
ITM Department Undergraduate Advising Best Practices

12.17.18

Goals of Academic Advising at IIT

1. To provide students with academic guidance as they fulfill their program of studies.
2. To guide students in choosing a program of study that meets their individual goals and career objectives.
3. To assist students with academic administrative matters (registration, minors, course repeats, etc).
4. To familiarize students with IIT policy (Bulletin), major requirements and general academic policies, enabling them to take responsibility for the successful completion of their academic careers.
5. Provide a custom one-on-one engagement mechanism to differentiate IIT from larger institutions.

Institutional Responsibilities

1. Recognize that advising represents a significant service commitment to academic units and the institution.
2. Conduct a periodic assessment of advising and review advising policies and procedures.
3. Provide suitable online tools to support advising.
 - a. Update advisers to changes in tools being used by advisers.
 - b. Update advisers to changes in academic policy.
 - c. Confine significant updates of online advising tools to mid-term periods in the spring and fall semesters, or to June/July in the summers.
 - d. Provide a simple and accessible way for instructors to contact a student's academic adviser and vice versa.
 - e. Provide a simple and accessible way for advisers to track advisees.
 - f. Train new advisers in use of advising tools.
 - g. Provide ongoing training as needed for experienced advisers.
4. Comply with FERPA laws and make FERPA information available to advisers.
5. Academic units should oversee and ensure students advising needs are being met.
 - a. Units should assign appropriate advisers, recognizing the diversity of the student body, and appoint a primary and secondary adviser for each student.
 - b. Units should have clearly defined roles for each adviser including but not limited to program directors, thesis advisers, co-terminal advisers, and academic advisers.
 - c. Try to ensure consistency of advising, in that
 - i. adviser turnover is minimized. Students ideally will have one primary adviser throughout their tenure at IIT to build a strong adviser-advisee relationship.
 - ii. The number of advisers for any specific program is minimized, understanding that advising load is significant.
 - iii. A process of consultation is developed between advisers so that advising is consistent.
 - iv. New advisers are trained in criteria specific to the unit.
6. If conflicts or concerns arise, consultation with the adviser must occur. Efforts should be made to fully understand the issues involved, and consensus reached based on established program requirements and policies, before decision making occurs.

Undergraduate Adviser Responsibilities

1. Be knowledgeable about the degree programs, course scheduling, and academic policies.
2. Meet or communicate in an appropriate fashion with students on a regular basis and keep records of advising communications.
3. Review each student's academic progress each semester; may be done in conjunction with advising sessions.
4. Guide students on scheduling and planning their program of study, and in complying with other program requirements.
 - a. Provide a recommendation for courses in the coming semester.
 - b. Retain documentation of your recommendation.
5. Inquire about career interests and guide students on career planning, with the aid of the Career Services.
6. Ensure students take required courses in an expedient fashion, as is optimal for progression through the curriculum of the program. This includes things such as:
 - a. Direct students into narrowly specified courses as early as reasonably possible in order to have more options as their graduation nears.
 - b. Direct students (mainly first-year) who need COM 101 into the course during the first year—first semester, if possible.
 - c. Direct students who need HUM 20x course (that's most of them) into the course during the first year so that upper-level HUM/SSCI courses will be accessible.
7. If you are concerned that a student's speaking and/or listening abilities in English may not be adequate for college-level work in the U.S, contact English Language Services at els@iit.edu.
8. Direct students to other resources as necessary including but not limited to ROTC, Financial Aid, Student Health & Wellness, Center for Disability Resources, Public Safety, International Center, ARC, Writing Center, UGAA, GAA, OTS, SASDI, Study Abroad Office, and Career Services.
9. Ensure secondary advisers are notified when you will not be available for advising.

Undergraduate Student Responsibilities

1. Meet with your adviser on a regular basis, once a semester at a minimum, to discuss courses and career plans.
2. Familiarize yourself with your primary and secondary adviser.
3. As much as possible, take control of your education by learning about, understanding and complying with your program's requirements--core curriculum, major, and minor.
4. Be familiar with program resources such as the Bulletin, Degreeworks, academic audits (official audits are only issued after a threshold number of credit hours are completed), and any applicable unit publications such as the Student Handbook and published Advising Notes.