

Undergraduate Academic Advising Syllabus
College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office - Western Michigan University
(Effective Fall 2009)

Office: 2318 Friedmann Hall

Phone: (269) 387-4366

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College of Arts and Sciences web site: <http://www.wmich.edu/cas/advising/>

College of Arts and Sciences Staff: <http://www.wmich.edu/cas/advising/staff.htm>

Advising Hours: by appointment & walk-in (see below chart)

Advising Hours:

M W Th F 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.; 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Tu 9:30 - 11:00 a.m.; 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

General Office Hours:

M Tu W Th F 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

Academic Advising

Academic advising is an educational process that, by intention and design, facilitates students' understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education and fosters their intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning (National Academic Advising Association, 2004)

Advising Learning Outcomes for Students:

A. *Personal growth: Develop communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills*

- Define your short-term and long-term goals after reflecting on your values, interests, strengths, and challenges
- Articulate your goals during advising sessions
- Describe the connection between your goals and your values, interests, strengths, and challenges
- Discuss problems you face by assessing what caused them, what can be done to resolve them, and how to avoid them in the future

B. *Resource identification: Develop skills in locating and effectively using information and resources that help you achieve your goals*

- Identify campus offices, websites, and faculty or staff you can contact when you have problems
- Use information from university resources to assess progress towards achieving goals (e.g., major, minor, co-curricular planning guides, academic success one semester at a time, Bronco Jobs, Go WMU, information from faculty and staff)

C. *Curriculum integration: Understand the relationship between your classroom experiences and your academic, career, and personal goals*

- Explain how your major helps you achieve your goals
- Describe how general education requirements help you achieve your goals
- Schedule courses so you graduate in a timely manner based on your educational plan and your compact with Western Michigan University
- Connect your educational plan to your career goals
- Articulate personal strengths and weaknesses and be prepared for life after college

D. *Experiential learning: Understand the importance of including experiences outside of the classroom in your educational plan*

- Introduce yourself and have a conversation with at least one faculty member each year you are enrolled

- Participate in undergraduate research, service learning, study abroad, and/or internships
- Participate in student and professional organizations related to your career goals
- Discuss how participating in these activities helps you achieve your goals

When should you have contact with your advisor?

- If you are an athlete and need to do so to comply with NCAA requirements
- If you are a re-entry student and advising is required as part of your re-admission plan
- When you need to discuss possible majors or minors
- When you need to declare your major and/or minor
- If you need help with your schedule for the upcoming semester
- When you need to complete your graduation audit
- If you have graduation audit questions
- When you need study abroad credits approved
- When you need a referral to university resources
- When you have academic concerns or questions about university policies, procedures, and expectations

Which advisor(s) should I see?

Students in the College of Arts and Sciences have at least 3 advisors:

- A **curriculum advisor**, found in the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office, who assists you with general education (LEC) requirements, compiles your graduation pre-audit, facilitates your completion of the Western Edge graduation compact paperwork, and helps you with re-admission after academic dismissal. They are also able to interpret and answer questions, as well as make the appropriate referrals to other WMU departments.
 - If you are planning to go to a graduate professional school related to human biology (ie: medical school, dental school, chiropractic school, physician's assistant school, physical therapy school, optometry school, pharmacy school, etc.), then you will want to ask for one of the **Pre-Health Advisors** in the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office. They can not only assist you in navigating your LEC requirements, they can help you with the professional school application and acceptance process as well.
 - Similarly, if you are planning to go to law school, the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office has **Pre-Law advisors** to assist you with understanding both the LEC requirements and the law school application and acceptance process.
- Your **major advisor**(s) who will assist you in planning your major courses, internships, independent studies, study abroad course approval and referrals to other campus resources. Your major advisor also helps you declare your major and provide basic advising and counseling. If you have multiple majors you will see each advisor to coordinate the details of each major.
- Your **minor advisor**(s) who will assist you in the planning of your minor courses, help you declare your minor, and provide information about internships and independent studies allowed in your minor.
- If you are a **member of the Lee's Honor's College**, you will have an advisor at LHC to ensure you meet their requirements.
- If you are an inter-collegiate athlete, you will have an advisor in the Athletic Department, ensuring compliance with the NCAA.

How should you contact your advisor?

1. By Scheduled Appointment

When you need to spend some time with your adviser to discuss course scheduling, career plans, internships, study abroad, pre-professional questions, etc.

- Appointments usually last 30 minutes (new transfer student appointments will last one hour).
- Appointments are scheduled at least one day in advance, via the online appointment scheduler, as explained below. If you do not have internet access, you can call 269-387-4366 to set up an appointment.
- You can make as many appointments with your advisor as you feel necessary, but most students should check in with their curriculum and major advisors at least once a semester.

- **To schedule an appointment with any of the advisors in the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office use the link here: <http://www.wmich.edu/cas/advising/>**
 - Click the link in the upper-right hand corner, and follow the directions.
 - A reminder e-mail will be sent to your preferred email address 24 hours in advance of your appointment.
 - **Make sure to note the date and time of your appointment.**
- **Appointment Etiquette:**
 - **Cancel your appointment if you can't make it.**
 - Log on to the College of Arts and Sciences' appointment scheduler again and cancel your appointment.
 - If you do not have your user name and I.D., please call 269-387-4366 to cancel your appointment.
 - **Make your appointment WELL IN ADVANCE of your first day to register for classes!**
 - **Prepare for the meeting:**
 - Write down a list of topics/questions you want to address
 - Prepare a list of courses you are considering
 - Keep all your advising information organized in a folder or the "yellow advising envelope" provided by the College of Arts and Sciences Advising Office.
 - **Arrive promptly for your appointment:**
 - Bring your advising folder, with paperwork from previous advising appointments
 - Bring paper and pen to take notes
 - Turn off your cell phone before you walk into your adviser's office

2. **By e-mail:**

When you have a short, one-line question that requires a short, one-line answer; **OR** when it's physically difficult for you to come in person for an appointment (ie: you are taking summer classes elsewhere, away on an internship, transferring to WMU in an upcoming semester but still attending your current school, etc.).

E-mail etiquette:

- Use your WMU account
- Use a clear subject line such as "Question about my schedule"
- Include your full name with middle initial in the signature of your email, as well as your WIN.
- Make sure to include the CRN's of any classes you are having difficulty registering for, along with any error messages you may be receiving.
- Don't be too casual with your advisor when using e-mail. Proof-read and spell check!
- Keep the question short and to the point.
- Allow 48 hours for a response, excluding weekends and holidays.

3. **By walk-in advising:**

- When you need an answer to a quick question or a referral; meetings tend to last less than 20 minutes
- Consultation is available on a first-come, first-served basis
- Please arrive by the time walk-in advising ends.

4. **By telephone:**

- When you need to know advising hours, or another very quick general question that requires a brief/quick answer ("Do you have any suggestions for a good Area II class to take", etc.)
- The telephone should NOT be used for questions such as "What General Education classes do I have left?"...especially if you have never been in to our advising office before. These questions seem deceptively simple, but may entail large amounts of information that are best explained in person.
- If the advisor is meeting with a student, your phone call will go into voicemail. Please leave your name, WIN, phone number (including area code) repeated twice, along with the nature of the question you need to ask. Speak slowly and clearly.
- Expect a reply, but not an immediate one (Allow 48 hours for a response, excluding weekends and holidays). You may want to use e-mail for a faster response time overall.

Advisor and Advisee Responsibilities: You will have the best possible outcome from our advising meetings if we both do our part. We both have important roles in the advising process.

As your curriculum advisor, we will do our best to:

- Understand and effectively communicate the College of Arts and Sciences Liberal Education Curriculum (LEC) requirements, interpret and explain university policies, processes, and campus resources, and help you create a workable plan to complete your degree in four years or less.
- Listen to your concerns and respect your individual values and choices.
- Assist in defining your academic, career, and personal goals, as well as in creating an academic plan consistent with those goals.
- Be available to answer questions, either in person, via e-mail or by phone.
- Provide information regarding educational and co-curricular activities and events outside the classroom, as they are made available to us.
- Work with you to assess your academic performance and areas of strength to ensure they are consistent with your plans.
- Provide a respectful, supportive atmosphere during advising sessions.
- Assist in scheduling, transferring of credits and understanding the graduation auditing process.
- Keep the CAS advising homepage current and accurate.
- Continue to find ways to improve the advising process and how we communicate information.
- Refer you to other campus offices as appropriate or necessary.

As one of our student advisees, we encourage you to:

- Schedule and attend advising appointments once per semester as a first year student (either freshman or transfer).
- Schedule and attend advising appointments once per year as an established student (after your freshman or first year as a transfer student).
- Bring a list of questions and relevant materials to appointments. Ask questions if you do not understand a topic we discuss at our advising meeting.
- Become involved in the advising process by being prepared to discuss your goals and plans during our advising sessions.
- Become familiar with the material on our advising homepage: (<http://www.wmich.edu/cas/advising/>).
- Review your LEC/major/minor requirements each semester and track your progress toward completing your graduation requirements.
- Accept responsibility and accountability for your successes and failures.
- Be open and willing to consider advice from faculty, advisors and other mentors.
- Execute an academic plan directed toward completing your degree at Western Michigan University.
- Commit to and participate in the Western Edge.
- Read your WMU email regularly (that means AT LEAST once a week!)...and FOLLOW-UP on what's suggested/required.
- Become knowledgeable of university policies, offices, and resources which support student success at Western Michigan University.
- Become a regular patron of Career and Student Employment Services. Participate in career path development, resume writing workshops, etiquette dinners, career fairs, practice interviews, and job search services.
- Take primary and increasing responsibility for making your own academic and career decisions based on available information and advice.
- Clearly communicate problems or concerns you are having with professors and other WMU professionals. If you are unsure who to contact, we will help you determine the correct contact and refer you when we can.
- Enjoy your college experience at Western Michigan University!

IMPORTANT DATES FOR THE 2009-2010 ACADEMIC YEAR:

<http://www.wmich.edu/registrar/>