

WIP: Wrap-Around Advising: A Collaborative Effort Between Faculty Members and Student Success Professionals

Dr. Andrew Assadollahi, P.E., Christian Brothers University

Dr. Assadollahi is a native Memphian and a 2005 graduate of Christian Brothers High School. Dr. Assadollahi earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering with a concentration in structural engineering from Christian Brothers University in 2009. He also earned a B.S. in Mathematics from Christian Brothers University in 2009, concentrating in applied differential equations. He earned a M.S. in Civil Engineering from The University of Memphis in 2010 with a concentration in structural seismic engineering. Dr. Assadollahi completed his Ph.D. in Engineering from The University of Memphis with a concentration in geo-structures in 2013. He currently an Associate Professor and Department Chair of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Christian Brothers University. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Tennessee.

Mr. Mardarius Liddell Thomas, Christian Brothers University

Mardarius Thomas is a student affairs practitioner, higher ed and career consultant, and retention strategist. He is a graduate of the University of Mississippi, where he obtained his Bachelor of Science in Communicative Disorders. He furthered his education at Mississippi College and received his Master of Science in Higher Education Administration. Mardarius is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia of America, and NACADA.

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Introduction

Wrap-around advising involves a holistic methodology that puts the student at the center of attention with support from faculty members and a team of advising professionals. A wrap-around advising model includes faculty and student success professionals serving as co-advisors for each student to provide them with multiple points of contact, resources, and mentorship to better enhance their academic journey. In recent years, an increasing number of academic units have employed wrap-around advising practices to increase student persistence at the university and in their chosen major. According to Hasenwinkel and Mack (2021), implementing a holistic wrap-around advising model at Syracuse University addressed several factors influencing matriculation and graduation [1]. In this discussion, a wrap-around advising method has been developed by a faculty member and a student success professional and implemented in a first-year civil engineering course. This wrap-around advising methodology involves a collaborative and intensive process of fluid communication among the faculty member, the student success professional, and the students. The key to a successful implementation of a wrap-around advising process is collegiate communication between the faculty members and student success professionals, and always remembering to be student-centric with regards to their academic success and well-being. In this work, the authors discuss the history of development of this advising plan, some minor challenges, early results, and long-term goals.

Advising Plan Development

The early development of this advising plan began with the work done by Assadollahi (2020) [2], which provided a template of course assignments to be incorporated into a first-year introductory civil engineering course. This subsequently led to an open discussion between a faculty member of a first-year civil engineering course and a student success professional. The goal of the discussion was to develop a collaborative way to better improve student academic success, both overall and in the civil engineering program. The civil engineering faculty member developed a three-part assignment in the Introduction to Civil Engineering course that involved students researching the civil engineering paradigm, the university catalog, and scheduling meetings with the faculty member and the student success professional. Students continue to use the spreadsheets developed during these three assignments as they schedule their courses for subsequent semesters. Summaries of each of the three assignment parts are presented hereafter.

Assignment Part 1 Summary: Assigned during the second week of the semester

Use Excel to generate a table that lists your enrolled courses for each semester you have been at the university so far, as well as course list for the upcoming semester. Use the SUM function to calculate the number of credit hours you are enrolled in each semester. Refer to the academic catalog to ensure you are adhering to the proper pre-requisites and take note of them. If you do not meet these pre-requisites, what are you going to do? Email the professor to schedule a meeting for a debriefing to discuss this assignment.

Assignment Part 2 Summary: Assigned during the fifth week of the semester

Expand your Excel sheet to generate your graduation paradigm. Use the SUM function in Excel to add the total number of credit hours for each semester. Additionally, use an IF statement to ensure that you meet the required number of credit hours for program graduation. Figure 1 shows a sample of what you should generate (Assadollahi, 2020 [2]). Refer to the academic catalog to ensure you are adhering to the proper pre-requisites. Identify and list out the pre-requisite chains for all the mathematics, science, and engineering courses for your progression to degree completion. Identify which semesters all the civil engineering courses are offered. Note that some civil engineering courses are not offered every semester.

FRESHMAN YEAR - Semester I		SOPHOMORE YEAR - Semester I		JUNIOR YEAR - Semester I		SENIOR YEAR - Semester I	
CE 110	Intro to CE	CE 225 & Lab	Geomatics & Lab	CE 310	Design of Steel Str	CE 400	The Computer Engineer
CE 111	CE Graphics	CE 201	Statics	CE 313	Hydrology	CE 429	Envir. Engineering II
ENG 123	Writing and Critical Literacy	CE 210	Mech. of Mat.	CE 322 & Lab	Soil Mechanics & Lab	CE 431	Senior Design Project I
Math 131	Calculus I	MATH 231	Differential Equations	CE Major Elective		CE Major Elective	
BIOL 105	Envir. Biology	PHYS 251 & Lab	Physics 2 & Lab	GER		Math Elective	
CBU 101	Orientation to CBU		Total 17		Total 16	GER	
GER						CE 400	Licence and Certification
	Total 17						Total 16
FRESHMAN YEAR - Semester II		SOPHOMORE YEAR - Semester II		JUNIOR YEAR - Semester II		SENIOR YEAR - Semester II	
CE 113	CE Analysis	CE 212	Structural Analysis	CE 311	Design of Reinf. Conc.	CE 351	Intro to Engineering Economy
ENG 130	Writing and Critical Research	CE 251 & Lab	Const. Materials	CE 329	Envir. Engineering I	CE 432	Senior Design Project II
MATH 132	Calculus II	CE 299 & Lab	Hydraulics & Lab	CE 318	Highway Engineering	CE Major Elective	
PHYS 150 & Lab	Physics I & Lab	MATH 232	Calculus III	CE 340	Design of Foundations	GER	
CHEM 115 & Lab	Gen. Chem. & Lab	ME 202	Dynamics	MATH 300	Statistics	GER	
	Total 16		Total 16		Total 17	Program Option	
							Total 16
Total Number of Credits to Graduate = 131							
Check the Total Number of Credits: Total Credits Check							

Figure 1. Graduation Plan Template.

Assignment Part 3 Summary: Assigned during the ninth week of the semester

Access your student profile to identify your student success advisor. Schedule a meeting with your student success advisor to discuss your courses for next semester. Provide Table 1 and have them check all applicable boxes and obtain their signature. When you meet with your advisor, bring with you a copy of your Excel file that lists the courses you should enroll in.

Table 1. Civil Engineering Advising Checklist (to be completed by Academic Advisor)

Item	Check
Student was on time to advising appointment	
Student made proper/professional introduction to advisor	
Student came with Excel list of courses for Spring 2022	
Student understands when Spring 2022 registration opens	
Student took note of Alternate Pin	

Student Signature: _____

Academic Advisor Signature: _____

Date and Time of Appointment: _____

Minor Challenges

The inception of this model was led by the civil engineering faculty member in Fall 2020. Early challenges included disconnected communication between the faculty member and the student success professionals. Additionally, while there was one student success professional assigned to engineering students, there were multiple student success advisors who were communicating with engineering students. This caused confusion and frustration among students. Beginning the Fall 2021 semester, one specific student success professional was assigned to the engineering students. Having one student success professional communicate with the civil engineering faculty member and the students made for a direct and efficient line of communication.

Early Results

The findings of this study have helped to identify the average time spent in every first-year engineering advising appointment at the university. The time for advising all disciplines of engineering has been identified as 30.18 minutes. After the implementation and execution of the holistic, wrap-around advising model, the student success advisor immediately noted that the average time spent advising civil engineering students was approximately 14 – 16 minutes per session. The execution of this new initiative has reduced advising appointments nearly in half, allowing the student success advisor to dedicate more time to other duties. In addition to advising appointment time reduction, the student success advisor also observed the level of preparedness of civil engineering students in comparison to their counterparts. Civil engineering students greeted the student success advisor with a firm handshake and had their academic schedule prepared for the upcoming semester. The success advisor's only tasks were to check the courses, grant the student their alternative pin to register for classes and address any academic concerns.

Long-Term Goals

The proprietors of this study strongly consider that the implementation of this initiative cross-divisionally can bring about institutional change concerning the relationship between academic support units and faculty. Moreover, this relationship will mitigate barriers as it relates to degree attainment and student success initiatives by creating a system of support for all students. The lasting goals are to (1) establish interdepartmental relationships that increase faculty and staff collaboration, (2) increase student retention by helping students develop a sense of belonging through professional relationships, (3) enhance the academic self-efficacy and self-advocacy of students of diverse populations, and (4) reduce financial barriers by ensuring each student selects appropriate courses for their degree program and optimizing their roadmap towards graduation.

References

- [1] Hasenwinkel, J. and Mack, S. (2021) "Holistic, Wrap-Around, Advising Model to Support Student Success and Professional Development" *AICHE Annual Meeting, November, 2021*.
- [2] Assadollahi, A. "Using Proactive Advising in a First-Year Introductory Engineering Course" *ASEE First Year Engineering Experience Conference, East Lansing, MI 2020*.