

**RETENTION TASK FORCE
ADVISING RECOMMENDATIONS**

Endorsed by the Retention Task Force 26 October 2011, 09 February 2012, 12 April 2012

1. Require degree-seeking students to meet with their academic advisor prior to registration each semester until graduation.

Rationale: The current practice of not requiring advising for students with 90+ hours and who have submitted an application for graduation allows for numerous errors in course selection in the very critical time as students approach graduation. Requiring students to consult with their advisor in order to have the advising hold lifted prior to registration should assist students in making appropriate choices in course selection.

2. Prior to lifting the advising hold, the advisor should confirm/change major code and advisor for the student. This step should be a required electronic toggle performed by the advisor prior to lifting the advising hold. If the major code is changed, automatic email notification should be sent to the receiving department head for online approval of the change and assignment of a new advisor. Major changes should generally be restricted to the pre-registration period.

Rationale: Currently, this requires a printed page that is hand-processed through AARCC and must be signed by the department head of the receiving department. In addition, students now have the opportunity to change their major on a monthly basis. These factors combine to generate voluminous paperwork, resulting in both delays in updating and inaccuracies in students' records. Allowing this to be an electronic step and making it a mandatory step linked to lifting the advising hold should keep this up-to-date and allow for more effective advising of students.

3. Create a mechanism by which email notification is sent to a student's academic advisor if an advising hold is lifted by someone other than the advisor of record.

Rationale: By informing the advisor of record that someone else has lifted the advising hold, the advisor of record will be notified immediately and will be able to take steps to investigate if necessary to ensure that appropriate advising advice has been disseminated.

4. Require students to declare a major prior to registering for the 60th hour.

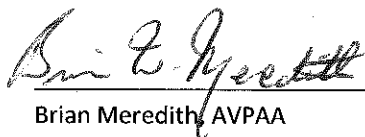
Rationale: Data generated by IR (and supported by studies nationally) show that students who remain undeclared into the junior year have significantly reduced persistence rates; At WKU, the percentage of undeclared students still enrolled drops from 53% (range 45-77%) to 12% (range 0-25%) over that time. Second, students who entered undeclared and subsequently declared a major prior to the start of the third fall had graduation rates around 70%, even if they later changed their initially-declared major one or more times. Requiring students to declare a major as rising juniors will allow students to receive major-specific advising and should enhance progress towards a degree.

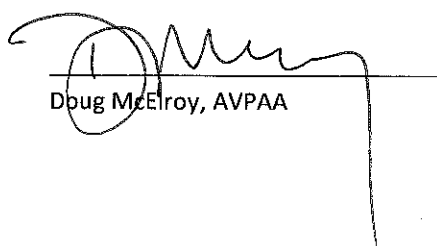
5. Develop an institutional plan to implement enhanced academic advising, perhaps through the hiring of full-time advising professionals in each college.

Rationale: With the current expectation for increased scholarly activity and service for WKU faculty, a more efficient advising mechanism (especially for first-year advising) would benefit both faculty and students. This would alleviate bottlenecks for students needing advice from faculty overloaded with advisees (e.g. pre-professional advisors in Ogden) while creating a centralized location for students to procure advice. It would also allow faculty time to dedicate to other university priorities.

Submitted for approval:

Approved/Not Approved:


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