

Academic Advising as Teaching: The Way You Do the Things You Do

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Abstract

Those who have classroom teaching responsibilities in the academy more or less take for granted the process we engage when we prepare classes for a new semester. Among other matters, we research and select the subject matter, determine the sequence in which to present information, think about ways both to engage students in the learning process and to access their understanding of the material. Then we prepare a course syllabus that, in essence, serves as a guide to the semester and spells out the nature of the shared responsibilities between faculty and students. Advising, in much the same way, engages this process and is valued to be one of the most important teaching responsibilities we undertake.

The concept of advising as teaching offers us a frame through which to view advising as critical to students' academic and personal development and success. It extends the skills, competencies, and attitudes of teaching to the advising process, and it places the role of an advisor squarely within the role of a teacher. In this workshop, we will come to understand that when done right and well, advising, like teaching, is a shared and reciprocal responsibility between students and advisors/ teachers.

Some of the issues to be addressed in this workshop include: how advisors guide students in identifying realistic academic and career goals; how advisors help students to integrate their learning and to see its relevance to their lives; the characteristics employed for both effective classroom teaching and academic advising in the area of skills communication, and attitude. These characteristics will be examined along with techniques for incorporating them into the advising process. We will also take a close look at how an advising syllabus can clarify the shared expectations and responsibilities of advisors and students in the advising as teaching equation.

At the conclusion of this workshop, participants will have a clearer understanding of the roles of an advisor-as-teacher and a renewed appreciation of the importance and responsibility of these roles to student academic growth and personal development.

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