



## **Advisor Guidelines for the Advising/Registration**

### **Process:**

#### **A Step by Step Process**

##### **Getting Started**

- Upon meeting a new student for the first time, introduce yourself and your program. Engage in conversation; learn as much as you can about them as a person.
- Talk to the student about why they are here at PCC.
  - Ask about the student's educational and career goals and help him/her develop an educational plan to reach those goals.
  - Ask questions such as: Are you planning to transfer to a four-year college? Are you planning to go to work after you receive your two-year degree? If so, what are you planning to do?
  - Based on the conversation, you need to determine if they are in the right place. If they are interested in another program, introduce them to the proper subject matter expert.
- As you get to know the student, be sure to start a file on them for your records. Collect basic information as listed at the top of the **PCC Academic Advising Form**. Pay careful attention to contact numbers. This makes getting up with the student in the future much easier.

- Before you go much further, ask the student if they have taken care of the following things:

- *Have you filled out a **PCC application**?* If not, have them go to the PCC Library to use one of the computers to access the PCC Website. Ask them to complete the online application to PCC. Have them complete all parts of the application, especially the Residency Determination section (RDS). If they need help with this process, refer the student to Student Services.
- *Have you filled out **financial aid paperwork (FAFSA)**, if applicable?* If not, have the student go to Student Services and speak with someone in the Financial Aid Department. If they are paying for courses out-of-pocket, still ask them to fill out their FAFSA information. They may qualify for scholarships and other services as a result.
- Check their **math and English placement test scores** in Datatel Colleague. If they have not taken these tests, have them go to the PCC Library front desk and sign up for a time to come in and take the test(s).
- ***Have you taken college courses elsewhere?*** If so, have you had an official transcript sent to the college registrar? If not, ask them to contact their former schools and learn how to get an official transcript sent to the PCC Registrar.

Ask the student if they have an unofficial copy of this transcript. It will give you an idea of what courses the student needs and does not need while you wait for the official transcript to arrive. Avoid registering for those courses. Look at other courses that they need and have never taken anywhere. If a course you would like to register the student for has a pre or co-requirement that is showing

on the unofficial transcript, you cannot register the student based on this. That information is not official here at PCC until the registrar receives an official copy of the transcript. **The unofficial copy (photo copy or loose, unsealed original copy) does not take the place of an original, sealed copy.** The student still needs to get an official copy sent to the registrar. Once the official copy arrives, the registrar will send you a transcript evaluation. Until you evaluate these courses, they will not be on the students PCC transcript and will not count towards graduation.

- If transfer credits are showing on an official transcript from another institution, an official transcript from that particular institution needs to be sent to the PCC registrar as well to be officially added to the student's PCC transcript and count towards graduation credits. For example, my official ECU transcript shows I took ENG 1100 & 1200. The PCC registrar can give credit for those. If that same transcript shows ECU accepted some credits from my time at Craven CC, the PCC registrar needs an official transcript sent from Craven CC to give me credit for those courses here.

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### **The Registration Process**

- Look the student up in the Datatel Colleague System. For more information how to do so, go the **PCC Academic Advising Center** located in Moodle. Once in Moodle, look for the Resources tab. Click on it and you will see it listed there. Look up the following information:
  - Placement test scores (English and math). These scores will help you determine which courses (ENG & MAT) you can and cannot place the student in. These scores can be recorded on the **PCC Academic Advising Form.** For more information about placement tests, go to the **PCC Academic Advising Center.**

- **The proposed student program (PSPR).** The PSPR will allow you to perform an evaluation on your student in any Program of Study at PCC (even if the student is not currently registered for that program). The PSPR can provide you with a version of the student's transcript. Print this information and look over it carefully to make sure all the information listed is correct. Review what courses the student has completed or received credit for toward the completion of their degree of choice (if any). This will help give you a better idea of what the student needs to take that semester and beyond. For more information about what to look for, go the **PCC Academic Advising Center**.
  - In Datatel Colleague, you can also look at the Student Academic Credits screen (STAC). It provides another view of the courses that our system shows the student has taken. **Looking at the STAC screen is not a substitute for looking at the PSPR screen.** For more information about STAC, go to the **PCC Academic Advising Center**.
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### **Course Selection**

- Provide the student with a **checklist for their program of study (POS)**. Be sure the checklist provided is based upon the catalog for the year the student enrolled or when the student declared or changed his/her program of study (POS).
- For new and returning students, suggest basic courses that will help start their educational pathway in a successful manner. For example:
  - ACA 111 or 122
  - English (based on test score)
  - Math (based on test score)
  - CIS 110
  - One subject matter (core course) course.
- Explain to the student the importance of enrolling in ACA 111 (College Student Success) or ACA 122 (College Transfer Success) during their first

semester enrolled. These courses need to be **HIGHLY** suggested as one of the first courses they take in order to better assure their academic success.

- ACA 111 should be suggested if the students' intent is to only complete a two-year degree. ACA 122 should be suggested if the students' intent is to pursue a four-year degree.
- Encourage the student to enroll in their math and English courses during their first semester. Taking composition courses prior to reading intensive courses (literature, history, etc.) or courses with significant research papers (Psychology, etc.) will help increase academic success in other courses. Courses that require the ability to make precise calculations are better taken after math course work has begun.
- Encourage student to enroll in CIS 110 (Introduction to Computers) during their first semester. Skills learned in this course are useful in all other courses.
- Online courses: Online courses have a certain level of difficulty and are not suggested to be the bulk of a first semester students' schedule. The same could be said of a current student with a history of poor performance in online courses.
- Explain to the student **when and how** courses are offered here at PCC. Certain courses are offered on a rotational basis (only during the spring or fall semester). Certain courses are offered every semester (English and math courses, for example). Some courses have pre-requisites that must be met before you can take them. In this case, you must be mindful of the rotation of those courses. For example, EDU 144 (fall) leads to EDU 145 (spring) which leads to EDU 221 (fall). Some courses are only offered in certain formats (online or seated, for example.)
- Question the student about other commitments and factors (work, family, Internet access for online courses, etc.) to help you determine the number of credit hours and course difficulty for that particular student. Ask questions such as:
  - Do you work? What days? What hours?

- Are you responsible for your family?
- Do you have military obligations?
- Do you plan to be part-time or full-time?
- Can you attend day classes? Evening classes?
- Do you plan to take distance education courses (online)?
- Many of your students are working adults with job schedules that do not always fit the course offerings for seated-tradition courses. In these instances, online courses are a great learning alternative. However, some students do not fully understand the steep learning curve that can come with online courses. As students register for online courses for the first time, be sure to explain the following to your students:
  - Online courses are convenient but by no means are they easier than seated-traditional course offerings.
  - Time management may be the biggest factor in succeeding in online courses. Successful online students have to be very proactive in their studies and take responsibility for their own learning.
  - Online students need to have a certain level of “computer know-how.” If they do not have this knowledge, it is suggested they complete CIS 110 before attempting an online course.
  - Online students need to have reliable access to the internet and the proper computer equipment to participate in the course.
  - Procrastinating in an online course, or any course, is not recommended. Deadlines come quick and life happens. By planning ahead, you can avoid all the problems procrastination may bring.
- Guide the student in choosing classes that will meet the degree requirements.
  - Do not encourage students to take courses not listed in the program of study **UNLESS** they plan to pay for them out-of-pocket. Financial aid will not pay for such courses.

- Remind them that such courses do not count toward their degree and graduation.
  - Together with the student, select courses that:
    - Satisfying program requirements.
    - Logically lead to faster degree completion.
    - Are offered in a format that best suits the student's ability.
    - Are offered during times the student is available.
  - As you and the student go through this process, teach them how to use the program of study checklist and other forms to plan class schedules and how to track their progress toward graduation requirements.
    - Give the student a copy of their program of study checklist, a copy of their Datatel Colleague program evaluation using (PSPR), and the **PCC Academic Plan by Semester Form**. Explain how to use each.
    - Armed with such information, students can now come to future advising sessions prepared with their tentative class schedule. As an academic advisor, you should strongly suggest that students prepare for advising sessions in this manner. A student knowledgeable of their program of study tends to be more successful than one who is not. This also empowers the student to have more ownership of their college career.
  - As you advise the student, if they choose to ignore the advice given to them:
    - Document how you advised the student on the **PCC Academic Advising Form**.
    - Have the student sign the form acknowledging that they have chosen to disregard your advice as to the best way to complete their degree program.
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## **Mentoring**

- Encourage students to make an appointment to see you from time to time during the semester. Use this opportunity to speak with your students about how their semester is going. The meeting will give you the opportunity to address any issues the student may have in an efficient and timely manner. This practice is **HIGHLY** recommended for first semester and returning students in order to better assure academic success. As an advisor, you serve as a mentor to the students you advise, especially those who face obstacles to their academic success.
- As for online students with whom you may have limited contact, you may want to use “other methods” to keep in touch with them. You may want to try some of the following methods of communication:
  - Online chats
  - Email
  - Phone calls
  - Video conferences (Skype)
  - Social media such as FaceBook & Twitter
- Contact the students you advise as soon as you become aware of any potential problems that may affect academic success, such as absenteeism and low grades.
- Know where to send students for additional support (Student Services)
- Encourage questions and active participation in the advising process.
- Teach problem-solving skills when appropriate.