

-- draft -- draft -- draft -- draft -- draft -- draft --

Advising Graduate Students Commission: GRADUATE ADVISING GUIDELINES

Preamble Graduate academic advising is provided by committed professionals within the university, such as faculty, graduate academic administrators, peer advisers and support staff, who lend to the development of the student. Ultimately, successful graduate advising meets the needs of individual graduate students, through challenges and offered-support, as part of mutually satisfying advising relationships and a fully functioning advising delivery system.

Application Persons making inquiries concerning graduate programs of study should be provided with application materials and access to an adviser who is qualified to interpret the entrance requirements in a timely fashion. Advising materials would include up-to-date and accurate information concerning program admission requirements, program and course prerequisites, research opportunities, and available financial, personal and family support services on the campus and in the community.

Orientation Graduate programs should provide an orientation to the program of study. This orientation would address minimally the program's mission, the number and sequence of courses, typical timetables for program completion, examination requirements, and thesis or internship requirements. A written outline of the program of study should be provided to each new graduate student. A more generic orientation of institutional expectations may be provided for all of the university's incoming graduate students or for graduate school bound undergraduates. This basic orientation should address institutional policies such as residency, plagiarism, and institutional resources, including fellowships or assistantships, as well as workshops on enhancing writing and research skills, time management skills, and expectations of graduate students.

Coursework During the period of graduate coursework, an academic adviser should be available to meet with each graduate student to address any program of study or classroom performance problems. This academic adviser would have the knowledge of all program and university requirements, and should be skilled in referring students with interpersonal problems or learning difficulties and in identifying and suggesting remediation for problems in academic research and communication.

Advising Process The advising process should move beyond directive practices to a more comprehensive approach. Such advising encourages student reflection upon and analysis of academic, career and personal goals. The resulting adviser-advisee relationship would be implemented through a mentoring process featuring interactive communication, socialization into the academic community, and sponsorship into the profession.

Support Services A knowledgeable adviser should be available to refer graduate students to housing, child care, counseling, financial assistance, health care and other social services that may be needed by the student and his/her family members. The inventory of services should include those available in the community as well as those provided by the university.

Examinations In the case of graduate programs with comprehensive examination requirements, an academic adviser should be available to graduate students to counsel them in exam preparation. This support would include standardized materials addressing the timing and format of the examination, the evaluation process used in assessing exam content, and the range of possible outcomes of the examination process.

Thesis or Dissertation In the case of graduate programs with thesis or dissertation requirements, an academic adviser should provide materials outlining the requirements for that document. The department would assign a thesis adviser or committee to oversee the preparation of the document. At the outset of a degree program, orientation to the thesis or dissertation requirement should include information concerning student as well as faculty responsibilities, such as the graduate student's role in selecting a topic and selecting a committee to oversee the development of the document.

(Continued on page 14)

Draft *(Continued)*

Practicum or Internship In the case of graduate programs that require a practicum or internship experience, an adviser should be assigned to oversee the learning activity. A written statement of policy that outlines the responsibilities, expectations, duration and goals of the experience and describes the method by which performance will be assessed, should be provided to the graduate student. The respective responsibilities of the student, the department and the internship/practicum supervisor should be delineated in this statement.

Job Placement The university should maintain placement services appropriate to graduate and professional school students following completion of their programs. These services should include appropriate access to alumni and other professionals.

Outcome Assessment Academic programs should maintain accurate information concerning advising outcomes, such as attrition and time to complete degree data. Exit interviews, alumni focus groups, surveys or other instruments should be used to solicit pertinent information. Faculty responsible for teaching in the program should meet regularly to review the data collected and act to remedy advising and/or programmatic deficiencies.

The above guidelines are in draft form. Commission members are encouraged to read these thoroughly and make suggestions and/or comments to the Chair, Patrick P. McGuire, at m McGuire@stjohns.edu by Friday, May 1, 1998.