

Midlands Technical College
Academic Advising
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Summary Statement of 1999-2004 Assessment Study

The assessment of academic advising at Midlands Technical College (MTC) includes the use of surveys and qualitative assessments to determine student perceptions of satisfaction with the effectiveness of the advisement process. To enhance advisement effectiveness and student progress toward achievement of academic goals, assessment occurs at various points during and after the student's college experience. MTC continues to conduct an annual review as well as a tri-annual program review of the Advisement and Scheduling Center's effectiveness. Resulting trend data on student perceptions are compared to established standards.

The College has set an 85 percent standard for sophomore-level student satisfaction with the College's advising system and established a quality rating standard of 2.4 or higher on a 4.0 scale. To provide a comprehensive picture of academic advising at MTC, student perceptions are assessed after initial advisement in the Student Advisement Center and at graduation. Academic program review surveys provide program-specific advising information and an external review committee comprehensively evaluates the Advisement and Scheduling Center every three years using the Council on the Advancement of Standards (CAS) criteria. Student/advisor ratios are also assessed. When appropriate, comparisons are made with other two-year colleges and to earlier data, for trend analysis.

In 2004 entering student satisfaction with advising exceeded the 85 percent standard. Graduating student satisfaction with advising was less than the standard. Advisement satisfaction ratings in academic programs participating in the academic program review process between 1999 and 2003 varied widely. The 2004 program review of the Advisement and Scheduling Center yielded an overall rating of 4.9 on a 5.0 scale. Student/advisor ratios have increased moderately over the past six years.

MTC strives to make innovative use of technology to support academic advising. Recent initiatives include:

- The Academic Advising web page was expanded. Links to useful information was added and a new interface was created for easier navigation.
- A web page specifically designed for the parents of students was created to provide easy access to the advisement, registration and financial aid information. A Parents Orientation program was also created to provide an opportunity for parents to meet with college officials and receive answers to advisement-related questions.
- A web page for high school counselors was created to provide them with advisement-related information for their students.
- An MTC Online screen was created to provide faculty advisors with easy access to student transcripts and test scores.
- A customized Class Search screen was created as a solution to a slow Internet transfer problem.
- The process for validating course prerequisites and loading them into the Colleague system was revised and improved. The process involves a collaborative effort between several MTC departments.
- An On-line Orientation video, which includes an advisement component, was developed and placed on the MTC web site for all students and prospective students to view.
- Degree Audit tracking was made available to students over the web, enabling them to determine their

academic progress not only in their current major, but also in other majors they may be considering.

- The Midlands Technical College Video News Network (MTCVNN), a series of plasma screens located strategically in high traffic areas on the Airport, Beltline, and Northeast Campuses, was implemented, providing students with the latest information about advisement and other college news.

Advisement training continues to be a high priority of the college. Advisement and Scheduling Center personnel conduct training sessions every semester. All new advisors are required to attend advisement training. An On-line Advisor Training program was created and placed on the web for advisors wanting to review training materials after attending the training sessions. Each semester a newsletter, the *Transfer Tribune*, containing advisement information and tips is published and sent to all advisors. Faculty from all education departments and key staff from Student Development Services and Education continue to assess advisement needs and recommend improvements in areas such as training, evaluation and processes. The advisor training initiatives outlined above are accomplishments relating to the 1997-99 objectives to continue to implement activities to improve the quality of advisement training.

The 2004-2007 action plan contains five objectives: (1) The Office of Assessment, Research and Planning will continue to collect trend data on student satisfaction with the effectiveness of advising on surveys at different points in the college experience. (2) Develop and implement a pre-admission advising program. (3) Coordinate the implementation of a telephone/e-mail outreach program for students who have not completed the registration process. (4) Develop and implement an outreach advising program for students considered as high risk who are not being served by an existing MTC Special Program. (5) The Advisement and Scheduling Center and Counseling Services will collaborate on the implementation of an advising/career planning program for Pre-Nursing and Pre-Health students who are currently enrolled in a Developmental Studies course.

Description of Assessment of Academic Advising

Developmental advising allows students to meet their educational needs and aspirations by helping them explore their potential, clarify their goals and use the resources of the college to achieve their educational objectives. These objectives may include transfer to a four-year institution, completion of a degree, diploma, certificate, career preparation program or specified courses. Surveys and qualitative assessments such as interviews and focus groups are used to determine if at least 85 percent of students at different points in their college experience are satisfied with the College's advising system and the contribution of academic advising to completion of their academic goals. Faculty and staff views on the effectiveness of academic advising are assessed through surveys, task forces, college committees, and an advisement study group. A tri-annual program review of the Advising Center, conducted every five years, involves a review committee of faculty, students, staff and an external evaluator familiar with advisement in a peer institution of similar size and mission in the assessment of the academic advising system, policies, procedures and practices. Council on Advancement of Standards (CAS) criteria for academic advisement are used for the evaluation.

Faculty, staff, departmental managers and college committees review survey findings and other assessment information. Trend data is established and summative profiles are constructed. Comparisons are made over time, against internal college standards and to national data for two-year colleges, as appropriate. Recommendations to improve advisement are added to the college's operational objectives as action plans.

Achievement of the 1997-99 Action Plan Objectives

The college has implemented numerous initiatives to improve the quality of advising over the past several years: refining and improving on-line advisement systems, providing students with more self-service opportunities, making college advisement services more convenient for students, tailoring advisement strategies for targeted high risk students, and using innovative technologies to communicate with students and provide them with the information they need to be successful.

To assess the effectiveness of these initiatives, several academic advising assessment objectives were developed for 1997-99. The status of those objectives is listed below.

Objective A: The Office of Assessment, Research and Planning will continue to collect trend data on student satisfaction with the effectiveness of advising on surveys at different points in the college experience. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Education).

Status: The Office of Assessment, Research and Planning collected data on student satisfaction with advising on departmental surveys for academic programs undergoing program review. That office also collected advisement data on the *Faces of The Future Survey 1999-2001* and the *MTC Graduate Follow-up Survey 2002-2003*. The data collected from those surveys is listed in this report.

Objective B: Fully integrate all advisement activities into the implementation plan for the Colleague System. This will be accomplished through the following action strategies:

- Coordinate the redesign of the Scheduling Center to accommodate the Colleague System. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services)

Status: Hardware and software components of the Scheduling Center were upgraded to accommodate the Colleague system. All Advisement and Scheduling Center personnel were trained in the use of Colleague screens. The Scheduling Center is fully functional under the Colleague system.

- Assist in the transition of course prerequisites from the SCT system to the Colleague System. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services)

Status: A systematic process for coordinating the entry of course prerequisites into the Colleague system was developed and implemented. The automated pre-requisite checking system in Colleague is operational for all MTC curriculum courses.

- Incorporate Colleague System materials into the new advisor training program. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services and Vice President for Education)

Status: The advisor training program was completely redesigned to accommodate Colleague screens. All advisement-related Colleague system material was incorporated into the new program. Interactive modules were developed to provide on-line training in the use of the new Colleague screens.

- Train all part-time temporary advisor personnel in the use of the Colleague System. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Education)

Status: Colleague training sessions were conducted on several occasions on a college-wide basis. All part-time and full-time advisement personnel at the college were required to attend a Colleague training session.

1999-2004 Assessment Study

The 1999-2004 assessment study of academic advising consisted of analyzing student survey data over a five-year period and implementing recommendations resulting from the Advisement Center program review. The program review assessed twelve dimensions: mission, program, leadership and management, human resources, financial resources, facilities, equipment and technology, legal issues, access and equity, campus and community, ethics and evaluation. The assessment study examined student satisfaction with advising at the following intervals:

- At college entry in Advising Centers from 1999-2004
- While enrolled as continuing students in 1999-2001
- At graduation in 2003

Methodology used included the following: (1) review of survey information on advisement to establish trend data and determine changes over time; (2) analysis of assessment information and comparisons against internal standards and national data, as appropriate; and (3) use of information to make changes in the college's advising practices.

Major Findings of the 1999-2004 Assessment Study

The academic advising function at Midlands Technical College provides students with opportunities to plan their educational program and to examine their abilities and interests relevant to their career goals. The advisement function assists students in clarifying their values and educational goals and to better understand themselves as individuals. Students are also provided information regarding the many college resources and services available to assist them in achieving their educational goals. Students are placed in entry-level courses commensurate with their abilities. This approach provides students optimum opportunities to successfully complete their academic goals. Students are encouraged to become familiar with their program's requirements and to make responsible academic choices. Students are urged to establish a close relationship with a faculty advisor in their field of study. After acceptance to the college, first-time college students are initially advised by Advisement Center staff and referred to advisors in their major field for further advisement.

The effectiveness of academic advisement is assessed by collecting data from students, graduates, and faculty/staff. Data collected includes entering student satisfaction with Advisement Center services, graduating student satisfaction with advising, and student satisfaction with departmental advising. Department chairs and SDS directors review the collected data and makes recommendations for improving the college's advisement program.

In 1999-2004 entering student satisfaction with advising in Advisement Centers exceeded 95 percent (Table A); however, credit and continuing education students ranked the quality of academic advising slightly below the national average for two-year colleges in the *Faces of the Future Survey* in 2002-2003 (Table B); in 1999 graduate satisfaction ratings met the quality standard but fell below the standard in

2002-2003 (Table C); Advisement Center student/advisor ratios have increased steadily from 1999 to 2003 (Table D). Student satisfaction with advisement in academic programs varied widely (Table E); and the program review of the Advisement and Scheduling Centers yielded an overall rating of 3.7 on a 4.0 scale, well above the established standard of 3.0 (Table F) (The CAS Standards have been revised and now use a 4.0 rather than a 5.0 scale) The following recommendations resulting from the program review have been addressed:

- To be entered upon completion of program review.
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Specific survey results are provided in the attached tables.

After reviewing the data, the Advisement Center staff with input from academic department chairs and Student Development Services directors developed 2004 – 2007 Action Plan Objectives.

2004-2007 Action Plan Objectives

- Objective A:** The Office of Assessment, Research and Planning will continue to collect trend data on student satisfaction with the effectiveness of advising on surveys at different points in the college experience. The surveys will be designed to provide a detailed view of the advisement components at the college. (Responsibility of the Director of Assessment, Research and Planning).
- Objective B:** Develop and implement a pre-admission advising program. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services).
- Objective C:** Coordinate the implementation of a telephone/e-mail outreach program for students who have not completed the registration process. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services).
- Objective D:** Develop and implement an outreach advising program for students considered as high risk who are not being served by an existing MTC Special Program. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services).
- Objective E:** The Advisement and Scheduling Center and Counseling Services will collaborate on the implementation of an advising/career planning program for Pre-Nursing and Pre-Health students who are currently enrolled in a Developmental Studies course. (Responsibility of the Vice President for Student Development Services).
- Objective F:** Enhance the advisement services for students planning to transfer to The University of South Carolina by developing targeted pilot activities with USC advisors. (The majority of MTC students transfer to USC).

TABLE A**ENTERING STUDENT SATISFACTION IN ADVISEMENT CENTERS****Data is percentage responding “satisfactory” or better****Source: MTC New Student Advisement Survey**

Item	Standard	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Correct Information	.85	.99	.99	.99	.99	.99	.99
Appropriate Referrals	.85	.98	.96	.94	.94	.98	.99
Helping Students Become Familiar with Program Requirements	.85	.99	.97	.97	.95	.98	100
Caring, Positive Atmosphere	.85	.99	.97	.96	.96	.99	100
Effective, Helpful Advisor	.85	.98	.98	.99	.99	100	.99

TABLE B**FACES OF THE FUTURE SURVEY****Quality ratings on a 5 point scale****Source: AACCC/ACT Faces of the Future Survey, 1999 -2001**

Item	1999		2001	
	MTC	National	MTC	National
Academic advising is of high quality	3.39	3.46	3.33	3.5

TABLE C

2002 – 2003 Graduate Follow-up Survey
Data is percentage responding “very satisfied” and “satisfied”
Source: MTC Graduate Follow-up Survey 2002 - 2003

Item	Standard	1999	2002 -2003
Academic Advising	85	85.0	74.6

TABLE D

STUDENT ADVISEMENT AND SCHEDULING CENTERS
USAGE/PRODUCTIVITY RATES

Item	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change (%) 1999-2004
Clients Served	22,000	23,152	24,268	25,347	26,492	27,840	26.5%
Staff	8	8	8	8	8	8.5	6.25%
Client/Staff Ratio	2750:1	2894:1	3033:1	3168:1	3311:1	3275:1	19%

Table E
 Student Satisfaction with Advising on Departmental Surveys
 for Academic Programs Undergoing Program Review
 During 1999 - 2003

**Data is percentage responding "good" or "excellent"; quality ratings are on a 4.0 scale
 "NA"=Not Available**

Date	Program/Survey Title	Standard	No. Of Responses	Excellent or Good Satisfaction Rating
May-99	ADN Student Self-Report Survey	.85	51	70.6%
November-99	Respiratory Care Graduate Satisfaction	.85	6	33.3%
January-00	ADN Student Self-Report Survey	.85	74	64.9%
February-00	ADN New Graduate Self-Report	.85	48	66.7%
March-00	HIM Alumni Survey	.85	18	88.9%
March-00	HIM Student Self Report	.85	12	91.6%
November-00	ADN/ Student Self-Report Survey	.85	53	81.1%
November-00	ADN/ New Graduate Student Self Report Survey	.85	22	59.1%
November-00	Respiratory Care Graduate Satisfaction	.85	9	66.7%
January-01	Legal Assisting/Paralegal Alumni Survey	.85	32	78.1%
April-01	Physical Therapist Assistant Alumni Survey	.85	11	63.7%

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April-01	Physical Therapist Assistant Student Self Report	.85	14	85.7%
May-01	Respiratory Care Student Self Report	.85	13	76.9%
June-01	LPN Student Self Report Survey	.85	30	77.8%
July-01	ADN Student Self Report Survey	.85	53	69.9%
August-01	AET Student Self Report Survey	.85	27	74.0%
August-01	CET Student Self Report Survey	.85	14	71.4%
August-01	EET Student Self Report Survey	.85	13	76.9%
August-01	ADN New Grad. Self Report	.85	43	74.4%
October-01	Dental Assisting Student Survey	.85	8	100.0%
April-02	ADN/ Student Self Report Survey	.85	102	80.4%
April-02	Surgical Technology Alumni Survey Results	.85	6	50.0%
April-02	Surgical Technology Student Self Report Survey	.85	24	100.0%
June-02	Legal Assisting Student Self-Report Survey	.85	27	81.5%

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June-02	Accounting Alumni Survey	.85	18	77.8%
July-02	Management/Marketing – Student Self Report Survey	.85	120	64.2%
July-02	Management/Marketing – Alumni Survey	.85	120	72.2%
July-02	CGC/ Student Self Report Survey	.85	14	85.8%
September-02	ADN/ Student Self Report Survey	.85	60	63.3%
December-02	Med. Assisting Student Self Report	.85	14	92.9%
December-02	CGC Alumni Survey	.85	6	10.4%
January-03	ADN Alumni Survey	.85	12	50.0%
March-03	Dental Assisting Student Self Report Survey	.85	14	92.8%

TABLE F

ADVISEMENT/SCHEDULING CENTER PROGRAM REVIEW

Ratings on a 5-point quality scale, Conducted April 1995 and June 1999

Review Component	1999 Standard	1999 Rating	2004 Standard	2004 Rating
Mission	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Program	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Leadership Management	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Human Resources	4.0	4.6	3.0	0.0
Financial Resources	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Facilities	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Equipment and Technology	4.0	4.5	3.0	0.0
Legal Issues	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Access and Equity	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Campus and Community	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Ethics	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Evaluation	4.0	5.0	3.0	0.0
Overall Rating	4.0	4.9	3.0	0.0
2004 Review Comments				
2004 Recommendations				