

ADVISING BEST PRACTICES

Expectations of Advisees and Advisors

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Welcome to Grinnell College! We are glad you are here. With your arrival, you have entered a new institutional and professional culture: an academic culture that extends beyond the walls of this institution, as well as the very specific culture of Grinnell College.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS FOR YOU OF THE ADVISING RELATIONSHIP?

Making Intentional Decisions: *Planning your academic program and selecting a major is one in a long series of important life decisions. You will be required to make your best decision out of a range of possibly excellent options, based on what you know about your self, this institution, and the future.*

- Develop processes for making informed, intentional decisions
- Practice the art of decision-making by combining information, input, and self-awareness
- Identify and respond to decisions that are less successful quickly and successfully

Resource identification: *Develop skills in locating and effectively using information and resources that help you achieve your goals*

- Identify websites, campus offices, and faculty or staff you can consult with questions
- Use information from college resources to assess progress towards achieving goals (e.g., first year planning program, interest inventories at the CDO, information from faculty and staff)

Curriculum integration: *Understand the relationship between your classroom experiences and your academic, career, and personal goals*

- Explain how your major curriculum helps you achieve your goals
- Describe how liberal education requirements help you achieve your goals

ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES: WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM ME AS YOUR ADVISOR?

I will...

- Assist you in creating an educational plan that is consistent with your occupational, intellectual and personal goals
- Understand and effectively communicate curriculum, graduation requirements, and college policies and procedures
- Help you to understand the purposes and goals of higher education and its effects on your life and personal goals
- Read and reply to emails in a timely manner
- Work with you to assess your academic performance and areas of strength to ensure they are consistent with your plans
- If I do not know the answer to a question, I will refer you to a resource that will likely be able to answer your question
- Assist you in gaining decision-making skills and assuming responsibility for your educational plans, decisions and the consequences of each

ADVISEE RESPONSIBILITIES: WHAT DO I EXPECT FROM YOU AS AN ADVISEE?

I expect you to...

- Schedule advising meeting using the sign up system in place at LEAST once a semester, and more as needed
- Come on time and prepared for meetings with me
- Read and reply to emails in a timely manner
- Become knowledgeable of campus policies, procedures, and resources
- Be involved in the advising process by being prepared to discuss your goals and educational plans during our meetings
- Be open and willing to consider advice from faculty, advisors, and other mentors
- Take notes during our meetings, follow up on recommendations, and ask questions if you do not understand a topic we discuss during our meeting
- Become knowledgeable about college programs, degree requirements, policies and procedures.
- Gather all relevant information before making decisions that affect your educational goals
- Accept responsibility for your decisions and actions (or inactions) that affect your educational progress and goals
- Take primary and increasing responsibility for making your own decisions based on available information and advice

TIMELINE OF ADVISING AT GRINNELL

Steps you should plan on taking. . .

Year 1: Take a diverse range of courses to develop and identify your interests, consult with peers, professors and professionals on campus about opportunities you should plan to pursue, join a couple of groups or activities, refine your four year plan, get to know the library, the CDO, the writing lab and the reading lab.

Year 2: Attend second year retreat in the fall, talk with peers who have majored in the areas you are considering, investigate internships at the CDO, especially GRINNELLINK options, get alumni network password, identify a leadership role you want to take in a group on campus, investigate off campus study options for year 3, declare a major, write a clear explanation of why you are choosing the major.

Year 3: Begin working with advisor in your declared major, continue to take a range of courses while developing depth in your major field, explore options for a MAP during the academic year or the summer, identify any graduate placement exams you will need to take, study abroad, consider internships, and opportunities to explore future career options.

Year 4: Identify who you will ask for letters of recommendation from, meet with them, set up a credential file in the CDO, take interest inventories, set up a plan for a job or graduate school search, set up informational interviews with experts in your intended occupation, set up a system of application, provide materials to your recommenders, finish any pre-professional exams or requirements.

This document is informed by the following models of advising syllabi: the College of Biological Science at the University of Minnesota, University of Southern California Office of College Advising, and the College of Charleston Academic Advising and Planning Center. Thank you to those teachers, faculties and departments for their examples and thoughtful modeling of advising best practices.