

Active Knowledge of Advising Materials – UW WAUKESHA

The first and most important point to be made about the student's place in the advising system at UW-Waukesha is that the student must take ultimate responsibility for his or her academic planning. In order to do so, he or she must be well informed.

Students are expected to educate themselves about the essential academic rules, policies, and procedures of the University through careful reading of their academic handbook. If they should find these manuals ambiguous or difficult to penetrate, they should seek clarification from their advisors in a timely manner.

Once they have educated themselves about academic matters, they are expected to use their knowledge to construct appropriate and responsible academic schedules and to adjust those schedules in a timely manner over the course of the academic year. They are, further, expected to take responsibility for constructing proper short- and long-range academic plans. And they are expected to seek out and use, when necessary, appropriate University support agencies (e.g., the Student Services Office and Study Center). These agencies can provide invaluable academic help as well as assistance for academic and career planning. From time to time, students will encounter obstacles in their planning; at such times, they should seek out their advisors for assistance.

Responsible Use of University Advising Services

Just as they are ultimately responsible for learning about University rules, policies, and procedures, students are responsible for their own personal well-being and academic success. Taking responsibility for personal well-being means eating well, getting enough rest and exercise, establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, participating in co-curricular activities, and being sensible about how to have fun. The University's interest in these aspects of student life is not parental, but educational; experience tells us that students who attend to these aspects of their personal and moral well-being are more successful academically.

Responsibility for academic success, more specifically, depends upon academic self-discipline. Students must be responsible for attending class regularly, for meeting academic deadlines, for maintaining regular study habits over the course of the academic year, and for seeking assistance when they need it. Meeting these responsibilities requires maturity, and maturity comes to some students earlier than to others. But whatever a student's rate of growth and development, the University expects him or her to put the demands of academic life above all other commitments.

Learning to meet the academic demands of the University can be difficult, and for this reason the University has provided students with a wide range of academic supports. Chief among these are faculty advisors, who are well-prepared to assist students with a variety of concerns. Faculty advisors take responsibility for making themselves available, by appointment or during office hours, to meet the needs of students; students, for their part, must take responsibility for seeking out their advisors in a timely manner to get their help.

When working with faculty advisors, students are expected to adopt a positive, problem-solving attitude. They are expected to be forthcoming, honest, and attentive to advisors' points of view (though, as adults, they are responsible for their own decisions). They

are expected to honor advisors' time schedules, when possible, making appointments to conduct routine advising business (e.g., registration, adding and dropping, class withdrawal). They are expected to maintain regular and timely contact with their advisors, apprising them of current situations, plans, and goals. And they are expected to pursue advisor referrals in a good-faith manner, allowing both parties to share supplemental information necessary to good academic planning.

Because they are ultimately responsible for their academic planning and success, students should keep clear, accurate records of the requirements they have met, and a thoughtfully considered plan for meeting requirements that remain. Consistent with care in planning, students should always be sure that they are properly registered for the academic schedule they are currently pursuing; registration, add/drop, withdrawal and other transactions taken through the Office of the Registrar must be scrupulously followed up. Further, students should be sure to keep an independent set of academic records; they should not depend solely on the records kept by their advisors. They should, however, use their advisors as resources, getting their help, for example, in working out long-range academic plans. If and when their plans change, they should assure themselves of the best possible advising support by changing advisors and majors in a timely fashion. Academic plans will change and develop throughout students' careers; in order to make the most of their changeable academic lives, students should be prepared both to use the University's system of support to the fullest and to become their own wisest and best advisors.