

STRATEGIES OF ADVISEMENT

Emphasized below are basic strategies of advisement used to assist in individual student development. Please review them carefully.

A. Attempt to become acquainted with the advisee in as many aspects as possible.

Getting to know the advisees outside the formality of the office when possible, and not only during class scheduling or unusual circumstances, can be extremely valuable. Knowing the academic abilities and background of the advisee is also important. Having good documentation (the advising folder) such as high school courses with grades, rank in graduating class, ACT or SAT scores, transfer courses and grades from other universities, and present academic status is essential when assessing a student's ability and future direction.

B. Explore the objectives, interests, and motivations of the advisee.

The advisee's actual certainty of future objectives and goals is difficult to ascertain. When the advisor has some knowledge of the advisee's non-academic background -- such as home influence, hobbies, and friends -- a more thorough type of advisement is possible.

C. Develop rapport with advisees.

If the student knows the advisor as a professional person who has a genuine interest in students, the advisement process becomes much more beneficial for both advisor and advisee. The student should be encouraged to become acquainted with other faculty members in the department, for multiple contacts can be useful to the student who is attempting to assess his personal goals.

D. Become knowledgeable concerning university rules, policies, regulations, and procedures that affect academic programs and activity.

Every advisor must be well informed regarding current academic policies and procedures for these are the foundations on which all advisement efforts will be built. Review of prior policies and study of new policy changes should be a regular activity of each advisor before beginning each registration period.

Familiarity with courses generally taken by advisees, the characteristics of teachers of the courses and how the courses have been appraised by prior students can make the advisement process smoother and more successful. Suggestions for student involvement in campus activities is often the key to retention in school.

E. Evaluate student motivation.

Enhancing a student's motivation by capitalizing on good academic planning can be a very helpful strategy. While lack of motivation is generally recognized as the most common cause of poor academic performance, no clear cut methods to help a student achieve maximum motivation have been developed. Suggested strategies might include:

1. Matching courses early in the program to the student's academic strengths, interests and background.
2. Helping the student, when possible, have a chance to build on success rather than failure.
3. Challenging capable students to continue their efforts toward academic excellence.
4. Explaining the rewards of a strong academic program and associated good grades.

F. Be aware of the limitations of responsibility which place the burden of the advisement process on the shoulders of the student.

Obviously, an advisor cannot make decisions for an advisee, but can be a sympathetic listener and offer various alternatives for the advisee's consideration. Advisors cannot increase the ability of a student, but can encourage the maximum use of that ability. While advisors cannot change some aspects of class schedules or employment loads, the students can be referred to the proper offices for such adjustments when desirable.

G. Seek to determine the level of advisement appropriate for your own comfort and training.

Generally, advisors should not attempt to personally handle complex problems concerning financial aid, mental or physical health, personal or social counseling. When these situations do arise, the faculty advisor should refer students to professional personnel who are specially trained and knowledgeable about dealing with such problems (Morehead State University, 1981).
Good luck and Godspeed during registration and other times of advisement.