

Academic Advising at Morris

*A new approach to advising
first year students*



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MORRIS

A renewable, sustainable education.

Why change?

Data suggests students want more from their advising relationships

– **First year advising assessment: 1999-2013**

- Want more time to connect with advisers
- Want more support in getting connected to other resources on campus
- Only 35% of NHS met with adviser more often than required

– **Student Readiness Inventory/Noel-Levitz analysis**

- Demographics of first year cohort
- Receptivity to support services
- Insight into level of academic confidence and areas of concern for our students

We asked what they wanted....

Rank	2014 Cohort Needs & Wants
1	Get help in selecting an academic program
2	Get information about clubs and social organizations
3	Discuss the qualifications for occupations
4	Get help in meeting new friends
5	Get help in selecting an occupation
6	Discuss job market for college graduates
7	Discuss advantages/disadvantages of occupations
8	Get help with exam skills
9	Get advice from an experienced student
10	Get information about student activities

Proposed change

Adviser assignments for first year students (NHS) will be made by

- Intellectual Community Instructors OR
- Faculty members teaching one of the student's small first year courses
 - Math, WLA, FL, Hist, Pol
 - Faculty in these first year courses typically have lighter advising loads

This model allows us to distribute advising responsibilities evenly across campus. Continuing students and transfers (NAS) will be advised by major.

Managing advising loads

- Advising loads will be capped at 8-10 NHS per adviser/instructor + keep some returning students in major
- Advising loads capped at 20 total to acknowledge additional work load
- For advisers teaching 2 IC courses, students will be drawn from both sections, the remaining students assigned to other first year course instructors

Changes to support the model

- **Advisees stay with the first year adviser for three semesters**
 - Continuity from first to second year promotes retention
 - Transition to discipline based adviser by mid-term
- **No declaration of major until the end of the first term** (Fall 2014: 102 major/minor; 29 adviser changes so far!)
 - All students listed as undecided; use ‘what if’ APAS and online planning materials
 - Emphasis placed on liberal arts and strong planning for any major

Preparing for the change

- Summer 2015: generalist advisers; students not grouped by major for new student registration
 - Emphasis on Liberal Arts and accurate placement into entry level courses in student interest areas
 - Shift away from defining students by a specific major
- Required Adviser Training will include best practices for working with first year students
 - Promoting strong interpersonal connections (advising vs scheduling)
 - Follow up training in week three of the semester
 - On-going connections with Master Advisers to stimulate conversations on improving the first year advising experience

Advising outcomes with the new model

- Create more opportunities for student contact with advisers in and out of the classroom
- Students develop strong relationships to the faculty and institution
- Increased support for successful transitions to the University
- Develop interpersonal relationships that foster a sense of belonging on campus

Advising impacts

Our student data from Noel-Levitz indicates:

- Students are craving information & confirmation that they are on track academically
- They need confirmation that they ‘belong’ at Morris – academically & socially
- They are curious & motivated
- They look up to faculty
- They want stronger connections with their advisers

Our first year advising connections hold the most potential for students to confirm that they belong and can be successful at Morris.

Questions?