## The Nine Goals for Successful Advising

The Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook published by the National Academic Advising Association lists nine goals for successful advising:

1. **The development of suitable educational plans.** The development of a suitable plan should be the result of partnership between the advisor and the student that leads to interactions concerning educational opportunities and options consistent with the needs of the student and the goals of the institution.
2. **Clarification of career and life goals.** Advisors must recognize that a major role of higher education is to prepare students for the transition to career and employment. Part of this preparation will occur during the advising process, as advisors assist students in "examining their values, their purpose for being in higher education, the relationship between education and the world of work, and ultimately how they see themselves as lifelong learners.
3. **The selection of appropriate courses and other educational experiences.** The most commonly identified role of academic advising, this goal should also represent the means by which an institution communicates its values and culture. Advisors can reinforce the timing and importance of particular course within a curriculum. They can also communicate the wide variety of educational experiences available through the college, for example, internships, leadership opportunities, or service learning opportunities. Enhanced advising will help the student evaluate the learning options appropriate for his or her particular situation and life goals.
4. **Interpretation of academic requirements of the institution.** The advisor will help students navigate through the requirements necessary to complete a particular program. These typically consist of the courses that comprise a degree, diploma, or certificate program but might also include any college-specific learning experiences or any requirements of external certifying or accrediting agencies within the field of study. In all cases, however, it is the advisor's responsibility to understand these terms and to communicate them effectively to the student.
5. **Making students aware of all the available resources that enhance their education**. Counseling services, tutoring and academic assistance, and social outlets help ensure educational success for students. Gordon, Habley, and Associates insist that advisors become familiar with such resources, the means to match students to the appropriate resources, and the referral process for each resource.
6. **Evaluation of student progress toward their degree — or other personal goal**. Knowledgeable and concerned advisors know "time spent in school is also money spent." PCC's advisors will help students understand the factors that determine how long it may take the students to achieve his or her educational goals. Thus, effective advisors will know and communicate the importance of course prerequisites and co-requisites, changes of major, course load per semester, and other vital factors shaping the time one takes to complete an educational plan.
7. **Developing decision-making skills in students**. Closely linked to the evaluation of student progress toward the educational plan is the goal of the advisor to foster the student's developing decision-making skills. Through their educational journeys, students face numerous decisions determining course load, weighing elective choices, balancing work and school responsibilities, and evaluating future career options. The assistance students receive in making these and other decisions "may provide the basis for whether or not they are able to make additional reasonable decisions in their lives”.
8. **Helping students become independent learners**. Learning does not end upon graduation. The pace of change in our culture and our world, both economically and socially, necessitate that tomorrow's workforce be "creative, flexible, and motivated to become lifelong learners." Advising should engage students to look beyond the list of required courses and class schedules and toward their roles as educated members of society. "Students need to understand that once they commit themselves to higher education, they need to remain learners throughout their lives (p. 189).
9. **Collection of data about students' educational needs, their history in the institution, and ways these data might affect intuitional decisions and policies.** This goal focuses on the advising system's effectiveness in meeting student needs — a self-evaluation goal based on the concept of continuous improvement. Consistent monitoring of an individual student's progress and needs, as well as that student's sense of whether the institution is successfully meeting those goals, provides information about how the advising system may be reconfigured or adapted for more efficiency. Future decisions about program revisions or alternative approaches should "be informed by the continued assessment of students' experiences".

Gordon, Virginia, Habley, Wesley R., and Associates, Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook, 2000