates (see Appendix A for graph). All of the students who participated have officially declared education as their major, plan to teach, have professional advisor, and have been advised in the College of Education Academic Advisement Center at least one quarter.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Instrument

The questionnaire, developed by the researcher, consists of 30 questions; 26 questions are designed as closed-ended questions and based on issues raised by students during advisement sessions. These closed-ended questions address issues such as feeling too rushed during advisement, whether the advisement center’s hours should be extended, whether professional advisors are helpful, etc. The participants selected from the combinations of choices: yes, maybe, no; yes, some, no; or yes, sometimes, no. The last four questions are open-ended: question 27 asks what subject the student plans to teach; question 28 asks the student to list the most useful information the advisor has shared with him/her; question 29 asks the students to indicate what direction they would like to see the Advisement Center moving in; and question 30 asks the student to list what additional information should be provided by advisors. In addition, the instrument includes items which collected data on the participants’ classifications, and the number of visits with their advisors.

A pilot study was conducted one week prior to administering the questionnaire to determine how much time it would take students to complete the entire questionnaire, to see if the terminology was clear and understandable, and to see if any of the questions
were vague. The pilot study involved five students: two seniors, one junior, one sophomore, and one freshman. It took 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Each participant in the pilot test was verbally asked whether he or she thought the questionnaire was clear and understandable, and whether the questions were too detailed. They all responded with comments such as “I understood it fine and I had no problem.”

Procedure

Completion of the questionnaire (see Appendix B) was voluntary. Included with the questionnaire was an intra campus memorandum (See Appendix C) for participants to read that identified the surveyor by name, the surveyor's qualifications, the purpose of the questionnaire, the assurance that responses were confidential, the permission to use the results in a study, and the time necessary to complete the questionnaire. The memo also informed participants that the study had been approved by Georgia Southern University’s Institutional Review Board. Responses were entered on the scantron on which the questionnaire was printed. The students did not have to disclose their name nor the name of their academic advisor.

Two methods of data collection were used. Students completed the questionnaire when they came into the College of Education Advisement Center to see their academic advisor and the questionnaire was administered in a random sample in education classes. Data collection took place from April 4, 1996 through May 17, 1996, a total of approximately 6 weeks.
Data Analysis

Each item on the questionnaire was examined by the researcher and placed in a category based on its contribution to that category. There are three main categories, each with several subcategories. The three main categories are Advisors Advising, Advisors Educating, and Advisement Center Services (see Appendix D for the placement of each question).

Under the category Advisors Advising are the subcategories, Academic Challenges (Questions 4, 7 and 18), Academic Time Constraints (Questions 10 and 11), and Academic Responsibility (Questions 12, 13 and 19).

The second main category, Advisors Educating, is composed of the subcategories: Academic Improvements (Questions 5, 6, and 21) and Academic Requirements (Questions 3, 8, and 9).

The final main category, Advisement Center Services, consists of these subcategories: Academic Advisors Limiting (Questions 14 and 20), and Academic Advisors Referring (Questions 15, 16, and 17), as well as a final subcategory, Academic Ratings in which (Questions 22, 23, 25, and 26) were used to rate Professional Advisors and Questions 24 and 29 were used to rate the Advisement Center.
The researcher used a computerized scanner (a Scrantron 2500 machine) to tabulate each scantron. The computer tabulated the data, provided the number and percentage of students who answered the question for each response option. For closed-ended questions, the researcher looked for the percentage which represented the highest number of students. Responses to open-ended questions were calculated manually. The researcher selected patterns and frequencies in answers to analyze the data. The data were manually computed to determine percentages by classification and major of the student.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of the research are presented in three main categories: Advisors Advising, Advisors Educating, and the Advisement Center Services. All contain the research questions, the related questionnaire items, results and discussion.

Moreover, all three main categories have been influenced by developmental theories. The developmental process of Advisors Advising involves not only building a relationship with the advisee, but helping students to understand why policies and procedures are in place. Incorporating the developmental process in Advisors Educating include advisors not only educating students of institutional requirements, but assisting them in defining their strengths, weakness, abilities, and interests to assure they are in the right major. The developmental process even effects Advisement Center Services; it enables the advisors to view the centers’ services constructively to determine the developmental conceptual framework in which the center will operate. It is important to operate in a theoretical or conceptual framework in which the type of services offered are meeting students needs. The four open-ended questions will be presented individually and the results will be represented in a table.
The researcher placed the subcategories academic challenges, academic time constraints, and academic responsibilities under Advisors Advising because they all affect the academic advising process. The subcategories academic improvements and academic requirements are under Advisors Educating because both relate to advisors educating advisees of various concerns such as, calculating their GPA, understanding departmental policies, etc. The subcategories, professional advisors, advisement center, academic advisor limiting, and referring are under Advisement Center Services because they all relate to the utilization of services in an advisement center. Each subcategory has a results section and a discussion section; the questions from the questionnaire are in the results sections and the implications for the results are in the discussion section. The structure of the research is as follows (See Appendix D for the placement actual question):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisors Advising</th>
<th>Advisors Educating</th>
<th>Advisement Center Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenges</td>
<td>Academic Improvements</td>
<td>Academic Advisors Limiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Time Constraints</td>
<td>Academic Requirements</td>
<td>Academic Advisors Referring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Ratings:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>→Professional Advisors</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>→Advisement Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Advisors Advising

Academic Challenges

One of the goals of academic advising is to help students identify the destinations they wish to reach and the courses they need to take to pursue and attain their destination. Atkinson, Linton, & McLaughlin (1995). Academic advisors are professionals who articulate what students are required to do academically to obtain a degree. Grades are the key mechanisms used in determining progress toward degree attainment. Students expect advisors to actively listen to their academic concerns and expect the advisor to provide valuable feedback. If a student’s academic performance is poor, it could be related to a student’s lack of understanding of time management; their priorities maybe out of order, such as putting their social life before their studies; or related to personal matters that may be interfering. Therefore, it’s difficult for advisors to know how far to probe the student about academic concerns when they perform poorly. NACADA supports that advisors gain meaningful insights into students’ academic, social, and personal experiences and needs. Moreover, if academic performance is poor, the advisor has to make the student aware of the institution’s and/or department’s requirements needed to be in good academic standing. Advisors try not to sound like a parent giving a lecture on
why it’s important to maintain satisfactory grades, but to present the facts in a professional manner by articulating what academic penalties the student will face if grades continue to fall. On the contrary, if a student is doing remarkably well, do advisees expect advisors to commend them for excellent academic performance? To find out what students’ thoughts were about advisors’ probing, lecturing, and congratulating, three questions were asked.

Results:

Research question 1A relates to whether advisees want advisors to commend or probe them; thus participants responded as follows.

If a student miserably fails a quarter, it is the advisor's responsibility to probe the student to get an idea of what happened? 30% (175 students) marked “yes,” 42% (238 students) marked “maybe”; while 28% (156 students) marked “no.” Advisors should lecture or give a short talk to students who are not doing well academically, 55% (313 students) marked “yes,” 33% (185 students) marked “maybe”; while 12% (71 students) marked “no.” Advisors should congratulate students when they make Dean's list or are doing well academically, 86% (488 students) marked “yes,” 10% (59 students) marked “maybe”; while 4% (22 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

The majority of the students are unsure whether they want advisors to probe them when they miserably fail a quarter. Surprisingly, the majority of students support that advisors should lecture or give a short talk to them when they are not doing well
academically. Discussing personal issues are probably difficult and sensitive for most students and perhaps explains why they are unsure whether advisors should probe.

Evidently, students want praise because more than half of them agree that advisors should congratulate students when they make Dean’s list or are doing well academically.

**Academic Time Constraints**

During the advisement peak periods, it becomes a challenge for advisors to address academic concerns, such as, poor grades, complete class selection, an entire planned program of study, clearance for graduation, etc. within the allotted twenty minutes. This is especially the case during the peak times when appointments are scheduled back to back. It becomes difficult for advisors to stay within the time frame without going overtime into the next student’s appointment, especially if several issues need to be addressed. Yet, students expect advisors to be accessible and to spend adequate time with them in planning their program of study.

**Results:**

Research question 1B relates to whether advisees feel too rushed during advisement sessions and the advisement center’s hours; the following questions were asked. *During advisement I feel too rushed. I need more time to discuss my academic concerns with my advisor:* 47% (266 students) marked “yes,” 21% (122 students) marked “maybe”; while 32% (181 students) marked “no.”
Would you like to see extended hours at the advisement center such as opening up at 7:30 a.m. instead of 8:00 a.m., and closing at 6:30 p.m. instead of 5:00 p.m.? 50% (284 students) marked “yes,” 26% (149 students) marked “maybe”; while 24% (136 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:
Almost half of the students feel too rushed during advisement sessions, and would like to have their advisor spend more time with them during advisement peak periods. Half of the students, who participated in the survey, would like to see the College of Education Advisement Center extend its hours.

Academic Responsibility

Are students aware of their academic responsibilities or do students believe that advisors should assume all responsibility in the advisement relationship? During appointments, some students expect advisors to tell them what grades to make in order to qualify for TEP (at every session), what professors to take to earn “good grades”, what classes to take and even manipulate registration to get them the classes they want at the times they want them.

Results:
Research question 1C relates to advisors’ and advisee’s responsibilities. In response to these questions, Advisors should expect students to know their program of study, (the classes on the check sheets) prior to advisement, 47% (269 students) marked “yes,” 31% (175 students) marked “maybe”; while 22% (125 students) marked “no.”
Advisors should assume all responsibility for advising. They should assume that students don’t know their program of study; therefore, advisors should tell students what classes they need to take each quarter, 42% (240 students) marked “yes,” 32% (181 students) marked “maybe”; while 26% (148 students) marked “no.” I feel that advisors are responsible for getting me the classes I want at the times I want them, 15% (87 students) marked “yes,” 33% (188 students) marked “maybe”; while 52% (294 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

Students support that they should assume some responsibility in the advising relationship. The majority of the students responded positively, indicating that advisors should expect them to know their program of study. However, in the second question, the majority of the students indicated “yes” that advisors should assume that students don’t know their program of study. Although clearly stated in the Georgia Southern University catalog, that students are responsible, students are still unclear as to who should assume what responsibility in the advising process.
Advisors Educating

Academic Improvements

Being an effective advisor parallels some of the characteristics which define effective teaching, such as preparing for students, organizing material, having the ability to stimulate students’ thoughts and interests, demonstrating knowledge and love of content. These are all highly recommended in the classroom setting and are quite frequently exercised in the advisement center.

Helping students learn is not very much different from a service point of view. For some people, there is an almost missionary zeal in teaching a child to read, helping her or him learn a trade, or assisting her or him in finding a career (Hessong and Weeks, 1987, p. 457).

Hessong and Weeks also identify some of the characteristics which define an ideal teacher. Being knowledgeable, humorous, honest, clear and concise, open, patient, a role model and being able to relate theory to practice, and in addition, such characteristics are also encouraged and promoted for the ideal advisor.
Results:

Research question 1D relates to whether advisors should teach students' strategies on how to raise, and calculate their GPA, the following questions were asked. Do you feel that the advisement center should become more involved with providing ways or tips on how to raise grades, methods of how to study, etc.? 65% (369 students) marked "yes," 26% (146 students) marked "maybe"; while 9% (54 students) marked "no."

Advisors should teach students how to calculate grade point average (GPA); especially when they have a combined GPA, or need to know their GPA for their major classes only, 76% (433 students) marked “yes,” 16% (91 students) marked “maybe”; while 8% (45 students) marked “no.” In response to the question, I expect my advisor to provide good academic advice, 97% (550 students) marked “yes,” 3% (19 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

The results of these questions show that students expect advisors to teach them what they need to know about their program of study, about their GPA, etc. The majority of the students would like the advisors to teach them how to study and offer them tips on how to improve grades. More than half of the students believe that advisors should teach them how to calculate their GPA, whether it’s needed to figure a combined GPA (transfer plus current) or to figure GPA for major classes only. An overwhelming majority expect their advisor to provide “good academic advice.”
Academic Requirements

In order to qualify for the TEP Program the students have to meet the following Admission Criteria:

✓ Students must have an adjusted GPA of at least a 2.50 on course work at Georgia Southern.

✓ In addition, if transfer GPA is less than 2.50, it will be combined with the Georgia Southern’s GPA to determine the combined adjusted GPA. Moreover, the combined GPA must be at least a 2.50 to qualify for admission in for TEP.

✓ Students must have a grade of “C” or better in ENG151, ENG 152, MATH 150 or 151, and in all Area IV courses.

✓ Students must pass both sections of the Regents’ Exam.

✓ Students must have 45 or more hours of earned course work (Sophomore status).

✓ The Oral Expression form should be completed by student’s FED 251 instructor. Students transferring into Georgia Southern with FED 251 completed, should have Oral Expression form completed by the first instructor taken in the College of Education (first quarter of enrollment).

✓ The Teacher Education Program application should be completed and given to an advisor.

Results:

Research question 1E relates to whether students know what the TEP requirements include. These following questions were asked: *Do you know what the*
current requirements are to be in the Teacher Education Program, 63% (354 students) marked “yes,” 25% (144 students) marked “some”; while 12% (71 students) marked “no.” I am currently in the Teacher Education Program, 63% (358 students) marked “yes,” 13% (74 students) marked “unknown”; while 24% (137) marked “no.” Do you feel that the current TEP standards should be raised? For example, students should be required to earn a GPA of 2.80 instead of the current 2.50, 22% (126) marked “yes,” 26% (149 students) marked “maybe”; while 52% (294 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

Of the participants in the study, 54.1% were classified as seniors. This may explain why well over half of the participants know what the requirements were for admission to TEP, and almost an equal amount were in TEP. Generally, one of the goals in the College of Education Advisement Center is to educate students very early about what requirements need to be met to qualify for TEP. Traditionally, the major reason students are not admitted to TEP is not meeting the GPA requirement; therefore, students who don’t qualify are advised to repeat classes to raise their GPA or to take remedial classes to assist them in earning better grades. A small percent (22%) of students support raising TEP standards, such as raising the required GPA of 2.50 to 2.80 and a little over half of the students do not feel that the standards should be raised. Apparently, students believe the current requirements are high enough.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Advisement Center Services

Academic Advisors Limiting

One of the goals professional advisors' have in common is to help students by providing them with thorough and accurate information; however, it has its limitations, such as providing students with the reputations of faculty members. It is considered unethical for advisors to give negative information or repeat rumors about professors. Advisors cannot guarantee students seats in the classes they need, due to the demand for classes, limited lab space, etc. Advisors are also limited in helping students with personal problems that affect academics, though it is ethical to refer students to the counseling center. Another goal is to help them by articulating what requirements are needed to graduate; however, students have responsibilities too. Students must learn what classes are required for their program of study, know what grades are and are not acceptable in their program of study, process any necessary paper work which needs to be done outside of the advisement center, such as paying all outstanding fines and making an appointment to be measured for a cap and gown. Advisors are not responsible for these tasks, and some students are unaware of the limitations advisors have.
Therefore, advisors have to inform them of what will be done in the center and what needs to be done specifically by the student.

**Results:**

Research question 1F relates to students expecting advisors to discuss the reputation of professors. In response to the questions, *I expect my advisor to give me names of professors who are easy, not so easy, and difficult:* 21% (117 students) marked “yes,” 41% (235 students) marked “sometimes”; while 38% (217 students) marked “no.” *If a student misses their appointment during advisement, then the advisor should make the student wait until the next available slot, even if it’s after the student’s registration date,* 58% (321 students) marked “yes” and 42% (248 students) marked “no.”

**Discussion:**

The results of the first question show that the majority of the students expect advisors to “sometimes” provide the reputation of professors, while the smallest percentage marked “yes”, to indicate always. Apparently, the students who marked “sometimes” are not aware that it would be unprofessional for advisors to provide such information. In reference to students failing to keep their appointments, a little more than half of the students support that advisors should make a student wait until the next available appointment, even if it is after his or her registration date instead of seeing him/her at an unappointed time. Although a student acts irresponsibility, he or she is upset when made to wait. Nevertheless, the results reflect that there is only a 16% difference between the student who marked “yes” and the students who marked “no”.
Academic Advisors Referring

Professional advisors are approachable and available to assist students with their academic concerns. When rapport and a relationship have been established, it becomes easier to pinpoint issues that are not academic and yet affect academic performance. Therefore, academic advisors must be familiar with other services on campus to make the necessary referrals. Student Services or Student Affairs encompasses many departments, and a referral could include Career Services, Counseling Center, Tutorial Center, or even the Admissions Office. Sometimes there is a fine line between when to refer and when not to refer. Professional advisors do not want students to feel as though they are “getting the run around.” When the students’ concerns are not within the advisors’ trained ability, then it is prudent and ethical to refer the student to another department. Advisors do try to address and assist with as many academic questions and concerns as possible.

Results:

Research question 2 relates to advisors referring appropriately, without giving students “the run around”. In response to the question, If my advisor cannot answer my questions, she or he refers me to someone who can, 77% (437 students) marked “yes,” 23% (132 students) marked “no.” When asked to answer, My advisor gives me “the run around” (to see this person and that person on campus), 15% (93 students) marked “yes,” 85% (476 students) marked “no.”
My advisor is usually available when I have a question about my classes or my program of study. 44% (250 students) marked “yes,” 47% (269 students) marked “most of the time”; while 9% (50 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

The results reflect that when advisors in the College of Education cannot address questions, they usually refer students to someone who can. In addition, the majority also supports that advisors don’t give them “the run around” on campus to see this person and that person. There is a 3% difference in the number of students who marked “yes” and “most of the time”. Nevertheless, the majority support that advisors are usually available most of the time when students have questions about classes or their program of study.

Academic Ratings

Professional Advisors

Generally, the primary reason for students to make contact with an advisor is to obtain professional academic advice. The concerns could be from whether a student should drop/add a class to whether a student should quit his/her full-time job to attend school full-time. After thorough training, an understanding of human developmental theories, and experience, advisors are capable of looking at academic issues/problems and articulating options. However, it is up to the students to decide whether he or she will follow the advisor’s academic advice. Students’ decisions are based on both personal and academic factors. Some students believe that their advisor should make decisions for them. Therefore, some students feel that their advisor is not being as helpful when he/she...
doesn't give them direct answers. So, the definition of advice to some students indicates that their academic advisor should “tell” them what to do.

There has been some controversy about whether professional advisors are as effective as faculty advisors. Because advising has traditionally been a part of the faculty responsibilities, some faculty feel threatened, hence, they neither support advisement centers nor professional advisors. One would think that the faculty would be receptive to professional advisors assuming advisement responsibilities. Nevertheless, some centers encourage some or equal faculty involvement in advising; such two Centers at Georgia Southern University are the Academic Advisement Center for undeclared and the College of Business Advisement Center. In the Academic Advisement Center faculty members are compensated (receive one course reduction for spring quarter) as part-time faculty advisors. All students who declare business as a major are first accepted as Pre-Business majors. After meeting required departmental criteria, they are allowed to apply for a business program in the department and then are assigned a faculty member who will serve as their advisor for the duration of their program. In the College of Education a small fraction (approximately 10-15) undergraduate students are advised by a faculty member while the remaining students report to their own professional advisor in the Center. During the establishment of the College of Education Advisement Center and the College of Health and Professional Studies Advisement Center (CHPS Student Services Center) there was hesitation from some faculty to surrender their student folders, and to relinquish some of their responsibilities as a faculty advisor.
Results:

Research question 3 relates to whether students value having a professional advisor or would rather have a faculty advisor. To find out students' thoughts about having a professional advisor, advisors being helpful, and advisees following their advisors advice the following questions were asked:

*I like the idea of having a professional advisor, 91% (512 students) marked “yes”; while 9% (57 students) marked “no.” I would rather be advised by a faculty member or one of my professors, 39% (221 students) marked “yes”; while 61% (348 students) marked “no.” I feel that my advisor is helpful, 63% (358 students) marked “yes,” 30% (172 students) marked “sometimes”; while 7% (39 students) marked “no.” I usually follow my advisor’s advice, 68% (386 students) marked “yes,” 30% (169 students) marked “sometimes”; while 2% (14 students) marked “no.”*

Discussion:

The results indicate overwhelmingly that 91% of the participants like the idea of having a professional advisor instead of a faculty advisor. In response to whether students would rather be advised by a faculty member or a professor, an majority 61% of the students marked “no”. The high percentage indicates that the majority of the students would rather be advised by a professional advisor instead of a faculty advisor. The percentage could also indicate that students realize either how occupied faculty members are or have never had a faculty advisor to compare.
Whatever advising model is utilized, academic advising training must be practiced and the persons involved must choose to advise.

Academic advising should be offered only by personnel who voluntarily choose to advise, who receive systematic skills training, who have advising as a specified responsibility, whose performance is systematically evaluated, and who are rewarded for skillful performance (Winston, Ender, and Grites, 1984, p. 24).

Sixty-three percent of the students feel that their advisor is helpful, while 68% indicate that they usually follow their advisor’s advice.

**Advisement Center**

Advisement Centers have become one of the most useful and used entities in higher education. It is where personal academic issues such as grades are discussed; it is where educational goals are finalized; it is where educational programs are questioned; it is where potential for growth is nurtured; and it is where students are finally cleared to graduate. There is little research that indicates what factors constitute a student-oriented advisement center. Elements such as the size of the waiting area, design of the center, hours of operation, number of students to be served, etc. need to be determined prior to establishing an academic advisement center. The location of the center should meet the needs of the students it will serve.
The busier the centers, like successful businesses, had good locations. They were often located in areas that were convenient for the advisees they served. The centers have easy accessibility, and were mainly located on first levels of buildings they occupied (Flickinger, 1989, p.84).

Success of the center depends on the staff, location and available resources. It also cannot be successful without the support of the administration of the university.

Results:

Research question 4 relates to whether students support having a specialized advisement center or not. To see if the College of Education Advisement Center is valued by its users, the following question was asked: I feel that having an advisement center just for education majors is an excellent idea, 96% (546 students) marked “yes;” while 4% (23 students) marked “no.”

Discussion:

There are advisement centers that advise students from a variety of majors as opposed to advising students only from a specified college; however, the College of Education only advises education majors and based on the results, apparently the students are pleased with having an advisement center specifically for education majors.
Research question 5 questions and asks participants to respond, *I plan to teach...*. For the first open-ended question, Table 4 shows that 94% of the participants listed the subject they plan to teach or the program of study they were in while 6% choose not to respond. The subjects were alphabetized for clarity of the table and the table shows that there were more Early Childhood majors to respond and the smallest number represents Art Education majors.

**Table 4: Participants Major**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I plan to teach:</th>
<th>Art Education</th>
<th>Business Education</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>English Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Education</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional Child</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>Health and PE</td>
<td>Home Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Middle Grades</td>
<td>Music Education</td>
<td>Science Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Technology Education</td>
<td>Participants who did not respond</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theater: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Speech: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic Arts: 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Participants listed the subjects as a major; however, there is not an established education program in the College of Education for the subjects listed.

Research question 6 relates to the participants listing useful information articulated by their advisor. To avoid a lengthy and redundant table, the researcher tabulated the responses of the seniors by the following majors: Early Childhood,
Exceptional Childhood, Health & PE, Math Education and Middle Grade Education.

The second open-end question was *What has been the most useful information your advisor has shared with you?* The results are presented in Table 5 and reflect in order, the most frequent responses.

**Table 5: Most Useful Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The most useful information an advisor has shared with you:</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>EXC Childhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Guidance in advising which classes I need to take</td>
<td>• Advisement of what electives are better to take</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Course expectations</td>
<td>• Scheduling of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information related to sequencing of classes</td>
<td>• Information about the field of Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information that could improve grades</td>
<td>• How to maintain good grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graduation information</td>
<td>• Information about Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grades needed in order to graduate</td>
<td>• Grades needed in order to graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How to improve grades</td>
<td>• How to improve grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information about TCT</td>
<td>• Information about TCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time Management</td>
<td>• Time Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paying for graduation fees</td>
<td>• Paying for graduation fees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See Appendix E for Advisors Providing More graphs)
Research question 7 relates to advisees expectations or future wishes of College of Education Advisement Center. The results of the third open-ended question, I would like to see the Education Advisement Center moving in the direction of.......... is reflected in Table 6. The table represents the most frequently made responses from all participants.

Table 6: Future Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like to see the Education Advisement Center moving in the direction of:</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>Exceptional Child</th>
<th>Health &amp; PE</th>
<th>Home Economics</th>
<th>Math Education</th>
<th>Business Ed</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
<th>Technology Ed</th>
<th>English Education</th>
<th>Middle Grades Ed</th>
<th>Science Education</th>
<th>Social Science</th>
<th>Speech Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becoming more involved with students (caring, encouragement, etc.)</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registering students, year-round advisement</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informing students of academic standing</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increasing advisor : student ratio</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Longer period of time for advisement/discussion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Longer hours for non-traditional students</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accurate information</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher standards</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>More organization</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>More physical space for advisement</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving “total” picture regarding education career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance with TCT exam</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I would like to see the
Educational Advisement Center
moving in the direction of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Area</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>Exceptional Child</th>
<th>Health &amp; PE</th>
<th>Home Economics</th>
<th>Math Education</th>
<th>Business Ed</th>
<th>Foreign Language</th>
<th>Technology Ed</th>
<th>English Education</th>
<th>Middle Grades Ed</th>
<th>Science Education</th>
<th>Social Science</th>
<th>Speech Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better technology in education field</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career alternatives for those opting not to teach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping student choose right major</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming more knowledgeable about major programs</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locating jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration between faculty and advisors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-advisement by advisor and faculty member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More involvement w/ students’ classes (working to get classes students need, more choices, etc.)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No improvement necessary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the participants in Table 6 would like to see advisors becoming more involved with students by demonstrating more caring and encouragement during advisement sessions. Students would also like to see the Center becoming more knowledgeable about major programs (which are offered in the College of Education). A small percentage of students believe that co-advisement (when the advisee has both a professional and faculty advisor, usually the faculty advisor is in his major area of study) is a direction the Center should move in.
Also, a small percentage listed need for assistance with the TCT exam, and they would like to see the Center moving in the direction of informing students of their academic standing.

Research question 8 gives the advisees an opportunity to list what aspects of the services they believe advisors should be able to provide more information about. The results of the final open-ended question are illustrated in Table 7. The question stated on the questionnaire is, *Advisors should be able to provide more information about*........

**Table 7: Advisors Providing More**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advisors should be able to provide more information about:</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Juniors</th>
<th>Sophomores</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Work:</strong> More information about classes; course loads; course order; class descriptions; class difficulty; syllabi/expected work load; new classes; when are classes offered; core vs. major classes</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professors:</strong> More information about professors’ expectations, teaching styles, difficulty; who should student sign up for</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing and Certification:</strong> TCT, TEP, GPA, certifications, job salary information</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation Requirements</strong></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate School Information</strong></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, Table 7 shows that juniors and seniors would like for advisors to provide more information about classes or course work. Sophomores would equally like more information about professors and course work, while freshmen would like for advisors to provide more information about professors.

**Discussion: Open-ended questions**

The first opened-ended question required the participants to list their major or the subject they plan to teach. The large number of Early Childhood participants responding is consistent with the College of Education number of advisees; of the 1,700 advisees, over half are Early Childhood majors. The six percent of participants who chose not to respond to this question could be freshmen who know they want to teach, but do not know what area they want to teach. Also, under Other Respondents, the researcher is not sure why the participants listed majors which the College of Education does not have as a program.

The researcher developed the last two items on the survey, *I would like to see the Education Advisement Center moving in the direction of.... and Advisors should be able to provide more information about.....* to get an idea of what the advisees expect from the
College of Education Advisement Center. For the first question, apparently students want advisors to become more involved with them by encouraging them, by exhibiting caring behavior, etc. because over eight majors provided such responses. For the latter question, over half of the freshmen students believe that advisors should provide more information about professors. The researcher is not sure what type of information they are seeking other than wanting advisors to provide information about the reputations of professors. The results of both questions provide data that indicate what the College of Education advisees expect or want the Center to provide.

In comparing the responses from, What has been the most useful information your advisor has shared with you? to Advisors should be able to provide more information about..... there appears to be contradiction in the participants’ responses. Although only senior responses are listed, the seniors showed that advisors have shared useful information with them about classes and course work. In the latter question, conversely, the majority of the students indicated that advisors should be able to provide more information about classes/course work. Hence, it could indicate that although some students are satisfied and believe that the information has been the most useful shared, others believe more information should be provided. Perhaps the students who are looking for more information would like for advisors to have on file an in-depth description of classes, class expectations, a course syllabi, etc.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Further Discussion

Questions on the questionnaire, such as *I am currently in the Teacher Education Program; Do you know what the current requirements are to be in TEP?*; and *Do you feel that the current TEP standards should be raised. For example, students should be required to earn a 2.80 instead of the current 2.50*, did not serve the purpose for which they were selected. The researcher chose these questions with the anticipation of determining whether lower class men, such as sophomores and freshmen, knew the criteria needed to qualify for TEP. The questions did confirm that senior level students are knowledgeable. Consequently, because the majority of the participants were seniors, the questions did not provide information needed to determine whether the College of Education Academic Advisement Center’s sophomores and freshmen are familiar with the requirements for the Teacher Education Program or whether they are in the program.

After examining the students' answers to the questions, *I feel that advisors are responsible for getting me the classes I want at the times I want them; I expect my advisor to give me names of professors who are easy, not so easy, and difficult*, the researcher has a strong belief that students are unaware of their desire for their advisor to get them the classes they want, at the times they want them and for their advisor to supply the
reputation of professors. Although the absolute numbers are represented in Table 7 the findings could be influenced by the high numbers of senior participants and the quarter the survey was given. Table 7 could provide a more accurate indication of students expectations.

Understandably, practicing developmental advising is highly recommended over academic advising. The term developmental advising is not used on the questionnaire, but the concepts of developmental advising are strongly implied in the questions, such as *Do you think the advisement center should become more involved with providing ways or tips on how to raise grades, methods of how to study, etc.?*, and *If a student miserably fails a quarter, is the advisor’s responsibility to probe the student to get an idea of what happened?*

**Limitations**

One limitation for the study relates to the reliability and validity of the instrument the researcher designed. Because the instrument is not a standardized instrument and has not been thoroughly tested (by authorized testing officials) it could lack validity. Some items may not have elicited accurate responses from the participants because of how they were worded. For example, for item number 20 instead of using the words “easy” and “difficult”, a better way of wording the item would have been to ask whether students are interested in knowing a professor’s teaching strategies and/or teaching style. Another limitation relates to the ability to generalize results from the study because of the sampling technique. Although the sample size was large and completing the survey was
voluntary, the respondents were College of Education majors and primarily seniors. Therefore, the sample could be biased.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Implications for Practice

Advisors are professionally trained and understand that personal problems can affect academics; however, advisors are fully aware of their limitations. They know whether or not to refer a student to the counseling center or another office. The majority of the answers for the open-ended questions were ambiguous; however, the researcher was able to analyze the responses, such that they were, and place them into context. The results of this study indicate that students believe their academic advisor should provide more help, become more involved, and care more about them as students. Therefore, rendering such comments suggests that the majority of the students would like to establish a relationship in which advisors are more personal—meaning that advisors not only listen to their academic and personal concerns, but also spend more time with them, exercise empathy, and provide direction. Although academic advisors do not address and attempt to resolve students’ personal problems, some students will continue to bring them to their academic advisor. Advisors have learned that they have limits and they must make referrals at times.

To assist with the issue associated with the findings, advisors would do a commendable service to their advisees if they had class syllabi on file. Assisting students
with this type of service allows students to make wise course load decisions. In fact, although most students ask about professors’ reputations, generally they want to know the teaching styles and class expectations. However, when advisors are asked which professors are “good” and which are not, they generally tell students to consult the student grapevine (or to consult peers). Also, it should be noted that although a professor’s class seems “easy” for one student, it might not be “easy” for the next, so even the advice of a peer could be misinterpreted.

Another choice is the Peer Advising Program which is utilized to give a student an opportunity to speak with another student who has had the classes and professors he or she expresses concern about. The Peer Advising Program could consist of trained volunteers who are seniors (who are close to graduation) familiar with specific details, such as what a class entails and how students can prepare themselves for it, and the teaching styles of professors. To avoid compromising the ethics of professional advisors, the Peer Advisors can discuss the issue about faculty members reputations’; these peer students can ease their concerns about professors’ academic expectations. Generally, students want answers to questions such as whether they should take three lecture courses or whether they should include an activity course.

Based on the findings, the advisor/advisee relationship could be viewed differently by both persons, especially with the advisee not knowing what to expect. It is recommended that the Center develop literature explaining what can be expected from the professional advisor and what is expected from the advisee. There is also mis-
communication about the type of services available in the College of Education Advisement Center. The types of services advisement centers offer vary from Center to Center and from campus to campus; therefore, students are confused. It is recommended that some literature be produced by each Center explaining what types of services are provided at that center.

The educational aspect of advising has yet to be discussed, for example, teaching students to calculate their GPA. The students responded positively to the question related to advisors teaching them how to calculate their GPA. It is recommended that advisors not only teach their advisees how to calculate their GPA, but educate them about the difference in and the function of a cumulative GPA, an adjusted GPA, a transfer GPA, and a combined GPA in the form of literature or in a handout.
Recommendations for Future Research

There are four areas of Academic Advising in the College of Education which need further research:

First, there needs to be further research conducted on successful advising programs and how to develop them for specialized Centers. There is a need for programs in which professional advisors and faculty members collaborate as a team in working with students to attain their educational goals. As has been cited in literature, professional advisors have various advising strengths and faculty members have various advising strengths. If the two are combined, their strengths in the advising process may be a healthier process for the students.

Second, there needs to be an in-depth study of what elements are pertinent in establishing a successful advisement center. Variables making the Center student-oriented such as the design of the Center, a spacious waiting area, convenient location, flexible operating hours, a resource area, and a student computer, (an approximation of how many students to serve), may be taken into account in the planning stages of the center.
Third, there needs to be further research conducted on how to establish a Peer Advising Program or a mentoring program as well as ways in obtaining grant money for such programs. Peer Advising programs can encourage seniors to academically interact with freshmen in an advising setting.

Fourth, there needs to be clarity on what aspects of services can be addressed by methods other than when in one-on-one relationships in the advisement centers. Incorporating developmental advising in the advising process takes time and includes advisors providing information such as the teaching styles of professors, class syllabi, and class expectations. This then could assist students to make better course load decisions, thus potentially having fewer students drop courses prior to mid term.

For a Center to offer effective advising services, the number of advisees assigned per advisor is significant in how much time an advisor can spend with an advisee. For example, an advisor who has 300 students can give them more individual attention than those who have 500.

The last recommendation is that there needs to be more research completed on how to include developmental theories in daily advising tasks. Practitioners whose focus is on higher education can articulate how to address students’ developmental needs and how to encourage them to become actively involved in the advising process. Also, using theories to establish an advisement center’s conceptual theoretical framework or create objectives has the advantage of keeping the student in mind and making the Center student-oriented.
Conclusion

Academic advising has been called an “educational paradox” by Hanson and Raney (1993) at some institutions because of the intricacies of satisfying university requirements, departmental requirements and meeting the needs of the students. Nevertheless, “academic advising remains the most significant mechanism available on most college and university campuses for aiding and abetting this important process” (Habley and Crockett, 1988, p.11). In some cases advisors serve as the only consistent contact students have at an institution. Students come to their advisors with lots of preconceived ideas about their academic concerns. Professional advisors seek to provide unerring service to their advisees, and in order to be effective advisors, many hats are worn.

Academic advising tasks are being replaced by developmental strategies. Understanding and incorporating human development theories in the advising process gives birth to developmental advising. When advisors utilize developmental advising, it enables them to use a holistic approach when assisting students and addressing their concerns. Developmental advising supplements are receiving attention; however, procedural advising tasks still exist and are carried out in the advising process. One of the
reasons developmental advising is exercised to assist students in understanding why policies are in place. For example, it is procedural to complete paper work to assure students are meeting institutional and departmental requirements. Today, developmental advising is used to assist students in understanding why institutional and departmental requirements are in place.

The questionnaire served as a tool to assist in gathering information about student expectations of their advisor and the academic advising process. The overall results indicate that students need to be informed or educated concerning the types of services conducted in the center, have a clear understanding of the job responsibilities and limitations of their academic advisor, develop an understanding of their role and responsibilities as an advisee, and know what can be expected in their newly formed relationship with their academic advisor. Once services and responsibilities have been defined, then students can understand the Center’s primary goals.

This study clarifies some of the students’ perceptions about the College of Education Advisement Center services and provided valuable feedback which will give the Center direction as it addresses students’ concerns and problems.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

References


Georgia Southern University’s General Catalog (1996-1997). Statesboro, GA.


National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, 28 (4), 322-327.


Appendix A
Classification of Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juniors</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sophomores</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
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<td>Post Baccalaureates</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Advising Assessment: Students’ Perceptions
Deborah Kittrell-Mikell
Appendix B
TO: Education Majors  
FROM: D. KITTRELL-MIKELL  
DATE: April 4, 1996  
SUBJECT: ADVISEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an Academic Advisor for Exceptional Child, and Health & Physical Education majors. Currently, I am obtaining a Master of Education degree in Higher Education & Student Services, and I am interested in how students (who are majoring in education) view the role of an Academic Advisor and the Advisement Center.

To better serve students, I am conducting this survey to become more familiar with what aspects of advising are more effective than others. This survey is optional, however, if you choose to participate, it will require approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. There is of course, no penalty should you decide not to participate. You do not have to disclose your name nor the name of your Academic Advisor.

Your responses will be confidential, and no one will be able to identify your responses. Your responses could be used to promote change in how I advise students. By completing this questionnaire, you are giving me permission to use the results in a study. The study has been received and approved by GSU’s Institution Review Board, if you have questions about your rights as a participate in this research, you should contact Dr. Tom Case, IRB Chairperson, at (912) 681-5205.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and time. If you have any questions about the study or if you are interested in the survey results, please contact me at the above phone number or landrum box. This survey will be conducted through May 17, 1996; therefore, I need for you to submit all questionnaires by that date. If you complete the questionnaire outside of the Advisement Center, please pick up an inter-campus envelope and mail it to D. Kittrell-Mikell, LB# 8029.

AA/EO Institution
Appendix C
### Instructions: Circle one number on the right

1. My current status is:
   1) Senior  2) Junior  3) Sophomore  4) Freshman

2. The number of visits I have had with my advisor total:
   1) one  2) two  3) three  4) four  5) five or more

3. I am currently in the Teacher Education Program (TEP):
   1) yes  2) unknown  3) no

4. Advisors should lecture or give a short talk to students who are not doing well academically.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no

5. Do you feel that the advisement center should become more involved with providing ways or tips on how to raise grades, methods of how to study, etc.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no

6. Advisors should teach students how to calculate GPA (grade point average), especially when they have a combined GPA, or need to know their GPA for major classes.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no

7. Advisors should congratulate students when they make Dean's list or are doing well academically.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no

8. Do you know what the current requirements are to be in the Teacher Education Program?
   1) yes  2) some  3) no

9. Do you feel that the current TEP (Teacher Education Program) standards should be raised. For example, students should be required to earn a GPA of 2.80 instead of the current 2.50.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCORRECT MARKS</th>
<th>CORRECT MARKS</th>
<th>USE NO. 2 PENCIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X X X</td>
<td>O O O O</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Would you like to see extended hours at the Advisement Center. Such as opening up at 7:30am instead of 8:00am, and closing at 6:30pm instead of 5:00pm?
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no

11. During advisement I feel too rushed. I need more time to discuss my academic concerns with my advisor.
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no

12. Advisors should expect students to know their program of study, (the classes on the check sheets) prior to advisement.
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no

13. Advisors should assume all responsibility for advising. They should assume that students don't know their program of study; and therefore, advisors should tell students what classes they need to take each quarter.
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no

14. If a student misses their appointment during advisement, then the advisor should make the student wait until the next available slot, even if it's after the student's registration date.
1) yes 2) no

15. If my advisor can not answer my questions, s/he usually refers me to someone who can.
1) yes 2) no

16. My advisor gives me the run around (to see this person and that person on campus).
1) yes 2) no

17. My advisor is usually available when I have a question about my classes or my program of study.
1) yes 2) most of the time 3) no

18. If a student miserably fails a quarter, it is the advisor's responsibility to probe the student to get an idea of what happened?
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no
10. Would you like to see extended hours at the Advisement Center. Such as opening up at 7:30am instead of 8:00am, and closing at 6:30pm instead of 5:00pm?
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no

11. During advisement I feel too rushed. I need more time to discuss my academic concerns with my advisor.
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15. If my advisor can not answer my questions, s/he usually refers me to someone who can.
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1) yes 2) most of the time 3) no

18. If a student miserably fails a quarter, it is the advisor's responsibility to probe the student to get an idea of what happened?
1) yes 2) maybe 3) no
<table>
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<th>COURSE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCORRECT MARKS</td>
<td>CORRECT MARKS</td>
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</table>

19. I feel that advisors are responsible for getting me the classes I want at the times I want them.
   1) yes  2) maybe  3) no

20. I expect my advisor to give me names of professors who are easy, not so easy, and difficult.
   1) yes  2) sometimes  3) no

21. I expect my advisor to provide good academic advice.
   1) yes  2) no

22. I usually follow my advisor's advice.
   1) yes  2) sometimes  3) no

23. I feel that my advisor is helpful.
   1) yes  2) sometimes  3) no

24. I feel that having an advisement center just for education majors is an excellent idea.
   1) yes  2) no

25. I like the idea of having a professional advisor.
   1) yes  2) no

26. I would rather be advised by a faculty member or one of my professors.
   1) yes  2) no

27. I plan to teach: (please write subject or program you are in)

28. What has been the most useful information your advisor has shared with you.

29. I would like to see the Education Advisement Center moving in the direction of

30. Advisors should be able to provide more information about


Appendix D
Survey Items by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advisors Advising</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenges</td>
<td>4, 7, &amp; 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Time Constraints</td>
<td>10 &amp; 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Responsibility</td>
<td>12, 13, &amp; 19</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advisors Educating</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Improvements</td>
<td>5, 6, &amp; 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Requirements</td>
<td>3, 8, &amp; 9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advisement Center Services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors Limiting</td>
<td>14 &amp; 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Advisors Referring</td>
<td>15, 16, &amp; 17</td>
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<td><strong>Academic Ratings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Advisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisement Center</td>
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Appendix E
Advisors should be able to provide more information about..............

Advisors Providing *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>TCT, GPA</th>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Grad. Sch.</th>
<th>Professors</th>
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<td>75%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These responses represent approximately 99.5% of the answers
Advisors should be able to provide more information about.....

Advisors Providing*

80% Classes  15% Professors  5% Other

*These answers represent approximately 99.5% of the answers
Advisors should be able to provide more information about........

Advisors Providing*

45% Professors  45% Classes

10% TEP, Different Majors

*These responses represent approximately 99.1% of the answers
Advisors should be able to provide more information about.......... 

Advisors Providing*

55% Professors  35% Classes  10% TEP, Grades

*These responses represent approximately 99.1% of the answers.
College of Education Academic Advising Process

Author Note

Deborah Kittrell-Mikell, Academic Advisor for the College of Education at the time of the study, has recently been promoted to Academic Advising Coordinator in the College of Health & Professional Studies at Georgia Southern University.

I was stimulated to conduct research in Academic Advising to determine what aspects of the College of Education Advisement Center services were meeting the needs of students, what aspects were not meeting their needs and what aspects of the services needed improving.

I thank Dr. Dale Grant, the College of Education Advisement Center staff, and the 569 participants who kindly responded to the survey. I also thank Atasha Singletary for assisting me with calculating the statistics.

The results of this study were submitted as research papers, accepted, and presented in the following format:


● "Advising Assessment: Students’ Perceptions" presented March 3, 1997 at the Southeast Regional IV NACADA Conference at Mississippi State University.
● “Is Academic Advising Practicing Its Promises?” presented April 24, 1997 at the Georgia College Personnel Association Conference (GCPA) held at Jekyll Island, Georgia.

● “Conceptualize Your Theoretical Framework By Practicing What You Preach” anticipated presentation date set for October 5, 1997 at the National NACADA Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

Publication:


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