

**2005-2006 :: Advising in NSM****1. Mission Statement:**

The mission of Undergraduate Academic Advising in the School of Natural Science and Mathematics (NS&M) is to provide undergraduate students in the school efficient and timely guidance for developing and implementing a degree plan that leads the student from matriculation to graduation and prepares him or her for life, work and leadership with the benefits of educational and research programs of the highest quality.

**2. Objectives:**

**2.1 Improve the effectiveness of the advising process.:** Improve the effectiveness of the advising process by developing a degree plan at the first meeting with the student.

**2.1.1 Related Institutional Priority Item(s):** CPT-5 Increase retention and graduation rates

**2.2 Improve the efficiency of the advising process:** Improve the efficiency of the advising process by reducing the wait time for appointments and/or walk-in meetings by an express line walk-in plan.

**2.2.1 Related Institutional Priority Item(s):** CPT-5 Increase retention and graduation rates

**2.3 Use the 75 hours audit rule:**

Use the 75 hour audit rule to insure that each student has completed a sufficient percentage of the degree requirement that will allow him or her to graduate on schedule.

**2.3.1 Related Institutional Priority Item(s):** CPT-5 Increase retention and graduation rates

**3. Measures & Findings:**

**3.1 Sample of new student degree plan:**

Random sample of 20% of Fall semester new student degree plans. Time frame : By Dec. 1 every fall.

**3.1.1 Success Criteria:**

All first time students will have at least 70% of their courses listed in the degree plan at the first meeting.

**3.1.2 Related Objective(s):** Improve the effectiveness of the advising process.

**3.1.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:**

Most general ed and major core courses, are on the degree plan. So this criterion is met.

**3.1.4 Achievement Level:** Met

**3.1.5 Further Action:** Yes

**3.2 Monitor website hits:**

Monitor hits to NS&M advising website, and on advising survey ask if student has visited the website. Time table: During first semester enrolled at UTD.

**3.2.1 Success Criteria:**

Log over 100 hits on website per semester; at least 50% of new students report visiting the website.

**3.2.2 Related Objective(s):** Improve the effectiveness of the advising process.

**3.2.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:** June 1 to Aug. 23. 1408 viewers to web site. 2380 views. Each viewer visited site an average of 1.7 times.

**3.2.4 Achievement Level:** Not Met

**3.2.5 Further Action:** Yes

**3.3 Report on throughput of express advising line:** Monitor throughput of students in express advising line. Time frame: End of Fall Semester.

**3.3.1 Success Criteria:** One advisor sees typically up to 30 students in a day.

**3.3.2 Related Objective(s):** Improve the efficiency of the advising process

**3.3.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:** Highly variable. 20 per day up to 68 in one day.

**3.3.4 Achievement Level:** Met

**3.3.5 Further Action:** No

**3.4 Report on total number of students served:** Monitor total number of students served. Time frame: End of fall semester

**3.4.1 Success Criteria:** Other advisors see up to 30 students per day either by appointment or walk-in.

**3.4.2 Related Objective(s):** Improve the efficiency of the advising process

**3.4.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:** Typical load is 12 students per day per advisor.

**3.4.4 Achievement Level:** Met

**3.4.5 Further Action:** No

**3.5 Perform degree plan:**

Perform degree plan audits for 80% of students during their 75 hour benchmark semester. Time frame: After completing 75 hours.

**3.5.1 Success Criteria:**

60% of the students will have completed the number of major core courses required in their degree plan at the 75 hour benchmark that will allow them to complete their degree on schedule, nominally in 4 years for full time students.

**3.5.2 Related Objective(s):** Use the 75 hours audit rule

**3.5.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:**

Generally, this criterion has been met, so the goal is to increase the percentage of students who meet it.

**3.5.4 Achievement Level:** Met

**3.5.5 Further Action:** No

**3.6 Report on general ed core courses completed:** During 75 hour audit, check the number of general education core courses completed. Time frame : After completing 75 hours.

**3.6.1 Success Criteria:**

80% of the students will have completed their general education core courses except for the advanced writing course which is taken in the senior year.

**3.6.2 Related Objective(s):** Use the 75 hours audit rule

**3.6.3 Results Related To Success Criteria:**

In audits of 28 students, 32% were core complete. Most students have not completed the Advanced writing requirement that comes in the Senior year

**3.6.4 Achievement Level:** Not Met

**3.6.5 Further Action:** Yes

**5. Closing the Loop:**

**5.1 Advise students about taking core courses:** Advise students to take the core courses earlier in their course of study.

**5.1.1 Related Objective(s):** Improve the effectiveness of the advising process.

**5.1.2 Related Measure(s):** Sample of new student degree plan

**5.1.3 Responsible Person:** NS&M Advisors

**5.1.4 Target Date:** Next year

**5.1.5 Priority:** Low Priority

**5.2 Encourage students to visit website:**

Encourage students to visit web site for information prior to seeing an advisor to streamline the visit.

**5.2.1 Related Objective(s):** Improve the effectiveness of the advising process.

**5.2.2 Related Measure(s):** Monitor website hits

**5.2.3 Responsible Person:** NS&M Advisors

**5.2.4 Target Date:** Next semester

**5.2.5 Priority:** Low Priority

**5.3 Encourage student to be better prepared:**

Encourage students to be better prepared for their advising session to reduce time with advisor.

**5.3.1 Related Objective(s):** Improve the efficiency of the advising process

**5.3.2 Related Measure(s):** Report on throughput of express advising line; Report on total number of students served

**5.3.3 Responsible Person:** NS&M Advisors

**5.3.4 Target Date:** Next semester

**5.3.5 Priority:** Low Priority

**5.4 Encourage students to follow degree plans closely:** Encourage students to follow their degree plans closely so as to complete their prerequisite and major core courses in the proper sequence.

**5.4.1 Related Objective(s):** Use the 75 hours audit rule

**5.4.2 Related Measure(s):** Perform degree plan

**5.4.3 Responsible Person:** NS&M Advisors

**5.4.4 Target Date:** Next semester

**5.4.5 Priority:** Low Priority

**5.5 Rewritten the assessment:**

This assessment has been rewritten to exclude the advanced writing in the percent completion by the 75 hour audit.

**5.5.1 Related Objective(s):** Use the 75 hours audit rule

**5.5.2 Related Measure(s):** Report on general ed core courses completed

**5.5.3 Responsible Person:** NS&M Advisors

**5.5.4 Target Date:** Next semester

**5.5.5 Priority:** Low Priority

## 6. Analysis:

### 6.1 Program/Unit Strengths:

#### 6.1.1 Objectives/Outcomes Exceeded or Met:

By initiating the Express walk-in line, we have greatly improved the efficiency in processing student registration needs, particularly in drop-adds and other minor changes in the student's registration.

We have 3 advisors in NS&M. We have a student load per advisor that greatly exceeds the average number of students per advisor in the other schools. We need a 4th advisor in order to mitigate the very long wait times experienced by our students during the registration times. This is particularly bad right after registration opens for the next term, and during the last week or so before classes begin but occurs during the entire time for registration for the next term.

### 6.2 Program / Unit Weaknesses:

**6.2.1 Objectives / Outcomes Partially or Not Met:** Encouraging students to use the web site to become better prepared for their meeting with an advisor so as to improve the throughput of students and reduce the wait time to see an advisor.

We are short one advisor which exacerbates this problem

## 7. Report:

### 7.1 Executive Summary:

The NS&M Academic Advising Office currently has only 3 advisors. We have 1873 active files of current students. We started the year with 3 advisors, but then added a 4th.

We had some changes in personnel. One advisor moved to another school. One left the university for a different kind of position. Our work load is very heavy and puts a strain on the individuals. Some have more difficulty handling the stress than others. In each case we were permitted to employ another advisor so we maintained the 4 person level.

In mid year, another of our advisors left the University. We had a search for a replacement, but before we could make an offer to an acceptable candidate, the request for the position was deleted. We now have about 600 advisees per advisor although not all are attending classes every semester. In mid year we introduced an express line to help the flow of students through the process. One advisor handles the express line each day. The other two divide their time between appointments and walk-ins. We are short at least one advisor in order to even out the work load as compared with the other schools and to be able to serve our students in a timely and effective manner.

### 7.2 Top 3 Program/Unit Accomplishments:

In order to help the situation, we introduced an express line last summer that we used through the fall registration after the 4th advisor left. The express line accommodates students who have only 1 or 2 items to see the advisor about, like adding a course, changing a registration or getting a form signed and is limited to 15 minutes, less in many cases.

This express line has helped tremendously in the throughput of students. Recently, we actually accommodated 92 students in 1 day, but that was exceptional. During Nov. 20-22, the beginning of the Freshman registration period,

we saw 180 students. Normally it is about 50 per day. One advisor handles the express line each day. The other two divide their time between appointments and walk-ins. The express line is all walk-ins. The personnel are rotated through each activity on a daily basis.

We are now introducing a plan whereby students after getting their course schedule for the next semester approved by an advisor are sent to a bank of several computers where they enter their schedule of classes into SIS+ themselves. We have hired a work study student to help them and many do need help. We hope this will also improve the through put of students.

**7.3 Research Activities or Publications:** N/A

**7.4 Instructional/Training Activities (presented or received):** N/A

**7.5 Public Service:** N/A

**7.6 Other External Activities:** N/A

**7.7 Contributions to UTD:**

The advising team serves a very important role to the students of the School. They plan with the student the course of study to guide the student through the requirements for the chosen degree. They monitor the student's progress and offer help if the student should falter. Academic scholarship students who are not meeting the requirements of their scholarship are carefully mentored. they work with the student to select specific courses for the next term and work out problems with schedule, like full classes, and conflicts.

**7.8 Top 3 Program / Unit Challenges:**

We are swamped with students and have very long lines during registration times. We get complaints from students about the long lines but we are working to improve the efficiency of our operation as stated above. The present group of advisors is working together very well and has a sincere interest in helping and accommodating the students. However, we are short of personnel and students are paying the penalty by not getting help on a timely basis with registration and the other activities that students expect from the advising program.

The advising situation in NS&M is very precarious. If we should loose another advisor, or if one becomes ill for any length of time, it will be impossible to serve the students in our school. We desperately need help, 1 or even 2 more advisors are urgently needed. Introduction of the express line has helped and the plan to encourage students to be more self sufficient in the registration process is expected to further improve the flux. But in the end, more help is needed.