APPENDIX A:

Existing Documents and Reports Regarding Academic Advising at UTSA

1. Report on Academic Advising and the Academic Advising Centers at The University of Texas at San Antonio for the NACADA Consultant Bureau Site Visit: March 7-9, 2005
2. Report of the Subgroup on Student Academic Support, Taskforce on Improving Student Success and Graduation Rates, June 2006
REPORT
on
Academic Advising
and
The Academic Advising Centers
at
The University of Texas at San Antonio
for
The NACADA Consultant Bureau
Site Visit: March 7-9, 2005

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Date submitted:
The NACADA Consultant Bureau was requested to identify a team who would visit the UTSA campus to “assist in a business process analysis of each (advising) center to include reviewing (the) use of technology in accomplishing the tasks in an efficient manner. The outcome of the consultants’ visit will be used to determine what we should improve and should we raise fees to hire more staff” (Consultant Request form dated October 15, 2004). The three-member team was identified and visited the campus on March 7-9, 2005. This Report is the result of the team’s observations, analyses, and considerations for advancing the academic advising program at UTSA. The Report is provided in ten (10) parts.

I. Materials reviewed in advance of site visit

Each member of the consultation team received the following materials:

- The UTSA Undergraduate Catalog 2004-2006
- The UTSA Information Bulletin 2004-2005
- A binder containing the following:
  - The overall mission statement for Undergraduate Academic Advisors
  - Mission statements for each advising center
  - The Statement of Core Values for Undergraduate Academic Advising
  - Organizational Charts for each advising center
  - Comparisons of advisor: student ratios and support staff
  - Advisor contact reports for each College for AY 2003-04
  - History and analysis of advising fees
  - Advisor Survey results from Fall 2002, Spring 2003 and Fall 2004
  - Academic Advisor Performance Appraisal Standards (March 1, 2004)
  - Professional Development Requirements and report of activity AY 2003-04
  - History of academic advising at UTSA (pre-2000 to present)
  - Proposed Plan to Strengthen Undergraduate Academic Advising at UTSA (c. 1998)

II. Materials received on site

Each member of the team received the following materials while on site, either as prepared materials by specific groups or as materials requested by the team members:

- The current overall Student Affairs Organizational Chart
- The schedule for training of newly hired advisors
- Packets of selected materials from most of the advising centers; examples of such materials included:
  - Various forms used by advisors campus wide (add/drop, petitions, etc.)
Various forms used specifically in a particular center (curriculum plan sheets appropriate to that College, teacher certification forms, student appointment sheets, new initiatives such as programs for students on academic probation, etc.)

The 2005-2006 Compacts for Advising (in general) and for the new Transitional Student Advisement Services

Various documents related to the CAPP degree audit, including sample audits and portions of the Advisor’s User Manuals

Sample Quarterly Reports

III. Preliminary observations

Upon review of the advance materials, the team (both individually and collectively) made the following preliminary observations:

1. the collection of data was extensive and provided a solid rationale for the use of the advising fees;
2. the emphasis of academic advising, in general, was focused much too heavily on the informational aspect of the overall advising process; some attention to the relational (personal) aspect was evident; the conceptual (total educational) aspect was lacking; these relative emphases do, however, reflect the “Mission Statement of the Undergraduate Advisors” and the respective mission statements of the Centers;
3. the absence of faculty involvement in the process (as mentors) was obvious;
4. a number of technology applications to supplement the advising process were available but some were underutilized; and
5. the organizational structure for academic advising was unique (if not puzzling to the team) in that Center Directors reported to an (academic) Associate Dean, but the overall process and Centers reported through an Associate Vice President to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

IV. On-site Interviews

Prior to the team’s arrival on campus interviews were scheduled with the following personnel:

Introductory session with Dr. Rosalie Ambrosino (Vice President for Student Affairs), Dr. Larry Williams (Associate Vice President), and Mrs. Linda Chalmers (Executive Director for Transitional Student Services and also the team’s host and primary contact for the visit)

Group sessions with each of the Advising Centers, which included the Director, as many Advisors as were available, and some support staff

The Associate Deans from COLFA, COB, COPP, CFAC and COEHD

The Transfer Center staff

The “degree auditors” from the Colleges
Staff from the Office of Admissions and Transcript Evaluation, including George Norton (Assistant Vice President for Admissions), Jennifer Ehlers (Director of Admissions), and Cindy Dermody (Assistant Director of Admissions)

Linda Chalmers and Sally Bench – review of CAPP development and training efforts

Review and preliminary feedback session with Linda Chalmers and Larry Williams

V. Review of the Advising Centers

The team agreed to insure a common interview strategy for all of the Centers in order to maintain a consistency of approach and of topics to be addressed with each unit. This process included an approximate 1-hour meeting with the full complement of staff in each Center, followed by an approximate half-hour individual meeting with the Director, the Advisors, and the office support staff.

In all of the general sessions the team employed a “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis approach in an attempt to solicit each unit’s particular successes as well as its problem areas, both current and anticipated.

During the individual sessions Tom Grites met with each Director to discuss the new performance review process and form and the staff development needs and efforts within the unit; Nancy King met with the Advisors to discuss the nature of the Advisors’ role, especially in their perceptions of the balance of the informational and conceptual aspects of advising, as well as the importance of the faculty mentoring expectations; and Mike McCauley met with the appropriate office support staff to review materials, processes, space utilization and needs, and the utilization of technology within the Center.

The following observations were made by the team and presented in the sequence in which our schedule was arranged (no hierarchy is intended):

**College of Education and Human Development**

The COEHD Center has two basic roles, advising and certification, and these seem to be clearly delineated among the Advisors. The Advisors in the Center spend a significant amount of time on administrative duties, and they are also very data-driven. They would thus seem to have less time to spend with students although their advisor-student ratio is roughly 1:300. The Advisors readily admit that they need more than just new advisor training and CAPP. As one Advisor put it, “We are turned loose before we’re ready.” There is a high turnover in the office that is primarily attributed to the relatively low salaries and the fact that the career ladder (Advisor I, II, and III positions) “is not really working.” Such turnover results in less consistency for a student to see the same Advisor over time. Of all the advising centers, there were fewer Advisors present for this meeting and, therefore, we don’t feel that we were able to gain a complete view of the conditions that exist here.

There was a minimum of concern with the new performance review. Though this is linked to merit pay, it seems that most who are recommended for merit do receive it.

Professional development activities are supported and will be encouraged more. There are professional development funds available in the College, and additional funds may be requested beyond what the advising fee supports.
The COEHD is not using available technology (CAPP and a College Website) to its fullest advantage. Although the location of offices has helped the overall functioning of the Center, space is still limited, especially during peak advising times.

**College of Business**

The ratio in this Center is approximately 1:350. The advisors are cross-trained for all 17 academic programs in the College; however, only one advisor is given the responsibility for degree audits. Nevertheless, the group as a whole feels it is “buried in paperwork” and that there is likely some inconsistency in the recording of email and telephone contacts. They definitely want more use of automation, e.g., in tracking students who are on international study and in the student use of WebCAPP. The feeling is that the internal training program is good (shadowing and peer review seem especially effective). All of the advisors agree that the focus of advising is almost exclusively on informational items with an emphasis on customer service. There is very little mentoring occurring. As one advisor stated, “We are overworked on the wrong things.” The morale in the Center among the Advisors seems quite low because salaries are low, advancement is unlikely, and they suffer from a campus perception that they are not regarded as “professionals.” Several also mentioned that the performance evaluation instrument can be oppressive.

The Director agrees that some of the areas on the performance evaluation instrument are subjective and difficult to use; however, the development and initial use of the instrument have served to identify more clearly just what some of the expected roles and duties of Academic Advisors really are. Professional development activities are available within the Center according to specific topic needs, as well as the “global” training offered by Linda Chalmers. Advisors do attend a variety of conferences on a rotational basis.

The overall business processes in the Center seem adequate. Materials are readily available; both walk-in and scheduled appointments are handled efficiently; and the available technology (Outlook, Banner, CAPP, and Excel) is used effectively.

**Downtown Center/COPP**

Some of the same themes were repeated in the meeting with the Downtown Advisors: inadequate salaries, ineffectiveness of the career ladder, and the large amount of paperwork (approximately two hours/day are spent on administrative duties). They also acknowledge that the majority of their training is informational. They feel the access for students in this Center is good because of the structured appointment times and walk-ins three times a day. Also, this Center is more proximate to many of the community colleges; students can receive advising for both their major and their minor in the same location; and there is more opportunity to see the same advisor upon request. Based on data we were given, these Advisors did see more students than any other Center in 2002-2003.

From a morale standpoint, the advisors feel they “have more ability to define our jobs partly because of strong leadership in the Center and the diversity of the group with advisors from each of the colleges represented.” The downside is that because they are not on the main campus, they sometimes feel like “second class citizens.” The Director in this Center also advises students and the advisors feel this role gives her a clearer sense of their job duties. Overall it seems to be a close-knit group, and they appear to take pride in the service they provide to students.
The Director has no particular problem with the performance review process/form and also acknowledged that it did serve to delineate all the aspects of the job better than in the past. The Downtown advisors avail themselves of the same kinds of professional development activities afforded in most of the Colleges, i.e., Human Resource workshops, the global and additional training offered by Linda Chalmers, and some conference participation. Space in this Center has been somewhat limited, especially as a waiting area, although the recent collaboration with Career Services has diminished this limitation somewhat. Both walk-in and scheduled appointments are handled adequately and efficiently via a color-coding scheme, and students are able to review both advising and career resources in the same location. Record retrieval can be a problem, that is, when records are at the 1604 campus site. Banner and CAPP are used relatively well.

**College of Science**

As is the case with the other Centers, the Advisors in the College of Science also indicated that they spend much time doing paperwork. All of the Advisors are cross-trained and, therefore, all do degree audits. The audits are done by hand, however, and the Center advisors expressed a great deal of concern about the fact that “CAPP does not work for their college.” There was some concern that course equivalencies were not used campus wide, although the COS has provided these for possible use in the future. As a result of these two perceived deficiencies, they spend an inordinate amount of time doing course substitutions. In addition, they are very anxious about the upcoming prerequisite checks because they feel these will have to be done by hand as well.

Two new and relatively unique initiatives mentioned in this Center were the use of group advising sessions (one hour sessions every Friday) and a new course for probationary students in the College that will involve two or three meetings with an Advisor. They are clear, however, that the great majority of their advising time is spent on informational items. According to one advisor, “We are not expected to talk with students about career or life goals.” The Advisors in this college, like the other Centers discussed thus far, also indicate that there is no link between the Center Advisors and the faculty. Furthermore, they are not aware that there is much mentoring being done by faculty, with rare exceptions. The morale issues in the Center cluster around salary, an ineffective career ladder, and the advisor performance evaluation instrument that most of them view as “demeaning.”

The Director felt the quantitative aspects of the performance evaluation were fine, but she had little difficulty using the qualitative ones. She had each Advisor do a self-evaluation using the instrument. Since this College also includes a variety of Health Professions programs and responsibilities, the professional development activities are broader, and conferences in this specialty area are a priority. The Advisors also take advantage of the campus-based workshops, as well as other local, regional, and national conferences (NACADA, Transfer Student Conference, etc.) as budgets permit. The Director emphasized the need for a specific Health Professions Office to handle applications for specific programs in this area, assisting with letters of recommendation, etc. This is a need that should probably be reviewed, but as a separate activity from the overall University review of the College Centers.

The general efficiency of the business processes in this Center is obvious. Materials are readily available; preparation for scheduled appointments is timely, and walk-ins are handled expeditiously; the Friday group sessions serve to reduce some of the heavy traffic and the repetition of information for
each student. The lack of confidence in Banner and CAPP is an area that needs to be addressed (see suggestions later in the Report). Otherwise, the processing of information flows smoothly. The linear configuration of this Center is somewhat cumbersome, but the available space is being used as well as it can be.

**College of Engineering**

Of all the Centers we visited the College of Engineering has made the most productive use of technology. In fact, they are extremely technology driven and report that there is very little paper in their office. CAPP works very well for their purposes and they seem quite pleased with the results. This is obviously partly due to the Center Director being one of the CAPP developers on campus, who has the capability to make changes in it. This Center is also unusual in that they exclusively use a walk-in basis with no pre-determined time limits, and they require students to see a faculty advisor (due to ABET accreditation standards). Although these meetings may not consist of true mentoring, there is at least a system in place to connect students with faculty in the college. The Advisors also report that they have a good deal of interaction with the department chairs and the Associate Dean of the College. They admit, however, that the majority of their advising is focused on informational items. In addition, they feel they need to do a better job of outreaching to students. At the present time they basically wait for the students to come to them. Morale does not seem to be a problem in this Center, although they do feel the career ladder is ineffective, and they are not completely pleased with the performance evaluation instrument.

The Director uses the performance evaluation as a template for the advisors to prepare a self-rating and evaluation and has experienced no issues with the instrument, though it is the first year for its use.

Professional development activities are encouraged, and participation in NACADA national and regional conferences occurs as budgets permit. Appropriate campus, local, and teleconferences are also utilized.

Space is a huge issue in this Center as there is virtually no privacy for the advising sessions. Fortunately they will be moving into a new building in the fall and the space issue will be greatly improved. As noted above, this Center probably makes the best use of technology, at least with the degree audit (CAPP) capability.

**College of Liberal and Fine Arts**

The atmosphere in this Center seems very relaxed and extremely collegial. The Advisors report that they rotate at the front desk in an effort to foster a sense of teamwork. Time is also provided for the services of a Career Counselor on a specified afternoon. They report frustration with CAPP and admit that it is not used very much in their Center because they “don’t trust it” (CAPP) and that “Students trust us.” They would very much like to have a “tracking” system that would assist in the collection of data and the management of the daily operations of the Center. They do more walk-ins than appointments and, like the other Centers, their advising is more often than not informational in nature. Some of the
Advisors do, however, have a fair amount of contact with faculty and they find that interaction very helpful. They also clearly feel that faculty are far better equipped than they are to help students with career and graduate school advice and mentoring issues. Other than their frustration with technology issues these advisors appear to feel valued and very positive about the work they do.

The Director had little difficulty with the performance evaluations, partly because she feels she maintains an ongoing performance review effort, which includes immediate feedback with an improvement plan; therefore, there were no surprises in the formal review process. The Advisors and the Director support each other.

Professional development is achieved through fall and spring retreats, as well as the regular campus offerings. Conference participation is encouraged, including NACADA and certain student affairs and leadership conferences; presentations are encouraged, and support is more likely to be available when this is done.

Basic software packages (Outlook and Excel) are used for scheduling and data collection, but CAPP is underutilized as an advising tool (see comments below in recommendations). The overall space allocation and scheduling processes for getting students to see advisors are adequately managed.

**Freshman Advising Center**

The Freshman Advising Center has responsibility for first-year students who have a declared major, including their orientation to the University, and every advisor in the Center is aligned with one of the Colleges. We were surprised to learn that the advisors were unaware of the plan for faculty to act as mentors in the overall advising program. Their observation is that with a few exceptions that is not happening with new students. As one advisor stated, “The onus is on the student to seek the faculty out for mentoring and most freshman are not going to do that.”

Their use of technology varies quite a bit from one Advisor to another but most agree that they don’t really use CAPP because in their view it is “too cumbersome and not always accurate.” Also, there is some concern that such a document is a bit overwhelming for new students to comprehend at this point in their UTSA career, which is a valid consideration. They are implementing what they call “mid-term maintenance,” which is an early intervention system since it targets students who have below a 2.0 at mid-term. This pro-active approach involves contacting the students by email or phone and encouraging them to come in and use resources that can aid them in their academic success. The Fall 2005 report we received on this program exemplified the detailed data collection that occurs throughout the Centers. What is missing, however, is the result of these contacts, that is, how many of the students contacted (as well as those who were not) actually improved their GPAs.

The morale in this Center is related to some of the common themes we heard from others. In these Advisors’ opinion, the compensation level given the expectation of a college degree is “appalling.” They also don’t feel they are treated as true professionals. One observation made is that “People above us
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institute policies but then they often override us when we try to enforce those policies.” Finally, they would very much have liked to have been involved in the design of the performance evaluation instrument.

Though there might have been some concern about the performance evaluation instrument, the Interim Director of the Center (an Advisor herself) felt the process was somewhat welcomed, since everyone knew what was expected of them and they were performing these functions well. She also indicated that this process provided a structured opportunity for dialogue, which could only result in improvements in the operation and success of the Center.

Professional development opportunities for the CFAC Advisors are used similarly to most other Advisors on campus. Conferences and graduate courses seem to be the most frequent ways the Advisors participate in this effort.

The space allocation in this Center provides adequate operational features. Materials are readily available; Advisor offices are easily accessible; and the reception procedures are efficient. Banner, Outlook, and Excel are used to maintain this efficiency, but CAPP is rarely used (for reasons noted above).

**Transitional Student Advisement Services (a.k.a. Transfer Center)**

Although the team was not originally asked to review this new program, a discussion session was built into the schedule, so a few comments re: that discussion are included here.

The design, purpose, and mission of this Center are to provide academic advising services to prospective students as part of an enrollment management enhancement. These students have not yet paid any advising fees, so the program is funded by the University. To date the number of contacts (200-400 per month) has been impressive, and the large number of transfer students to UTSA certainly warrants such an effort.

The full range of services and operational processes for this unit are still evolving, but the team observed several situations for which this unit might have significant potential for enhancing the overall enrollment management strategy for the University. Examples of this potential include: having a consistent academic advising approach for all new transfer and re-entry students (stop-outs, transfers, dismissals, etc.); and sharing the burden of transcript evaluation in order to provide a more timely flow of this information to the Colleges/Centers. Site visits to the local community colleges will provide critical advising services to these potential students, as well as for the counselors at these institutions, who will become better informed about UTSA and will likely supplement its recruitment efforts.

**VI. Meetings with Other Groups**

**Associate Deans**
The Associate Deans were fully aware of most of the very observations and concerns raised by the team and by several of the Center staffs. Though the reporting lines of the Center Directors is cumbersome (personnel reviews by Associate Deans but work tasks delineated by someone else), the overall results of the Centers have been welcomed and positive. More consistency in advising has been recognized, and having the budgets administered by the Directors has been a plus.

The Associate Deans are well aware that very little faculty mentoring takes place, unless on the student’s initiative. They recognize the value in this role of faculty, but also recognize the need for resources to be able to achieve it in any systematic way. They emphasized that any recognition, reward, or compensation for faculty to advise/mentor must be linked to their workload credits. They also commented that the overall effort to develop learning communities has generally failed due to lack of faculty involvement.

All recognized the inordinate number of course substitutions and other exceptions that are made in curricular requirements, which raises a concern for the integrity of the curriculum in general.

Degree Auditors

This group of Advisors had both common and unique concerns about the graduation process. The common concerns appeared to focus on the general college-wide application process. There are three (3) graduation certification processes each calendar year, although only 2 ceremonies. In all cases the student’s application triggers the review process. The College auditors exercise their specific procedures and hold the records until the final term grades (or outstanding transcripts) are available. The ceremony occurs, and all applicants who wish to attend are eligible to participate in it, although final notifications and diplomas are not distributed until several days/weeks after the ceremony.

The variability in processing within the Centers arises from a combination of factors. One College tries to audit potential graduates one term in advance; two have capstone courses in which they can readily identify students ready to graduate; others rely on the information from the University’s Graduation Coordination Office. All voiced a concern about appropriate notification of students who were seeking minors.

Not all degree auditors use the CAPP degree audit, as noted above. Those who do expressed some desire for the capability to make modifications in their own programs. It seems that most changes are made on an individual basis, rather than systematically for the campus. This is probably true in some unique circumstances, but more uniformity can probably be achieved as well. See the team’s comments and recommendations later in the Report.

There was an apparent consensus among the auditors that they should probably meet as a group on a regular basis (at least once per term), with one of the Directors leading these on a rotational (perhaps annual) basis. Such meetings would provide a venue for sharing processes and materials that might be
used by others, as well as developing a collective voice to improve processes that are the responsibility of other offices. Additionally, representatives from some of these external offices might also be included regularly, e.g., the Admissions Office (especially for transfer credit evaluations), the Graduation Office, etc.

**Admissions Staff**

This group was well aware of some of the potential concerns that might have been raised by the Centers and came prepared to share their side of the process – in an instructive and not adversarial way. Two characteristics became very clear: (1) the Admissions Office has the primary responsibility for evaluating students’ records in a timely fashion so that they can be admitted, which is critical for everyone; and (2) the relative workload comparison between the Transfer Evaluators and the Advisors was enlightening, as a comparison was made of the time to process a transcript vs. a typical advising session. Assuming a 30-minute standard for each task, these are shared among 4 Evaluators, while there are c. 60 Advisors.

The balance of our meeting was spent exploring a variety of potential options that might facilitate the work of both units. Some ideas included: the simple instruction that Advisors can check Banner to view whether a transcript has been received on campus (even if not yet evaluated); the option that a temporary grade might be assigned to those courses for which an unofficial transcript has not yet been received; and the shifting of some evaluation responsibility to other offices/personnel. See the team’s recommendations later in the Report.

**CAPP Managers** (Linda and Sally)

Tom and Mike observed a demonstration of the CAPP degree audit and an explanation of the processes used to implement and develop its effective use. Clearly, all Advisors have had the opportunity to learn how to use CAPP, since a training manual, a cd-rom, and Web assistance are all readily available. In addition, workshops have been offered, which do also serve to fulfill the professional development requirements of all Advisors. Perhaps early involvement by Advisors would have served to remedy some of the currently perceived difficulties and to generate more confidence in the product. It is not too late to achieve these outcomes.

The variability with two separate types of audits (Banner and Web), which are certainly different in the output format and readability, does present a concern, but not one that should be used as a rationale not to use this advising tool.

Where areas of perceived inaccuracy or weakness in the product seem to exist, Center staff (most likely the degree auditors) should work closely with CAPP staff to explore options that will improve what is already in place. For example, where a “subfield” or “support work” is required specific sets of courses that many/most students complete could be identified and built into the audit so that the number of manual entries and/or substitutions could be minimized. Where transfer course equivalencies are discrepant, alternative ways of posting might be established.
The team recognizes that no degree audit product is perfect and able to accommodate every single idiosyncrasy in an institution’s curriculum and policies; however, a substantial number of improvements are likely possible at UTSA so that all users will be better served by this technology.

VII. Observations Re: Academic Advising in General

1. The original plan for the advising program at UTSA (1998-1999) was twofold and involved the use of Advising Centers staffed with professional advisors in each of the Colleges. In addition, faculty were to be charged with providing mentoring for students.

Based upon our observations after interviewing a variety of campus personnel, we came to the conclusion that not much faculty mentoring seems to be occurring. This is especially concerning because, as Alexander Astin (1977) notes, “Student-faculty interaction has a stronger relationship to student satisfaction with the college experience than any other involvement variable.” Tinto (2004) supports this conclusion, especially for low-income and first-generation students, in order to improve institutional retention and graduation rates. UTSA has both a significant number of such students and a desire to increase its success rates in retention and graduation.

With some notable exceptions, however, the UTSA faculty does not appear to be consistently engaging students in a mentoring relationship. In our meeting with the Associate Deans of the colleges they were unanimous in saying that the desired mentoring is not happening in any systematic way. The reasons given centered around the rapid growth in enrollment, the large number of adjuncts, and the recently established goal to move to Tier I, along with the demands on faculty accompanying that move. All of the Associate Deans agreed philosophically that faculty mentoring would definitely be beneficial for students; however, they don’t believe that a widespread faculty mentoring program is realistic given the current resources and the steadily increasing enrollment.

2. Not only is faculty mentoring not happening on a regular basis, but it also seems that the Advising Centers are not focusing on mentoring. It appears unlikely that students would be developing relationships with the professional advisors because they more often than not see a different Advisor each time and the scope of interaction is apparently limited. Most of the Centers’ Advisors’ time is spent on informational items rather than on the conceptual or relational aspects of advising. In general there are three types of conversations that advisors need to be having with students to maximize the value of advising:

1. Conversations that are informational - University policies and procedures, requirements, important dates and deadlines, available programs of study
2. Conversations about the individual student (relational) - core values, aptitudes/interests, strengths, areas for improvement (i.e., study skills, time management, level of involvement in the life of the university, etc.)

3. Conversations about the future (conceptual) - goal-setting and posing questions such as:
   - What do you want your future to be? (career and personal life)
   - What steps do you need to take to make this future a reality?
   - How am I changing as a result of my education?
   - How has my view of myself and the world altered?
   - What new insights have I gained from my college experience?
   - Have my aspirations for the future changed in any way?

   Questions such as these extend the impact of an advising session beyond simply the informational. According to successful students who were interviewed by Richard Light (2001) for his book Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds, the most effective advisors
   - asked questions or posed a challenge that forced students to think about the relationships of their academic work to their personal lives
   - established a relationship with students that enriched the value of the advising process (mentoring)
   - interacted with students by talking about “bigger issues” as well as the more “nuts and bolts” issues.

Although these conceptual and relational elements are obviously important, it is also clear that the Advisors in the Centers are of necessity spending an inordinate amount of their time on administrative functions, such as degree audits and the number and nature of student contacts. While these functions are clearly important, our hope would be that technology could be used more effectively and efficiently in order to free up more of the Advisors’ time to be spent in more meaningful dialogue with the students.

If UTSA wishes to increase its retention and graduation rates, as it strives to move toward Tier I status, and if UTSA expects the academic advising process to contribute to these increases, then this process must become more developmental and educational. Such a shift must occur in the Centers, with faculty, and in all other aspects of the University that support student success.

The first two observations above are the broadest and most significant among the team’s findings. The remaining observations are no less important, but are more specific.

3. More campus-wide and inter-Center communication needs to occur in order to maximize the available resources that impact the overall academic advising process. As has been suggested above, regular meetings among degree auditors, Associate Deans, Admissions Office personnel, Graduation Office personnel, the CAPP managers, etc. can not only rectify (or clarify) current
issues, but also serve to prevent future ones and to develop alternative strategies for improvements.

4. The inception of the advising fee structure has created a significant emphasis on the concept of “customer service.” While it is true that students are truly paying customers by virtue of this unique fee assessment, the pervasive references to this concept might be reinforcing a subtle attitude about academic advising being only an informational process and less of an educational one.

5. Related to #4 above, the issue of the advising fees may becoming less of an issue than it once was. Students seem not to have complained about other general service fees, and they have likely accepted this one as well. It seems that, as long as they are reasonable and that services are provided, there is less concern about the fees. If so, then the Committee that reviews these fees might become more of an overall Advisory Committee on Academic Advising in a broader sense.
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VIII. Observations Re: the Use of Technology in Advising

With respect to the use of technology by advising centers, academic advisors, and advising administrators, the team made a number of observations.

1: Five advising centers (COB, COLFA, COS, CFAC, and COPP) had Websites that supported important information regarding each respective center. Two centers (COE and COEHD) had no Websites, and no reference to the college advising center was made on the respective college Websites.

_Suggestion:_ Strongly encourage or mandate that each advising center have a Website by and providing sufficient “released time” (or designate as a portion of an Advisor’s responsibility) to develop and/or maintain the Center’s Website.

2: Some of these Websites were more comprehensive and robust than others. Generally speaking, the Websites focused almost exclusively on informational items.

_Suggestion 1:_ Develop, through a cooperative effort (committee with representation from each Advising Center) an advising “Web page template” that would bring consistency to the format of the various Advising Center Websites. Most Centers have very similar needs, such as why academic advising is vital, why establishing a relationship with an academic advisor is important, procedures for making appointments, procedures for walk-in sessions, office hours, directory (with or without photos) of Advising Center personnel, etc.

_Suggestion 2:_ Permit expansion of Websites to include some “college specific” information, practices, and procedures, e.g., each student in Coe must meet with a faculty advisor each term, group advising sessions are available in COS, etc.

3: Although collecting Advising Center activity data is vital, the amount of time currently expended in this data collection is far too great and is taking away valuable time that could be spent with students. Additionally, each Center (and in some cases, each Advisor) records some of the data items differently – email and phone contacts, change of major, change of catalog, CAPP adjustments/substitutions, etc. If these data are to be reliable and used for fee increases to support additional staff, etc., more consistency should prevail in the logging of these activities. Perhaps a type of technology audit might be attempted, that is, to determine the overall use of various software packages, develop a wish list of additional support materials, and review the accuracy, timeliness, and accuracy of current practices.

_Suggestion 1:_ Revisit the purchase/licensing of an advisor appointment management software. Such software could significantly reduce the amount of time advisors expend in data collection duties, and provide additional time for individual appointments with advisors.

_Suggestion 2:_ Create a technology committee of Advisors from the various Centers, a representative from the computer center, at least one person who would represent the Associate
Deans group, and a few support (front office) staff representatives. The group should be chaired by someone at the Assistant Dean level or higher.

**Suggestion 3:** Last October at the NACADA National Conference Steve Wilkins from Eastern Kentucky University gave an outstanding session on advisor appointment management software. Among other things, Steve compared the features of 5 software packages (AccuTrack Deluxe, Advisor Trac, Advisor Tools, SARS.Suite, and Who’s Next?) that address appointment management. His analysis was well done and could be used as a basis for discussion by the abovementioned committee. Steve also addresses other cogent factors such as who will use the system, who needs to be brought on board, what training needs will be required, and what types of data tracking and reporting are needed.

4: Transportation of records from the main campus to the downtown campus is viewed by many, especially the Associate Deans, as being risky at best. This situation frequently necessitates delays in working with students, as relevant materials must either be transported or faxed to the appropriate location.

**Suggestion:** Advising administrators (including Advisors and support personnel) at both locations, along with at least one representative from the Associate Deans group, should work with the Information Technology Center to determine the types of data that need to be available electronically and how to make these data accessible to the people who need them.

5: With the exception of the COE, the CAPP degree audit is used very little. Among the reasons for not using the CAPP for advising and for the final graduation audit focused on the lack of trust of the data, its difficulty to read and understand, and little or no confidence in the transfer course equivalencies applying in the proper manner. After viewing the CAPP Web degree audit, and reviewing some printed CAPP audits, it is apparent that it certainly can provide appropriate, accurate, and comprehensive information for students and Advisors. Further, the people responsible for the “encoding” of requirements for the CAPP appear to have extensive knowledge of the encoding options, have prepared and distributed training tools that are appropriate, and have been sensitive to changes recommended by Advisors and faculty.

**Suggestion 1:** To generate confidence in the CAPP among Advisors, Deans, and academic departments, CAPP degree audit encoders should meet individually with representatives from each center (for each major) and review the requirements as currently defined, make appropriate adjustments, and test the modifications made. Once advisors are convinced of the accuracy of each major, they will more likely begin to use CAPP instead of the paper degree plans. Preparation of degree plans for each student (except in COE) requires Advisors to spend an inordinate amount of time in this activity, and precludes them from expanding their roles beyond just “information givers.”

**Suggestion 2:** With respect to accurate transfer course equivalents, CAPP simply uses the information that the “evaluators” load into the Banner transfer module. Admissions personnel are frequently barraged with transcripts to be evaluated, thus impeding the timeliness of getting the transfer data loaded that both students and advisors need. Assigning additional staff to the
evaluation processes would be one possible solution, as would be cross-training others to assist during periods of great need.

Perhaps an onsite (at UTSA) discussion with a representative of the SCT Banner software company would be advantageous. This representative should possess complete knowledge of how the transfer module of the Banner package works, and how it relates to other modules (such as CAPP) in the system. Advisors should prepare in advance a list of examples describing where, specifically, the use of transfer equivalents does not accurately reflect the intent of the courses on the CAPP audit. Sending the list of questions and examples to the SCT representative well in advance of his/her visit might be a fruitful and time-saving exercise.

**Suggestion 3:** Before evaluators load transfer course equivalents into the Banner system, they should have signed approval by the appropriate academic unit (college, department, advisor, admissions official). Thus when disputes arise about the application of the credit, there is evidence that the proper official approved the equivalency.

**Suggestion 4:** In order to maintain confidence in the CAPP degree audit, the “degree auditors” from each of the centers should meet as a group on a regular basis (once each month or so) and discuss successes and problems. The group could be chaired by one of the auditors (or one of the center directors) on a rotating basis, so no one person is required to plan each meeting, take notes, and distribute them to others in the group over an extended period of time. Including an associate dean or two in this group might be helpful, and would certainly give them an opportunity to understand the problems and successes with CAPP. Agenda items could include discussions with data center people who work with Banner, discussions with Linda, Sally, and/or Mike about how they encode requirements, conduct review sessions on the training materials, etc.

An overall observation is that UTSA Advisors, like so many others nationwide, have great difficulty letting go of practices and processes that they know work. However, this is the 21st century, and other schools with “challenging” curricula have made CAPP work. It is time for UTSA advisors to separate themselves from the labor-intensive paper processes and capitalize on the technology available. Advisors should spend more time and energy making CAPP work for them and their student clientele. They should make an effort to work cooperatively with the IT folks and CAPP encoders to make certain that the degree audit projects an accurate interpretation of degree requirements. If it is determined that CAPP cannot accurately reflect degree requirements, then the institution should begin to explore other degree audits and vendors who have a products that will solve CAPP shortcomings.

**IX. Recommendations/Considerations to Improve Academic Advising at UTSA**

Beyond the suggestions re: the improvement in the use of technology noted above, and based upon our review of materials and resources and our discussions with many academic advising constituents, the NACADA consultant team offers the following recommendations that UTSA may wish to consider in an effort to improve its overall advising program. These are not necessarily presented in a priority order, but include:
1. **Reevaluate the way training is done for the professional advisors.**

Some of the specific suggestions to be considered include:
- placing more emphasis on the conceptual and relational aspects of advising in addition to providing the very important informational and technology instruction
- providing ongoing training; it is clearly important to offer new advisors a comprehensive training program, but all advisors need frequent development opportunities to keep their skills fresh
- involving the Associate Deans in the training so that they have an increased understanding and appreciation of what excellent advising offers to students
- improving the use of technology for those tasks that can indeed be automated, which would hopefully free up more time for the advisors to spend with their students.

2. **Develop a structured and formalized approach to a faculty mentoring program.**

Since this was an important part of the original plan when the Advising Centers were formed, the idea definitely needs to be revisited because it does not appear to be happening in any consistent way. There are indeed small pockets of faculty who do meet with students outside the classroom and mentor them, but it seems to be the exception rather than the rule. The Associate Deans, in collaboration with a Task Force of faculty representatives of the various colleges, should be charged with developing a systematic plan for faculty mentoring. Questions that they need to consider include:

- Should certain faculty within each college be designated as mentors who would serve as a valuable resource for students in the area of careers within the various disciplines, graduate school information, and general guidance in achieving college success?
- How will the faculty mentors be rewarded, i.e., course release time, additional compensation, service considered in the P and T process?
- Who will train faculty in how to be effective mentors?
- How will their success be measured?
- How can faculty work with groups of students in the Learning Communities in a way that will allow mentoring to occur?

3. **Address the professional Advisors’ morale issues.**

The team is confident that this contributes to high turnover and affects the advisors’ approach to their job. The specific issues that need to be examined are: compensation levels, effectiveness of the career ladder, recognition of the Advisors as professionals, and the performance evaluation instrument. Since the latter has only been in use for one cycle, some discussion with Advisors might occur in order to consider revisions. The level of detail seems extensive, and a more concise instrument might be more effective.

4. **Consider some mandatory advising checkpoints, e.g., ninety hours.**
Currently there is no mandatory advising and having some points when students must see an advisor would aid the connection between the advisor and advisee and help to avoid certain problems down the road. Another checkpoint might be if/when a student is placed on academic probation. Two Centers have employed a rather structured approach to serving these students. Such an intrusive approach would help these students to make accommodations that will help insure their academic success. These students are the only ones who have provided an overt message that they are likely not to return, and the opportunity to preserve their academic status should be maximized.

5. **Expand what is currently being called the Transfer Office to the Office of Transfer and Re-entry Services.**

This office could provide an invaluable service, especially to those students who are returning after academic dismissal, by linking them with resources that can help them succeed. The reporting structure for this office should probably be in alignment with the Freshman Advising Center.

6. **Accelerate the transfer credit evaluation process.**

Clearly, the Admissions Office is overwhelmed with transcripts, which delays credit evaluations for many new (and continuing) students. Academic Advisors must become more proficient in retrieving information that is available in Banner, and the course evaluations must occur more quickly if the student is to be served in a timely manner, through routine advising, CAPP auditing, and ultimately in graduation clearance. Improved efficiency in this area will likely reduce the extraordinary number of course substitutions that are routinely processed currently.

Given the minimal staff in Admissions who are dedicated to this task, several alternative strategies might be examined. Some possibilities include: adding staff in Admissions; shifting evaluations for currently enrolled students to the Registrar’s office; and/or shifting this same responsibility to the new Transfer Center.

X. **Summary Comments**

Overall, UTSA has developed a good plan for providing advising services to students; however, a major element of the approach- faculty mentoring - does not seem to be in place and deserves some attention. In addition, the Centers would benefit from an improved use of technology to enable them to spend more quality time with students. At present they are spending an inordinate amount of time on administrative paperwork and not enough one-on-one time with students that extends beyond imparting information. In order for this shift to occur, the training must include all three components of a successful advisor development program: conceptual, relational, and informational. Finally, listening to the advisors’ concerns would pay dividends in terms of their job satisfaction and ultimately the level of service they provide to students.
The NACADA consultant team was impressed with the wealth of materials presented prior to the site visit and with the level of detail with which the visit was planned. Every individual we met exuded the attitude that they were serious about their roles, that they were concerned about students, and that they were eager to learn how things might be improved. The team’s approach to the visit and analysis of its findings reflect the values of the Association and the profession, the best practices and available research on the topics and issues reviewed for this review, as well as the expertise of individual team members. The team is appreciative of the assistance provided throughout the visit and the entire process.
Taskforce for Improving Student Success and Graduation Rates, 2006

Subcommittee on Student Academic Support: Final Report

Subcommittee Members:

Dr. Patricia Glenn, Chair
Dr. Edwin Barea-Rodriguez
Cari Goodyear
Dr. Amir Karimi
Dr. George Negrete
Dr. Sandy Norman
Marian Paul
Barbara Smith
Dr. Richard Utecht
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Taskforce for Improving Student Success and Graduation Rate
Subcommittee: Student Academic Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Student Success Programs

Recommendation 1A: Set up a main link on the Provost’s webpage describing student support programs and their effectiveness. Notify departments to build and maintain their own webpage detailing their success programs.

Recommendation 1B: Dedicate two additional classrooms to the Writing Center to meet student demands until permanent space is found.

Recommendation 1C: Provide adequate space to hold SI sessions.

Recommendation 1D: To establish connections between faculty and students, support measures to engage faculty in the Freshman Seminar. To make this possible, rework reward structure to make it more appealing for faculty to teach the seminar.

2. Student perspectives on barriers to graduation (three top barriers)

First mentioned barrier: Course offerings/course availability

Recommendation 2A: All courses required for a major should be offered each fall and spring semester. Because this may work a hardship in some academic departments, appropriate faculty resources must be provided.

Recommendation 2B: The cohort approach, with lock-step scheduling, does not work for many UTSA students. When cohorts are used, careful monitoring must be instituted to ensure that the needs of all students are being met.

Recommendation 2C: Many students are reporting the need to repair their GPAs in order to graduate. Reinstate the Grade Replacement Policy for all students to help them graduate.

Recommendation 2D: Many students are frustrated at having to drop all courses in order to drop one failing course and report that this slows their progress to graduation. Extend the
opportunity for dropping a single course until the end of the semester to all students, rather than just to freshmen.

**Recommendation 2E:** The committee suspects that some of the barriers to graduation may be resulting from a loss of instructional resource, due to simple lack of teaching faculty. We recommend that Institutional Research be commissioned to compare the number of courses offered ten years ago and compare that to how many are offered currently. The report should go to the Dean’s Council and to the Provost.

Second mentioned barrier: Conflicts between priorities, school/work/family

**Recommendation 2F:** Expand the hours and the capacity of the UTSA Child Development Center to better meet the needs of student-parents.

Third mentioned barrier: Academic advising problems

- Incorrect advising received
- Inconsistent advising received (from one advisor to another; from one center to another)
- Availability or service considered poor

Note: Advising recommendations are listed under Subhead 5, below.

**3. Automated Degree Checking/Transfer Student Support**

**Recommendation 3A:** Our degree audit program (CAPP) has significant limitations. Many advising students and whole advising centers will not use it at all. We recommend that UTSA hire a qualified consultant to fix programming errors and omissions in the CAPP program. Alternately, consider another degree audit program altogether.

**Recommendation 3B:** Each academic advisor should be trained and certified on the CAPP program within their college. The degree audit specialist in each college should be held accountable for training and certifying each advisor.

**Recommendation 3C:** Have consultant program Banner/CAPP so that each time a student logs on to Banner, his/her simplified list of courses taken/courses needed for graduation (Student WebCAPP) automatically pops up.

**Recommendation 3D:** A fulltime Articulation Officer is needed to complete and monitor all articulation agreements and to do outreach to the community colleges.
**Recommendation 3E**: To facilitate the transfer process, every new transfer student should receive academic advising. Their admissions letters should indicate which transfer plan they have completed.

4. **Developmental Education and Placement**

**Recommendation 4**: Our Developmental Education Program and its outcomes need to be evaluated. We recommend that the Provost engage a consultant or appoint a committee to do such an evaluation.

5. **Academic Advising**

**Recommendation 5A**: During summer orientation for new freshmen, the “Meeting of the Colleges” session needs to be broken out by majors and a faculty member (not a staff member) should lead a one-hour discussion of the subdisciplines, the curriculum and careers.

**Recommendation 5B**: Implement uniform advising hours for all centers (Example: M-T 8-7, W-R 8-6, F 8-5, S 9-1). This would ensure that students and the UTSA community would know when the centers are open. Also, it is recommended that centers maintain standard walk-in hours for the entire semester, not just month by month, or week by week. We suggest that all Centers go to open walk-ins during the first two weeks of registration.

**Recommendation 5C**: Centers should fill open positions as soon as possible.

**Recommendation 5D**: We suggest that the Advising Directors participate in advising students by keeping at least a partial caseload (e.g., 50 if their advisor ratio is 1:350). This may help decrease the waiting period for students to see an advisor. It also may provide a better understanding of the difficulties that the advisors face on a day-by-day operation.

**Recommendation 5E**: Increase the salaries of all the advisors. Make the new minimum $30,000 (Currently at UTSA, they recruit Career Services Counselors at a starting salary of $30,000). Implement an advising career ladder structure, such as the one recommended by one of the subcommittees that reviewed the NACADA Report.

**Recommendation 5F**: Advising centers should strive to reduce the wait time for an appointment to less than a week. We suggest that the advising process be streamlined to serve students in a more timely fashion. The following suggestions might help reducing the wait time:

i) Increase the rate of advising on walk-in basis.
ii) Consider conducting group advising for student populations that are not at risk (Graduation Sessions, Transfer Sessions, etc.).

iii) Provide incentives for students to see advisors during off-peak periods (earlier in the semester, before registration starts).

iv) Make course schedule available on ASAP earlier in the semester (e.g., put the Spring schedule on-line by August or September). The latest date should be 4-6 weeks before the semester begins.

v) Remove some of the administrative duties and projects from the advisors, allowing them more time for face-to-face, phone or email contact with students.

vi) Hire a support staff to handle some of the administrative duties.

vii) Employ automated systems for advising processes. This would require hiring additional IT support staff.

**Recommendation 5G:** Develop and revamp the common Advising Website and move its direct link to the UTSA Home Page. This site, in turn, should have links to all the Center websites. This would require that all Centers maintain an updated website. The common Advising Website could provide general information on advising, resources available for becoming successful students. Each advising center website should provide specific information regarding academic programs offered in the college (e.g., a checklist for the Recommended Program of Studies for each program) and the forms used related to advising.

**Recommendation 5H:** Each academic department should develop a Recommended Program of Study to guide students in planning their course schedule. The Recommended Program of Study should give information on when each course should be taken by students interested in completing their degrees in a timely fashion (4 years). In developing the Recommended Program of Study, consideration should be given to the prerequisite course sequence. Accordingly, the Recommended Program of Study should make clear which courses should be taken in the freshman year, for example, and in each succeeding year.

**Recommendation 5I:** Each center should implement a process to assist students in taking courses in a proper sequence. This could be achieved simply by using a Recommended Program of Study as a check-off list. The existing problems with the CAPP degree audit system should be resolved, allowing advisors to complete this process automatically. Advisors should be encouraged to use the CAPP automated degree audit system. (See also Recommendation 3.)

**Recommendation 5J:** Additional training in conceptual advising and working with at-risk students will improve the advising process.

**Recommendation 5K:** Advisors should have some input into the course scheduling or at least be consulted. Also, it will be useful if advisors are consulted during the catalog revision of programs.
Recommendation 5L: Move the deadline for applying for graduation to an earlier date. Students should apply for graduation at least one semester before graduation. Require that degree audits be conducted the semester before graduation and that a letter be sent to the student clearly outlining what the student is missing. This would require that the CAPP plans be easily generated at 30, 60, and 90 hours.

Recommendations 5M:

i) Increased collaboration between the advisors, department chairs, and faculty is needed. We suggest that “meet and greet” sessions, to be initiated by the advising centers so that faculty could learn what advisors do, provide advisors with some valuable insight into the majors they advise and also help advisors learn more about what faculty do and expect from students. These sessions would also help to identify faculty who are willing to mentor students;

ii) Improve communication between the Honors College and the advising centers. We suggest that Dr. Eisenberg or the AA II from the Honors’ College, the AA III from the College of Architecture, and the Athletics advisor be included in the advising center directors’ meetings.

Recommendation 5N: We suggest that, in addition to the existing mechanism for seeking student input, the Associate Dean or designee randomly contact one or two students a month from each center, to get feedback about their advising session. This would help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the advisor and advising center.

6. Sophomore Student Support

Recommendation 6: Institutional Research should be asked to submit a report to the Provost and Deans’ Council on students lost during the sophomore year. What characterizes these students? Good standing vs. dismissed? Transfer vs. native and any other relevant dimensions.

7. Swirling Senior Issue

Results of the Barriers Study suggest that course availability and work/school conflicts are major contributors to this problem. Recommendations in this area are listed under Number 2, above. One additional recommendation pertains:

Recommendation 7: Faculty members of our committee indicate that too many students are postponing foundation courses, especially in the College of Science, and this is adding to their time to graduation. We therefore recommend that academic departments should reevaluate their prerequisites to ensure that students take these courses early enough to benefit them. Any additional prerequisites or changes in current prerequisites should be communicated to involved stakeholders.
Taskforce for Improving Student Success and Graduation Rates  
Subcommittee: Student Academic Support  

NARRATIVE  

The Scope  
The Subcommittee on Student Academic Support was asked to consider the following areas and how they bear on UTSA’s undergraduate graduation rate:  

• Developmental education and placement  
• Student success programs: learning communities, tutoring, supplemental instruction, etc.  
• Sophomore and transfer student support.  
• Swirling seniors’ issue.  
• Student perspective on barriers to student success  
• Academic advising  
• Automatic degree checking  

The Charge  
The subcommittee was charged by the Taskforce to deliberate and recommend in the following ways:  

“Make recommendations on measures to improve the academic success of our undergraduates to include improving retention rates and ultimately, to improve graduation rates.”  

• Identify, review and assess effectiveness of current activities  
• Make recommendations to improve current programs  
  or  
• Consider recommending new programs, policies or processes  
• Identify barriers impeding students’ progress to goals  

The Process  
The subcommittee was comprised of nine members, five of whom are faculty, and four of whom are professional staff. During the spring semester of 2006, the committee met together nine times and two additional times as part of the larger Taskforce. During the meetings, committee members discussed the issues with which they were charged and also completed other data-gathering activities outside of the subcommittee meetings. This report contains the findings of the committee, recommendations and supporting documentation.
The Findings

Academic Support Programs

In researching the range of support programs, members felt that all of the information on the programs and their effectiveness should be gathered onto a central website. During the semester, Dr. Sandy Norman worked with web personnel to make this happen. In addition, representatives of the many support programs spoke before the subcommittee and answered questions.

- Dr. Richard Utecht, a member of the subcommittee, spoke on Learning Communities and the Freshman Seminar. He emphasized the difficulty the program is encountering in recruiting good faculty to teach the seminar.

- Karen Roth spoke on the tutoring, workshops, and academic coaching offered by the TRC. Subcommittee members suggested changes in the way that faculty are notified of workshops and other offerings and also suggested that tutoring groups not exceed six students. These suggestions were adopted and are in place.

- Cyndi McCowen and Maggie Jackson-Floyd presented on Supplemental Instruction. The members were familiar with the program and gave it positive feedback. They endorsed a recommendation that designated space be provided for holding SI sessions.

- Dr. Sandy Norman, a member of the subcommittee, presented on the Math Department Math Lab. Other members agreed that this was a worthwhile program and a good source of graduate student support and experience.

- Judith Gardner presented on the Writing Center. The number of students served and the importance of the academic service persuaded the subcommittee members to recommend that more space be immediately dedicated to the Center.

Developmental Education and Placement

In order to assess the parameters of the role that developmental education plays in progress to graduation, members of the subcommittee requested and received information from Institutional Research on the number of students who enrolled in developmental education and the number of last semester’s graduates who had begun their college career taking developmental courses.

The following information was received:
29.1% of fall 2005 entering freshmen were enrolled in at least one developmental course.

For Fall 2005:
1742 students were enrolled in developmental math
(77% of total developmental enrollment)
298 students were enrolled in developmental reading
(13% of total developmental enrollment)
213 students were enrolled in developmental writing
(10% of total developmental enrollment)

11.5% of all fall 2005 graduating students had been enrolled in one or more developmental education courses during their college careers.

Due to the large number of students enrolled and the substantial expenditure of resources involved in getting students to college level, the subcommittee felt strongly that the placement and outcomes of UTSA’s developmental education process should be studied by a competent expert in the field.

Automatic Degree Checking and Transfer Student Support

Two members of the subcommittee with relevant experience, Barbara Smith and Marian Paul, prepared reports and recommendations on these topics. It was concluded that the CAPP degree audit program is in need of upgrading or an alternate program should be chosen. As far as the support for transfer students is concerned, it is recommended that a dedicated staff member work as Articulation Officer and complete 2+2 transfer plans with our feeder community colleges. The subcommittee also felt that each new transfer student should receive academic advising as a matter of course, to help make their transition to UTSA go smoothly.

Student Perceptions of Barriers to Graduation

Faculty members of the committee agreed to survey their upper division classes with the open ended query, “What do you perceive as barriers to your or your friends’ graduation here at UTSA?” Later, to balance contributions from all colleges, the SI staff asked other professors to pose the same question to their classes. Students were passionately interested in providing this information to the university; a nerve had been touched. This process yielded 712 student responses. Because of the significant outpouring of student interest and contributions, a separate analysis of the responses has been prepared, “Report on Barriers Survey” (p.4)
Early results of the Barrier’s Survey indicated that students saw academic advising services as implicated in their delay to graduation. To gather more information on the functioning of the advising centers, it was decided that the directors of the major advising centers should be interviewed, to provide their input. Faculty members of the committee contributed the questions that were compiled to be used in interviewing the directors.

These same faculty members interviewed each director and provided their interview notes to Dr. Amir Karimi, subcommittee member and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies. Dr. Karimi used the interviews, the 2005 report from NACADA consultants and the advising concerns raised in the Barriers Survey to compile the “Report on Academic Advising” which is included here, beginning on p. Following completion of the report, subcommittee members read and voted on the report’s recommendations. Those recommendations which passed are listed in the Executive Summary of this report. Interviewer notes are also included at the end of this report, as Appendix B.

“Swirling Senior” Issue

Although this issue was not researched separately, subcommittee members felt that the concerns raised in the Barriers Study, especially the top three issues, Course Offerings/Availability, Conflicting Priorities and Academic Advising are probably salient in so many students seeming to spend an inordinate amount of time in the senior classification without graduating. Other studies, such as the qualitative studies completed this semester by Dr. Raymond Padilla and Jennifer Balderas, throw light upon the issues, but further attention and study need to be devoted to this phenomenon.

Sophomore Support Initiatives

Due to time constraints, this issue received very little attention during the subcommittee’s deliberations. Two new programs, The Sophomore Seminar and the Sophomore Retreat will target sophomores in the 2006/2007 academic year, both offered through the TRC Learning Communities Program. Susan Colorado-Burt, who directs the new programs, provided the information on these programs which is entered on the Matrix, Appendix A.

In Closing

Members of the subcommittee have devoted many hours of their time and effort to providing full and honest evaluations and recommendations to the Taskforce. It is our hope that they are helpful, that they are adopted, that they are implemented and that they help to make UTSA a better place for students to succeed and to graduate.

Note: Many sincere thanks go to Lisa M. Johns, TRC Associate Director for Assessment for her skilled and patient handling of the subcommittee data. Lisa spent many days entering and classifying responses for the Barriers
Survey and, along with Cari Goodyear, a member of the subcommittee, processed and trended the responses within categories. The Report on the Barriers Survey is also Lisa’s work.

**Report on Academic Advising**

*Prepared by Dr. Amir Karimi*

Based on the comments made in the survey of students on Barriers to Graduation and the 2005 report from NACADA consultants, a questionnaire was developed to interview the directors of Advising Centers. The questionnaire consisted of 32 questions. Several faculty members of the subcommittee (Edwin Barea-Rodriguez, Amir Karimi, George Negrete, Sandy Norman, and Richard Utech) conducted the interviews. Barbara Smith also attended all (except one) interview sessions and assisted the faculty members in compiling their reports. The directors (or senior advisors) of the following centers were interviewed: CFAC, COB, COEHD, COLFA, COPP, COS, Honors College, and TRC. The compiled results of the interviews are included in Appendix B. Following are the main observations which led to a number of recommendations:

2. The operating hours for all advising centers are not the same. Some centers are open on Saturdays, but not all. Also, in some centers the walk-in schedule differs from month to month. This inconsistency might cause some confusion for students.

   **Recommendation:** Implement uniform advising hours for all centers (Example: M-T 8-7, W-R 8-6, F 8-5, S 9-1). This would ensure that students and the UTSA community would know when the centers are open. Also, it is recommended that centers maintain standard walk-in hours for the entire semester, not just month by month, or week by week. We suggest that all Centers go to open walk-ins during the first two weeks of registration.

3. With the recent addition of new advisors, it appears that the current advisor/student ratio is adequate at 1:350. A few centers have not filled the open positions.

   **Recommendation:** Centers should fill open positions as soon as possible.

4. Some Directors of Advising Centers advise students on a regular basis, while others either advise students occasionally, upon request, or when there is a need for intervention.

   **Recommendation:** We suggest that the Advising Directors participate in advising students by keeping at least a partial caseload (e.g., 50 if their advisor ratio is 1:350). This may help decrease the waiting period for students to see an advisor. It also may provide a better understanding of the difficulties that the advisors face on a day-by-day operation.

5. Some centers have experienced loss of advising staff due to low salaries.
**Recommendation:** Increase the salaries of all the advisors. Make the new minimum $30,000 (Currently at UTSA, they recruit Career Services Counselors at a starting salary of $30,000). Implement an advising career ladder structure, such as the one recommended by one of the subcommittees that reviewed the NACADA Report.

6. Advising is mandatory only for Athletics and in the College of Engineering. In other colleges, advising is mandatory only for students with a TSI (Texas Success Initiative) hold, academic hold (probation for GPA being lower than 2.00 and prevention for GPA in the range of 2.00 to 2.20).

**Recommendation:** None.

7. The average percent of time committed to face-to-face contact with students is about 70%. It seems that in all centers, students have the choice to see the same or different advisors. Advising by appointment varies from college. In one college, advising is done strictly on walk-in basis. In one college, 2/3 of advising time is devoted to appointments. The waiting period also varies from college to college, ranging from less than 30 minutes to one month. It appears that the waiting period for students to see an advisor is longer for centers where a higher portion of advising is done by appointment.

**Recommendation:** Advising centers should strive to reduce the wait time for an appointment to less than a week. We suggest that the advising process be streamlined to serve students in a more timely fashion. The following suggestions might help reducing the wait time:

i) Increase the rate of advising on walk-in basis.

ii) Consider conducting group advising for student populations that are not at risk (Graduation Sessions, Transfer Sessions, etc.).

iii) Provide incentives for students to see advisors during off-peak periods (earlier in the semester, before registration starts).

iv) Make course schedule available on ASAP earlier in the semester (e.g., put the Spring schedule online by August or September). The latest date should be 4-6 weeks before the semester begins.

v) Remove some of the administrative duties and projects from the advisors, allowing them more time for face-to-face, phone or email contact with students.

vi) Hire a support staff to handle some of the administrative duties.

vii) Employ automated systems for advising processes. This would require hiring additional IT support staff.

8. Not all Advising Centers are currently maintaining a Website. It is also difficult to find information on transfer credits or articulation agreements (transfer plans) with community on the UTSA website.

**Recommendation:** Develop and revamp the common Advising Website and move its direct link to the UTSA Home Page. This site, in turn, should have links to all the Center websites. This would require that all Centers maintain an updated website. The common Advising Website could provide general information on advising, resources available for becoming successful students. Each advising center website should provide specific information regarding academic programs offered in the college (e.g., a checklist for the Recommended Program of Studies for each program) and the forms used related to advising.
9. In most advising centers, advisors are cross trained to advise in more than one major, or all majors offered in the college. Continue this cross training to better accommodate students.

**Recommendation:** None.

10. In at least one college, no “Recommended Program of Study” has been developed to provide information on when each course should be taken by a student registered in a specific degree program.

**Recommendation:** Each academic department should develop a Recommended Program of Study to guide students in planning their course schedule. The Recommended Program of Study should give information on when each course should be taken by students interested in completing their degrees in a timely fashion (4 years). In developing the Recommended Program of Study, consideration should be given to the prerequisite course sequence. Accordingly, the Recommended Program of Study should make clear which courses should be taken in the freshman year, for example, and in each succeeding year.

11. Most advising center offices have a check-off sheet for each major that oversees that students are taking courses in the proper sequence. At least one center does not provide this service. In one center, this process is achieved through Web-CAPP. Other centers do this process manually.

**Recommendation:** Each center should implement a process to assist students in taking courses in a proper sequence. This could be achieved simply by using a Recommended Program of Study as a check-off list. The existing problems with the CAPP degree audit system should be resolved, allowing advisors to complete this process automatically. Advisors should be encouraged to use the CAPP automated degree audit system. (See also Recommendation 3.)

12. All centers do more outreach (intrusive) to at risk students regarding academic cautions, academic probation and re-admits from dismissal.

**Recommendation:** Additional training in conceptual advising and working with at-risk students will improve the advising process.

13. Currently, advisors have little or no input in course scheduling.

**Recommendation:** Advisors should have some input into the course scheduling or at least be consulted. Also, it will be useful if advisors are consulted during the catalog revision of programs.

14. Currently the deadline for students to apply for graduation is after the Census Date, in the last semester of the senior year. In many cases, this late deadline creates problems for students who have not completed or attempted all the degree requirements (e.g., a student who has taken a wrong course for satisfying the Core requirements). By the time a degree audit is conducted, it is too late for students to correct the existing deficiency.
**Recommendation:** Move the deadline for applying for graduation to an earlier date. Students should apply for graduation at least one semester before graduation. Require that degree audits be conducted the semester before graduation and that a letter be sent to the student clearly outlining what the student is missing. This would require that the CAPP plans be easily generated at 30, 60, and 90 hours.

15. It appears that there is a need to improve the level of communication between the departmental faculty and the advising centers. Sometimes there are misconceptions by faculty on what the advisors do. Also, the interaction between some centers needs to be improved. Centers without a director feel isolated and left out of the process.

**Recommendation:**

i) Increased collaboration between the advisors, department chairs, and faculty is needed. We suggest that “meet and greet” sessions, to be initiated by the advising centers so that faculty could learn what advisors do, provide advisors with some valuable insight into the majors they advise and also help advisors learn more about what faculty do and expect from students. These sessions would also help to identify faculty who are willing to mentor students;

ii) Improve communication between the Honors College and the advising centers. We suggest that Dr. Eisenberg or the AA II from the Honors’ College, the AA III from the College of Architecture and the Athletics advisor be included in the advising center directors’ meetings.

16. It appears that most centers use an on-line student survey to seek student advice on advising strength and weaknesses.

**Recommendation:** We suggest that, in addition to the existing mechanism for seeking student input, the Associate Dean or designee randomly contact one or two students a month from each center, to get feedback about their advising session. This would help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the advisor and the advising center.

17. Some advising directors mention that one major barrier to student success is low admission standards. They feel that that we are setting students up for failure, who enter the university with a GPA of less than 2.0.

**Recommendation:** Consider raising standards for admitting freshman and transfer students. Raising standards for provisional admission and deferring more freshmen and raising the transfer standard to 2.2 GPA should be considered. This recommendation did not pass the committee vote.
Report:  
Student Perceptions on Barriers to Graduation

Overview

Members of the Subcommittee on Student Academic Support were challenged to provide perspective on what students believed to be barriers to their graduation at UTSA. In order to do so, faculty members of the subcommittee agreed to give one of their upper division courses a one-question, anonymous survey:

What do you perceive as barriers to your or your friends’ graduation here at UTSA?

Faculty members represented the Colleges of Business, Sciences and Engineering. To collect responses from students not represented by faculty subcommittee members, another subcommittee member surveyed upper division students in the Colleges of Architecture and Public Policy, and additional faculty volunteered to survey upper division courses in the Colleges of Liberal and Fine Arts and Education and Human Development.

A total of 712 students responded to the survey.

In compiling the student response data, ten categories became evident. Below is a list of the categories in rank order, according to the highest number of responses. Students were not limited in the number of their comments; therefore, most student responses fell into multiple categories.

- Course Offerings/Availability
- Conflicting Priorities
- Academic Advising
- Campus Issues
- Studying
- Tuition/Fees
- Degree Requirements
- Professors
- Policies
- Support Programs

The Top 3 Barriers—Virtually, every respondent mentioned at least one of these categories.

1. Course Offerings/Availability
   By far, the greatest concern to upper division students was the availability of courses, what courses were offered and when. Of the total respondents, 49% claimed such issues to be a barrier to their graduation at UTSA.
General Concerns

- Students in several of the colleges stated that **not enough course choices** were being offered during each semester to complete the degree in a timely manner.
- Students expressed growing frustration when courses, especially upper division degree requirements, were only offered **one time per year**. If the course filled quickly, many students were required to delay graduation.
- Limited times also appeared to be a barrier students encountered frequently; students reported that when a required class was offered, often, there was only **one time offering** or that degree required courses would have **conflicting times** during the semester, so the student could not take both.

Concerns within Specific Colleges

- College of Sciences students repeatedly reported **conflicting times of required courses** during the same semester. Just as important, were the objections that labs were in the class schedule for 5 hours but ended after 3 hours. From the students' perspectives, those 2 hours were “wasted” because they were unable to fit another course into their schedules during that time block.
- Within the College of Architecture, students disapproved of the courses being offered only one time per year, **too few class sections offered** and **not enough seats** when required classes were offered, compared to the number of students needing to take the course during the same semester. COA students also responded numerous times with the need for **more upper division summer courses**. Students stated that summer courses would allow them to catch up with the rest of the cohort when the student needed to stop-out a semester, but that they were not offered.
- COPP students regularly stated that there were **not enough courses offered** each semester to complete degree plans in a timely manner. A few students suggested that sheer **lack of faculty** members seemed to be the cause.

2. **Conflicting Priorities**

This category was defined as outside student concerns that affected academic progression, but were not within the control of the university.

- Work. Too much time working, work schedules conflicting with or limiting class schedules were reported by 39% of the students who stated that they experienced conflicting priorities as a barrier.
Money, or lack thereof, and financial concerns were repeatedly offered as barriers to success.

A number of students stated that a great obstacle was their own attitude toward education and graduation, usually characterized as “laziness”.

Family obligations were also considered barriers.

Other reasons ranged from personal issues such as drug addiction and alcoholism to lack of child care or poor health.

3. Academic Advising
   This category pertained to specific mention of the advising received or the advising center attended.

   General Concerns

   - 48% of students who reported academic advising as a barrier stated that they had received incorrect information from academic advisors in their college, particularly due to lack of knowledge of the degree plan.
   - Inconsistencies between advisors within the same center, as well as inconsistencies between centers were also reported to cause graduation delays.
   - Students reported numerous times that they did not have access to their advisors, because of the center's advising schedules.
   - Another concern would be the reports of advisor indifference students experienced, stating that advisors were not helpful at all and did not seem to care to help students.

   Concerns within Specific Colleges

   - Students within the College of Sciences reported that academic advisors for their college did not know the degree plans for their majors.
   - A number of reports from students in the College of Liberal and Fine Arts stated that advising was inconsistent among these advisors, often citing advisor turnover.
   - College of Education and Human Development students reported conflicting information received from these advisors and other colleges’ centers.

The Remaining 7

Campus Issues
These concerns were addressed by 16% of the students who were surveyed. Students reported a myriad of issues. Those concerning the university or barriers within university control made up this category.
- **Financial Aid.** Experiencing issues with the Financial Aid Office was the top trend in this category. Typical responses were confusing paperwork/process, not enough financial aid received/available and office personnel not being helpful.
- **Parking.** Students reported leaving campus and not attending classes because they were unable to find adequate parking.
- **Outdated Equipment.** Substandard equipment in the computer and science labs were reported as well as insufficient hours of operation and accessibility to such resources.
- **Lack of Prestige.** A few students perceived UTSA as not having enough prestige. UTSA’s inferior reputation was given as the reason many students transferred to “better” universities.
- **Low Admission Standards.** Low admissions standards were often stated as a reason for low graduation rates and contributed to the lack of prestige at UTSA.
- **High Textbook Cost.** Students stated they were unable to take as many courses as they would like each semester due, in part, to the high cost of textbooks.
- **Miscellaneous Issues.** Other barriers reported were inadequate faculty to student ratio, problems with CAPP and the registration process, a lack of campus activities to promote campus involvement, lack of knowledge regarding campus resources and not enough child care available on campus.

### Studying

Of the 712 students who responded to the barriers question, 16% reported issues relating to this category.

- Students reported that having **poor study skills** affected their progress.
- **Under-preparation for college** was described as an important barrier.
- **Difficulty understanding course content** was also stated as an obstacle.
- Having **too little time to study**, as well as **too much time spent socializing** was reported.

### Tuition and Fees

This category ranked sixth with 15% of students surveyed claiming this as a barrier to student success and graduation rates.

- The majority of responses stated that tuition and fees were too expensive to take the classes necessary to graduate in a timely manner.
- The cost of education and how it continues to rise were of great concern to students. Many reported this was their reason for “taking a break” or stopping-out.

### Degree Requirements

Responses in this category were defined as any report dealing with courses which were required to complete a degree in any discipline.
The most consistent complaint was that some programs have too many prerequisites for degree required courses. Some students stated that they believe there were too many credit hours required to earn a degree. Students reported that degree plans were not clear or that they needed clarity in the actual application process for graduation. It was reported that students had difficulty meeting degree requirements, due to changes in catalog requirements.

**Professors**
Ten (10) percent of students who responded, stated that they experienced issues with faculty that hindered their progress.

- Bad pedagogy was stated as the largest complaint about faculty with 15 comments pertaining to this specifically.
- A few students reported faculty indifference as barrier to their graduation.
- The response, “Bad professors”, was received several times as an obstacle. This may refer to a number of issues with instructors.
- Other matters related to faculty were problems with testing policies, a lack of professor availability to students and impressions that research was more important than teaching.

**Policies**
Responses in this category were surprisingly consistent. Of survey participants, 10% reported that a UTSA policy caused a delay in their graduation.

- Students voiced problems with policies regarding acceptance of transfer credits, even when they had followed transfer plans from a local community college.
- Upper division students reported delays in graduation which they attributed to UTSA’s grade replacement policy not being applied to them.
- The policy known as the “3-Peat Policy” was reported as a barrier in student progress.
- Students surveyed also stated they should have a longer amount of time during the semester to decide to drop individual classes.

**Support Programs**
Compared to other categories, this one had the fewest responses. 4% of the students surveyed commented on support programs as a barrier to their success. This may be attributed to the widespread availability of academic resources on campus.

- Many upper division courses lack academic support.
- The need for a mandatory career assessment tool to start early career planning was suggested.
Other responses included needing more tutoring available on campus, needing more Supplemental Instruction (SI) sessions and wanting better trained tutors.

Conclusion

In closing, students enthusiastically responded to the survey. They wanted to speak out about concerns, in the hope that changes would be made because of their experiences. Some barriers are out of the university’s scope of influence. However, two of the top three obstacles to graduation (course availability/offerings and academic advising) should become areas targeted for improvement by the university. With the large number of students claiming unavailability of courses and poor course offerings as barriers to graduation, there is definitely a problem that needs to be remedied. Perhaps, it is actually a shortage of faculty that is the underlying cause. In terms of improving academic advising, lack of leadership and of solid training appears to be major issues for students.

We hope that the Taskforce will take into consideration remedies suggested by these student responses to make improvements at UTSA. At the very least, positive changes based on their voiced concerns would foster a sense of student belonging in the university community because they were heard and heeded.
## Taskforce for Improving Student Success and Graduation Rate

**Subcommittee: Student Academic Support**

### MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Identify, Review, Assess Effectiveness</th>
<th>Recommendations for Improvement</th>
<th>Recommendations for New Programs, Policies, Processes</th>
<th>Identify Barriers to Student Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student success programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Learning Communities**     | • Mission Goals: Identity with University, integrate | • Engage more faculty. | • Ideal conditions? | Advisors describing wrongly.  
Athletics & NCAA regulations/GPA. |
|                              | • Many requirements in COR 1203 | • Faculty recruitment difficult. | • Logistical and scheduling challenges. |  |
|                              | • Retention rates & GPAs higher at for LC members | • Dept. Chairs’ attitudes important. | • Could overload $$$ go to special M&O account only for instructor? |  |
| **Tutoring, Academic Coaching, Workshops (TRC)** | • Tutor I, II positions | • Concern regarding large group tutoring | • PLATO individual log-ins? | Faculty not receiving flyers  
SPACE  
Students miss out because unaware of tutoring |
|                              | • Some Grad students, but mostly Undergrad | • Getting students to come early instead of peaking just before an exam | • Include flyers on Web CT with syllabi |  |
|                              | • Tutors refer to Academic Coaching | • Faculty recruitment difficult. | • Flyers should go to faculty instead of departments |  |
|                              | • Goal: 1-1 tutoring appts. | • Dept. Chairs’ attitudes important. | • SPACE! |  |
| **Supplemental Instruction** | • Ratio of SI leader per class? 1 per class, more sessions for large classes | • Market SI success. | • Limitation to further expansion is based on space |  |
| **MAP for Math**             | • Funding? Fee | • Recruit most successful students as leaders | • SPACE! |  |
|                              | • What % of students per class takes advantage? Usually 25-30% | • Doubles A/B rate; cuts D/F/W rate in half. | • Lack of space limits number who can be served. Space should be centrally |  |
| **Writing Center**           | Served 5000 students in fall, 2005. Also serve faculty/staff. 9 Tutors have BAs, | Continue to disseminate to departments/residences halls. | New class to train tutors, fall 2006.  
Writing Across |  |
### Student Success and Graduation Rates Taskforce Report-Appendix A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Success and Graduation Rates Taskforce Report-Appendix A</th>
<th>recruit all majors. Not remedial. Extended hours, 8-8</th>
<th>Desperately need more space</th>
<th>Curriculum, 12 professors so far, fall, 2006. Additional funding for writing center included in Title V proposal</th>
<th>located. Recommend two more classrooms dedicated to WC.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math Department Math Lab</td>
<td>Located SB 2.01.01 Undergrad peer tutors (learning resource fee) Hours 9-5, M-F Tutor calculus-differential equations. Served ___ students last fall.</td>
<td>Good way to support grad students. Need to clarify who is tutored by TRC and who by Math Lab.</td>
<td>Math Learning Center is included in proposal for Title V. B. Travis is doing study for improvement of College Algebra in Fall, 2006.</td>
<td>Lack of proficiency in math continues to be a major barrier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Organizations</td>
<td>Provide peer tutoring for members: Accounting Society, Ambassadors, Sigma Kappa, Assoc. for Women in Communication, Sigma Alpha Iota, Kinesiology &amp; health Society, Orientation Leader Assoc., Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, Vietnamese Student Assoc.</td>
<td>Mandatory Study Halls for members: Sigma Phi Epsilon, Sigma Kappa, Alpha Omicron Pi Voluntary Study Halls: Asian Alliance, Sigma Phi Epsilon, Orientation Leaders Assoc.</td>
<td>Rewards for Academics: Sigma Phi Epsilon, Sigma Kappa, Sigma Alpha Iota, Alpha Omicron Pi, Orientation Leader Association, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship</td>
<td>Monitoring the academic progress of members and providing interventions such as study halls and tutoring will help members overcome academic barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student perspective on barriers to student success</td>
<td>A survey was done where students in junior and senior classes were asked to identify barriers to success. There were 712 responses.</td>
<td>It is hoped that the major barriers, outlined in the “Barriers Survey Report” can be successfully removed.</td>
<td>Included in Report.</td>
<td>Included in Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated degree checking</td>
<td>On the web so students can access it 24-7. Have to manually move in transfer courses, do splits.</td>
<td>Market that it’s available 24-7. Encourage students to utilize and bring the plan to the advising sessions (appointment/wal</td>
<td>Require that all newly admitted students have an automated degree plan run at the time of admission or explain the</td>
<td>Not used by all colleges. Students might be led to believe they have everything</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are plans for every major but not every college uses them.
Lengthy plans—list all options for core.

All centers have computers and printers designated for students to print out these plans.

k-in) Contribute resources to bring in experts to “tweak” current plans and build plans for 06-08 catalog.
Look at programming issue concerning courses being reflected on the students plan when they have not taken the course (Identified in COS and COLFA).

If we are unable to get the CAPP program working properly then look at investing in a new Automated Degree System.

Degree Works has been suggested as a possible option since it “plugs” into the BANNER system. Have them do a demonstration and actually develop a degree audit plan for one of our majors.

Currently it is not set up as a clear checklist like some of the manual plans.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prospective Transfer Student Support</th>
<th>IN PERSON Services, not limited to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Group and individual appointments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On-site visits to ACCD campuses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transfer Advisors at UTSA DTN and 1604 sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unofficial transcript evaluation JAG for ACCD (Joint Admission Agreement)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Transfer applications are up for TR/FT over: - 20% for Fall 2005 - 7% for Fall 2004
*expand visits to other articulation colleges

Monitor/ID who enrolls after being admitted

Do they become a student after we assist them in some way? EMAS- has all students contacts for tracking

Raise admission standards to equate to higher program standards of 2.5 to be admitted to COB and teacher cert

Mixed signals are received at the community college/sending institution regarding the use of the Transfer Plan or the AA/AS/AAS degree plan.

Financial Scholarships available to transfer students – timelines and rules not matching the
| **ONLINE/Internet Services:** | **A)** Admissions website:  
- Transfer Equivalency Table  
- Transfer Checklist  
- Admissions/Cost/Programs/Housing  
- Orientation  
| **B)** Undergraduate Studies Support & Technology Services website:  
- Transfer plans  
- TCCN lists  
- ACCD Core lists for UTSA equivalencies  
- JAG ACCD  
- Foreign Credentials Service link  
- BAAS  
- NSE  
- Map/Shuttle/Lingo  
- Advisor Lists  
- Colleges | **ARTICULATION**  
Staff shortage and support needed to expand articulation past the 11 colleges we have had for many years  
ID an Articulation Officer (Asst Dean of UGS was the AO)  
Need to develop the Advisor website for the CC advisor/counselors - need to add AAT info online  
| *Transfer Articulation*  
*JAG form will be available online for students and counselors to access*  
*Transfer Equivalency Table needs updating*  
| *Initially ID and continue to monitor the progress of transfer students by their sending institution*  
*Expand services to the Joint Admissions (JAG) student library access, ID card, Rec Center, Sports events, etc. Student service fees have always hampered this initiative.  
| Course Availability for 1st term here and later  
| Disconnect between admission to UTSA and Program admission  
| COB  
| COEHD Teacher Certification  
| Articulation agreement  
| Dallas Cty CC  
<p>| Houston CC |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admitted Transfer Student Support</th>
<th>Advised in College Advising Centers</th>
<th>TBD with Advising Report Some centers like COS/COB have regular group advising sessions for newly admitted transfer students</th>
<th>Recommend new/different orientation program that is mandatory and accessible online (PowerPoint) and at no charge.</th>
<th>Initial Advising/registration confusion Orientation gap since not required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developmental education &amp; placement</td>
<td>To our knowledge, DE outcomes have not been evaluated in the aggregate.</td>
<td>We recommend that the university engage an evaluator to assess effectiveness of placement and instruction</td>
<td>29% of entering students are enrolled in developmental education. 11.5% of our latest graduating class began in developmental education.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swirling seniors issue</td>
<td>The barriers listed in the “Barriers Study Report” all relate to the number of students who remain seniors for too long.</td>
<td>Course availability seems to be a major cause of graduation delay. See recommendations in Barriers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore Seminar</td>
<td>Connects students with their perspective college and major Faculty connection Introduction of university research theories and models</td>
<td>Must be able to cross-list classes Academic Advisor support Market course Recruit faculty from every college</td>
<td>Offer Sophomore Retreat addressing topics effecting sophomore Funding for instructors and programs (above). Assessing student success</td>
<td>College Deans and Chairs must support Attractive monetary incentive for faculty Attractive topics for student interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes from Interviews with Advising Center Directors
Compiled 6/13/06

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center or Area</th>
<th>Director</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Interviewed by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CFAC</td>
<td>Joan Tsacalis</td>
<td>4/28/06</td>
<td>Amir Karimi/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COB</td>
<td>Niki Stutzman</td>
<td>5/17/06</td>
<td>George Negrete/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COE</td>
<td>Susan Hodges</td>
<td>5/11/06</td>
<td>George Negrete/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COEHD</td>
<td>Lona George</td>
<td>4/26/06</td>
<td>Sandy Norman/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLFA</td>
<td>Kathy Calucci</td>
<td>4/26/06</td>
<td>Edwin Barea-Rodriguez/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPP/Downtown</td>
<td>Barbara Smith</td>
<td>5/2/06</td>
<td>Richard Utecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COS</td>
<td>Patricia Gonzalez</td>
<td>4/27/06</td>
<td>Amir Karimi/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors</td>
<td>Ann Eisenberg</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Sandy Norman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRC</td>
<td>Sabina Kapoor &amp;</td>
<td>5/2/06</td>
<td>Richard Utecht/Barbara Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leticia Duncan</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What are the operating hours for your advising center?

**CFAC**
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**COB**
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM
- Wednesday and Thursday: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
- Friday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**COE**
- Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM -5:00 PM
- [Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (co-located with COS for summer)]

**COEHD**
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Wednesday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**COLFA**
- Monday – Thursday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
COPP/DT
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM
- Wednesday and Thursday: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
- Friday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

COS
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
- Wednesday and Thursday: 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM
- Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Honors
- Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

TRC
- Monday and Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM
- Wednesday – Friday: 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- Saturday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

2. How many advisors on are staff? How is this number determined?

CFAC
- 14 fulltime Advisors: 13 Advisors I & II and 1 Advisor III.
- 2 support staffs.

COB
- 5.5, hiring to 9.5; student/advisor ratio.

COE
- Currently 2; Allotted 1 more and waiting for a Director.

COEHD
- 6 full-time staff advisors, in addition to 3 Teacher Certification Specialist – Teacher Certification Specialist recommend Graduate and Undergraduate Students to the State.
- This number is determined above the college via formula based on # of advisees (roughly 350:1 student to advisor ratio).

COLFA
- 10 full-time; 1 part-time.
- The number is determined upon the caseload.
COPP/DT
- 9 Total: 7 Full-time (1 is an AA II) and 2 Part-time.
- Initially, we just had one representative from each college then as we grew and became established, the need for 2 advisors in some colleges became evident. The request was made by the Director to obtain additional advisors. Both the 1604 and DT Director agree on the distribution of staff DT since they are figured into the Colleges’ ratio of advisor to advisee.

COS
- 7 FTE (excluding the Director).
- 6 full-time (5 Advisors I, 1 Advisor II). Advisor II does the degree audit.
- 2 part-time.

Honors
- 1 ½ staff advisors in addition to HC director.
- This number is determined above the college via formula based on # of advisees.

TRC
- Overall 7 ½ positions (1/2 DT).
- Based on student population.

3. Does the director advise students?

CFAC
- No. Involved mostly with management and supervision. Advises by request, speaks with the parents.

COB
- Sees students with problems; not a regular problem; peak periods.

COE
- Yes.

COEHD
- Yes, but more typically in unusual circumstances or situations that require some supervisory problem solving.

COLFA
- The director only advises students if the student is causing trouble. Sometimes on Saturday.

COPP/DT
• Yes. She advises CRJ students on a regular basis. Anytime there is a vacant position she will pick up and advise those majors until a new person is hired. If someone is out sick and her schedule permits she’ll advise the students rather than rescheduling them. She is sometimes called upon by her staff to help reiterate something to a student (e.g. Deadline to petition for graduation) when they as to speak to someone at the next level.

**COS**
• Not in general. Advises walk-in students during busy periods.
• Sees students with complaints.
• Does “prep” paperwork during heavy walk-in times- Updates degree plans.

**Honors**
• Yes, (Although, the HC does not have a Director of Advising per se, Dr. Eisenberg, as Director of the Honors College, serves in an equivalent capacity.)

**TRC**
• Yes.
• 2 academic advising directors both advise students.

4. **What is the turnover rate of advisors in your center? (Use last 12 months.)**

**CFAC**
• 2 turnovers. One moved to higher position. The other moved out of state.

**COB**
• None except promotions.
• No problem.

**COE**
• No.
• Susan-6 years.
• Connie-4 years.

**COEHD**
• Only 1 of six in the past year. Not a major problem at the moment, but without increased resources and administrative support it could become one.

**COLFA**
• We have lost 3 advisors—mostly due to promotions.

**COPP/DT**
• Had 3 people leave UTSA and 1 transfer to the 1604 advising center: 2 full-time staff for more money and 1 part-time staff for full-time teaching position at local community college.
COS
- None in the last 12 months. Last person left February 2005, another left February 2004.

Honors
- None in the past year. Not a problem.

TRC
- Lost 3 in the last 12 months due to salary. Make $5-10,000 more at community college or school district. (2 are coming back to work part-time in the summer.)

5. **How many advisees does your center see per semester? Please use actual, unduplicated figures, rather than estimates.**

CFAC
- 2000 per semester (guessed). Actual unduplicated figures are not available. However for the actual advising contacts for 2004-05 (9/04-8/05 are as follows:
  - **Total:** 12,270
  - **Appointments:** 1630
  - **Walk-ins:** 7537
  - **Orientation Appointments:** 3120

COB

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Adv Activity</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>Sem Total</th>
<th>Per Month</th>
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<td>234</td>
<td>202</td>
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<td>87</td>
<td>103</td>
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COE
- Will send that information.
- 750-800 to advisor.
- Require faculty advising of all students.
**COEHD**

**COEHD - Advising Statistics**

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<tr>
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<th>January 05</th>
<th>February 05</th>
<th>March 05</th>
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<td>1,500</td>
<td>627</td>
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</table>

**COLFA**
- 4,041

**COPP/DT**
- Spring 2005-2,683
- Summer 2005-905
- Fall 2005-2,857
- Spring 2006-1,950 (Incomplete only Jan.-April)

**COS**
- Fall 2003-3,039
- Spring 2004-3,287
- Summer 2004-1,389
- Fall 2004-3,382
- Spring 2005-3,559
- Summer 2005-1,427
- Fall 2005-3,187

**Honors**
- Advising contacts for a one-semester period from mid-August to mid-December. During that period, there were 629 students who were members of the Honors College. Of those, 486 or 77.3% used the Advising Center at least once (range = 0 to 16 times). Across all students, the average number of contacts was 2.21 (1.13 face-to-face, 1.02 email, and .06 phone). For those students who actually used the Advising Center, the average number of contacts was 2.86 (1.46 face-to-face, 1.32 email, and .08 phone). The median rate for use within the term was 2 contacts both for all students and just for those who used it at all -- and 49.6% of students used the Center either 0 times or 1 time during the term.

**TRC**
- 1,404 (unduplicated for fall 2005).
6. *What percentage of your college’s students saw an advisor last semester (Fall 2005)? (CFAC, TRC: What percentage of your assigned students saw an advisor in Fall 2005 after required summer advising? Do not count summer advising.)*

**CFAC**
- 85-92% of the total.
- All TSI hold, academic holds are required to see an advisor.
- Declared freshman on probation have a hold.

**COB**
- 3,730 for Fall ’05 out of 5,000 which is 75%.

**COE**
- 100%
- Total Students 1,750-1800.

**COEHD**
- N/A; Higher rate because of teacher certification questions. About 2/3 of their students are getting their Teacher Certification.

**COLFA**
- 80% of the total.

**COPP/DT**
- It is hard to list actual numbers since the data collected is based on walk-in and appointment sign in sheets not on the individual student. The same student could come in multiple times during a semester thus would be counted as a contact each time.

**COS**
- It is hard to find actual numbers. Since the data is collected only on the number of contacts, which includes many duplicates (those students who contact the center more than one time during the semester).

**Honors**
- 77.3%

**TRC**
- UND Freshman (PACE)-about 1/3-1/2 per month.
- ADP students-89%.
- ACE students-100%.
- Scholars Support Program (SSP)- 29 students initially; now only 25. Lost the 4 to the honors college-100%.
7. *Is advising mandatory in your college?*

**CFAC**
- It is mandatory for approximately 40% of students. All TSI holds, academic holds (probation, prevention) are required to see an advisor.
- Approximately 85% choose to see an advisor.
- Several CAP (Students who plan to continue at UT Austin) programs require students to follow a prescribed schedule for courses and these students see their advisor quite often.

**COB**
- No, only semester before graduation.

**COE**
- Yes

**COEHD**
- Students are not required to see an advisor, but they are strongly encouraged to, and sometimes circumstances (need for an advisor’s signature, for example) compel them to. They have courses that require advisor clearance.

**COLFA**
- It is only mandatory for probation or dismissals and those on academic caution. (Academic Caution Area – 2.0-2.2)

**COPP/DT**
- COPP-Only if they are on academic probation or reinstated students.
- For all other Colleges, we enforce the same mandatory advising they do.

**COS**
- No, just those with an advising hold, which include the following:
  - For students on probation, since Fall 2004.
  - Dismissed and reinstated students.
  - Students with GPA of less than 2.00-Started in Spring ‘05- Must come in to meet with advisor-SAS (Strategy for Academic Success).
  - Students with GPA of 2:00-2:20-Started Fall ‘05.

**Honors**
- Not exactly. Students have to get approvals for taking Honors courses, theses, etc. But they are also advised in their major’s college advising center.

**TRC**
8. What is the delay when a student requests to see an advisor? How long must a student wait for an appointment?

**CFAC**
- Walk-in mode for all students before September. Mixed mode (walk-in and appointments) after September.
- Typically, appointments are made for the next day.

**COB**
- Up to a month; should be reduced when up to 9.5 advisors.

**COE**
- See on walk-in basis; immediately.
- During registration could be 3-30 minutes.
- Students generally wait less than ½ hour.

**COEHD**
- It depends on the time of semester, but generally 2-3 weeks for an appointment.

**COLFA**
- This depends upon the major of the student. The center strives to see the student within one week.

**COPP/DT**
- It depends on when they request to see the advisor. Many times when they call or stop by the center, they can usually come in that day for our walk-ins since we have them in the a.m. and p.m.
- As for appointments, the wait varies per college and time of year.
- Generally:
  - COS& COE-same or next day
  - COPP-one to two days
  - COEHD-one to three days
  - COLFA-one day to one week (one of the COLFA advisors is part-time)
  - COB-one week

**COS**
- Depends on Major.
- 48 hours for non-Bio majors.
- For Bio majors, sometimes it might take one week.
- Walk-in everyday.
  - Monday - Friday: 8:00-9:30 AM and 1:00-3:30 PM
  - Wednesday: All afternoon (1:00-6:00 PM)
o Saturday: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

**Honors**
- Depends on the time of semester, but generally 1-2 weeks at most.

**TRC**
- Peak times, we do walk-ins only.
- Traditionally next day. PACE, ADP, ACE call students to set up appointments once a month.

9. *Is the advising done by appointment, walk-in, or both?*

**CFAC**
- Both.
- Walk-ins in the mornings and Appointments in the afternoons except during peak periods. During peak periods, we do all walk-ins from date freshman can begin registering through Census date.

**COB**
- Both + email + phone (only general questions are addressed with the last two methods). Best advising by appointment.

**COE**
- Walk-in only.

**COEHD**
- Yes, especially on the DT campus.
- (5 hours per week DT, 14 hours per week 1604)
- 1604
  - Mornings 9-10
  - Afternoon 2-3
  - M & T 5-7
  - Modeled after the DT center

**COLFA**
- Both.

**COPP/DT**
- Both.

**COS**
- Both.
Honors
• None.

TRC
• Both. During non-peak times, appointments in the a.m. and walk-ins in the p.m.

10. What percentage of your center’s time is open for walk-in advising? How was this percentage decided?

CFAC
• 50% walk-in.
• During the summer, they have Freshman Orientations, so advisors all out on Thursdays.

COB
• 32%; Monthly schedule is done.

COE
N/A

COEHD
• 34% of time is available (but not necessarily devoted) to walk-ins. Determined primarily qualitatively from feedback from student surveys, requests of what works best for students.

COLFA
• Would like to keep student contact at 75%-25%. Generally 60%-40% with 40-45% of this time for walk-in: (The students requested walk-in appointments).
• This number changes with registration. During peak registration, we go to ½ day walk-ins and the weeks of registration, we do all walk-ins the first day.

COPP/DT
• 40%
• Based on the need of the students and way courses are scheduled Downtown.
• Walk-ins:
  o Monday – Friday: 8:30-9:30 AM, 2:00-3:00 PM
  o Monday & Tuesday: 5:00-7:00 PM
  o Wednesday & Thursday: 5:00-6:00 PM
  o Saturday: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

COS
• Walk-ins everyday.
  o Monday – Friday: 8:00-9:30 AM and 1:00-3:30 PM
  o Wednesday: All afternoon
Saturday: 9:00 AM -1:00 PM

- Percentage of time per week:
  - Walk-ins 76%.
  - Appointments 38%.
  - (This total is more than 100% since walk-ins and appointments are occurring simultaneously at some points during the week.)

**Honors**
- 0%

**TRC**
- Non-peak advising times: 50% time
- Peak advising times: 100% time

11. *What percentage is done by appointment?*

**CFAC**
- 50% by appointment.

**COB**
- 26% by appointment.

**COE**
- N/A.

**COEHD**
- Approximately 2/3 of the time is devoted to working with face-to-face appointments.

**COLFA**
- 20-25%

**COPP/DT**
- 55%

**COS**
- Appointments
  - 9:30-11:00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday
  - 2:30-7:00 Monday & Tuesday
  - 2:30-6:00 Thursday
  - 2:30-5:00 Friday
- Percentage of time per week:
Walk-ins 76%
Appointments 38%
(This total is more than 100% since walk-ins and appointments are occurring simultaneously at some points during the week.)

Honors
• 51% (in person), 46% (e-mail), 3% (phone).

TRC
• 50%
• 1 to 1 ½ hours of admin time each day to return emails, phone calls, prep. They also teach, so at the end of the week, they block time to work on classes.

12. If a student does not show up for an appointment, what does that advisor do for the appointment period?

CFAC
• Students receive a confirmation call one day before the scheduled appointment.
• See walk-in students.
• Go back to other duties (answering phone calls, e-mails, outreach).
• Have about a 70% show rate.

COB
• Paperwork: documentation, review degree plans and send communication to students, or see other walk-in students.
• Advisor on call every day when no walk-in time.
• New student scheduled time: 1h-typical time.
• Repeat student: less.

COE
• N/A
• Update files, see substitutions are in correct order, crystal reports for new admits so can go ahead and begin updating.

COEHD
• Advisor works on paperwork, clerical tasks. There is plenty of work to do. It depends on the time of year. Now they use the time to clear students for restricted classes. During non-peak periods see student that opt to wait to see if an advisor has an appointment that doesn’t show.

COLFA
• They catch up on other files, return phone calls, and return emails and degree audits.
**COPP/DT**
- Return emails, phone calls, process forms and various other paperwork.

**COS**
- Go back to other duties: answering phone calls and e-mails. Do other projects and paperwork.

**Honors**
- Advisor works on paperwork, clerical tasks. No shows are frustrating for advisors.

**TRC**
- Call student if they don’t come in.
- See a walk-in.

**13. What percent of an advisor’s day (week) is spent/devoted to direct (face-to-face) contact with students?**

**CFAC**
- 90%
- Center has received 96% satisfaction rating on student surveys.
- Freshmen have the highest percent of direct face to face contact.

**COB**
- About 58%.

**COE**
- 100% during registration.
- Average 70% over the semester.
- No admin time designated just do during slow periods.

**COEHD**
- 66% about 60%.

**COLFA**
- 60%

**COPP/DT**
- 90%

**COS**
- 70%
14. Does your center conduct group advising?

**CFAC**
- During the Orientations.
- 6 students/group by major or college.

**COB**
- No.

**COE**
- Yes, if group of students choose and have same general questions. Students’ choice.

**COEHD**
- Yes. Undergraduate information sessions for undergraduates, discuss what to expect for admission to Teacher Certification.
- Hold those about once a month. Hope to move to on-line tutorial.

**COLFA**
- No. The center used to, but the students did not like it very much.

**COPP/DT**
- Yes, only during Downtown Transfer and Freshman Orientations.

**COS**
- Transfer sessions.
- Graduation information session (2 times per semester).
- 45 and 95 SCH sessions.
- Residential hall advising.
- The group-sessions are advertised in residential halls. E-mails are sent to students with more than 100 SCH, send posters to several apartments, and post on electronic newsletter.
- Done on Friday.
- Useful for students that need to be told the same information. Explain prerequisites, policy and procedure for various paperwork, importance of Career Counselor.
- Usually 25-35 minutes to explain everything then provide with personalized degree plan and then given the opportunity to meet one on one with an advisor.
Honors
- Initial orientation advising for new Honors students.

TRC
- Only during Fall Orientations (which occur in the Summer).
- ADP because limited number of orientations.

15. Can students receive advising through e-mail? If so, what percentage of advising is conducted using this method?

CFAC
- Yes. However, it is low numbers because students crave the face to face.
- 35-40% students ask questions by e-mail.
- Mostly it is a combination of e-mail and direct contact.

COB
- Yes, it varies based on the email. Generally, each advisor averages 54 emails per month.

COE
- Yes. Less than 5%, but its increasing.

COEHD
- Yes, questions are handled by e-mail sometimes. (No percentage was given.)

COLFA
- Yes. No way to know what percentage.

COPP/DT
- Yes. It is hard to give a specific percentage since the advisors do this during their administrative time or when their appointments don’t show. If I had to estimate I’d say 5%-10%.

COS
- Yes.

Contacts per semester:
- SPRING 2005
  - Appointments 688
  - Walk-ins 2853
  - Email 889
  - Phone 965
- SUMMER 2005
  - Appointments 387
  - Walk-ins 1992
• Email 1507
• Phone 635
• FALL 2005
  o Appointments 669
  o Walk-ins 2196
  o Email 384
  o Phone 592
• SPRING 2006 (Jan-Apr)
  o Appointments 534
  o Walk-ins 2265
  o Email 433
  o Phone 685

Honors
• About 46% of advising contacts are via e-mail.

TRC
• Very Limited. Encourage students to come in for face to face.
• 10-15%

16. Typically, how often does a student see an advisor, and is it usually the same advisor each time?

CFAC
• Two or three times per semester.
• 50% see the same advisor.
• All advisors are cross-trained.
• Appointments usually ask for same advisor. Walk-ins see any advisor.

COB
• Students have choice to see same advisor. Some students prefer same.

COE
• Split.
• Some take whoever’s available. Others follow specific advisor.

COEHD
• While students are encouraged to see advisors each semester, on average, those who seek non-teacher certification seek advising do so once per year, everyone else is every semester. Do not normally see the same advisor.

COLFA
• This depends upon the major of the student. Usually they see the same advisor at least 1-2 times per semester. The most frequent majors that come in for advising are Psychology,
Communications, and English majors. Typically, these students see the same advisor each time.

**COPP/DT**
- It varies from student to student, but generally, I'd say at least once a semester.

**COS**
- Once or twice per semester (those who come for advice).
- They can request to see the same advisor.
- Usually, they see whoever is available at the time.
- There are 17 programs within 6 departments in the college.
- More than 1 person trained in every area.

**Honors**
- For those students who seek advising the median number of contacts is 2, with a range of 1-16.

**TRC**
- Encourage to come in once a month.
- PACE-178/caseload of students- once a month.
- ADP-encourage once a month.
- SSP-encourage once a month.
- ACE-encourage once a month.

17. **What is the average length of an advising session?**

**CFAC**
- On the average, it is 30 minutes.
- The advising session ranges between 8 to 45 minutes. Depends on the problem and the advisor’s style.

**COB**
- 20 minutes for walk-in, appointments 1hour, advisor on call spends 20 minutes.

**COE**
- 20 minutes.

**COEHD**
- 45 minutes.

**COLFA**
- Established Students – 30 minutes.
- Walk-in Students – 20 minutes or less.
• New Students or Degree Audit – 1 hour.

**COPP/DT**
• Walk-in: 20 minutes.
• Appointment: 40 minutes.

**COS**
• Appointment-Usually 30 minutes.
• Walk-ins – 15 minutes.

**Honors**
• Typically, 30 minutes.

**TRC**
• 30-45 minutes.

18. *Are the College advisors partitioned in some way by subject area, or does each advise whatever major walks through their door?*

**CFAC**
• All advisors are cross-trained. But they are also specialized by college.
• Number of specialized advisors by college: 4 in Engineering, 4 in Science, 2-3 in Education, 1 in Architecture, 3 in Business, 4 in Liberal and Fine Arts, 1 in Public Policy.
• Each specialized group goes to college meetings, but they train the other CFAC advisors.

**COB**
• No partitioning. Want everyone to address all questions.

**COE**
• No.

**COEHD**
• No – advisors are all generalists.

**COLFA**
• Yes.

**COPP/DT**
• They are separated by College. During peak periods, an advisor is stationed out front to answer general questions regardless of major.

**COS**
- Four (4) advisors are cross-trained for all programs, but they are also specialized by college.
- Three (3) advisors are trained for Biology only.
- One Advisor is trained for some of the programs.

**Honors**
- No.

**TRC**
- Only advise UNDs.
- All advisors can advise all students. Cross trained concerning TSI.

19. *Does the advising office have a “normal progress schedule” for each academic degree program? This schedule should give information on when each course should be taken by students interested in completing their degrees in a timely fashion (4 years). Accordingly, this should make clear which courses should be taken in the freshman year, for example, and in each succeeding year.*

**CFAC**
- Yes. The Advisors use the recommended program of study provided by the colleges.
- One common problem is that sometimes classes fill up and students cannot follow the degree plan exactly.

**COB**
- No, has general list of courses for each emphasis.

**COE**
- Yes

**COEHD**
- Yes, we have incorporated degree plans provided by the various departments.

**COLFA**
- Yes, on the web.

**COPP/DT**
- Yes. They are also now doing individual semester by semester plans for the students along with the degree plan. We began this process in mid-April.

**COS**
- Yes. Degree plans (recommended Programs of Study) are available for all programs.
Honors
• Yes, but major area advising is done in appropriate college advising center.

TRC
• Yes.
• UND-stick with Core.
• ADP have restricted curriculum.

20. Does the advising office have a check-off sheet for each major that oversees that students are taking courses in the proper sequence?

CFAC
• Yes. The Advisors use the recommended program of study provided by the colleges along with the Core sheet.

COB
• No-but may reflect flexibility of program.

COE
• Will do for student but don’t keep; Refer to web CAPP.

COEHD
• Yes, for Teacher Certification students.

COLFA
• Yes, we use the degree plan as a check-off sheet.

COPP/DT
• Yes.

COS
• Yes, it is done manually.

Honors
• No.

TRC
• No, stick with core curriculum sheet-as check off list. Target courses they can double dip in major and core.
21. Do you do outreach to any “at risk” student populations? If so, what groups and how?

**CFAC**
- Mid term maintenance program for students with a GPA below 2.00.
- TSI round table.
- Other outreach programs include:
  - Career workshop with career services.
  - CAP students (1000 out of 4100 freshmen).
  - Residence Hall advising, one night a week.
  - High school students.
  - High school counselors.
  - Classroom Outreach.
  - Sophomore Transition Program.
  - UT Telecampus.

**COB**
- Yes. HS, JC recruit students. Director and advisor-different program and personnel.

**COE**
- Currently do not.

**COEHD**
- A reinstatement committee (2 academic advisors IIs and Director) evaluate “at risk” students who seek reinstatement into certification programs. They figure out if it is probable that the student will meet the Teacher Certification admission requirements. If they won’t then, they discuss the non-Teacher Certification route.
- Mid-term Intervention-called students to remind them of the “W” date during the 5-7 p.m. time and reached about 100 students.
- More generally, e-mail, handouts, and worksheets provide information and encouragement to at risk students.

**COLFA**
- Yes. We have the Pass Program, Pass Plus – Academic Caution 2.0-2.2. We also see dismissed students.

**COPP/DT**
- Yes.
- For COPP, it is the students on academic probation. We place a hold on their record and require that they see an advisor each semester until their UTSA GPA reaches 2.0.

**COS**
- Yes. Probation and those at risk of going on probation 2.0-2.2

**Honors**
At risk students are those whose grades threaten their Honors status. They are monitored and contacted by e-mail.

**TRC**
- Populations-Provisional students, Undecided students, ACE (DT), Scholar Support Program.
- Checkpoint Program for those at risk at midterm.
- Phoenix Program for those at risk at end of semester.
- Handle readmission petitions individually.

22. *Does the advising office have information relevant to the needs of students who must take remedial coursework? For example, which specific courses should be taken and how will scheduling these courses influence the progress toward degree.*

**CFAC**
- Yes.
- Availability of class room seats could be a problem (especially in math and reading).
- Student academic preparation delays graduation.

**COB**
- 2 advisors get training on advising these students.

**COE**
- Yes, every advising center has a TSI liaison.

**COEHD**
- Yes, we have information about specific courses needed by students taking remedial courses and advisors are aware of these.

**COLFA**
- No, other than the 4 year degree plan. The degree program is being redesigned.

**COPP/DT**
- Yes.

**COS**
- For students taking remedial course(s), Math is a big problem for Physics, Math and Computer Science majors.
- Program of study usually assumes they can start with Calculus. Designed by the Departments.

**Honors**
- N/A
TRC
• Yes. All advisors must be familiar with TSI and how that restricts students from taking courses with remedial sequence and higher level courses.

23. Do the advisors know when each course will be offered in the future, particularly those that are typically impacted (in heavy demand)?

CFAC
• Most 1000-2000 level courses are offered every semester.
• CFAC uses the recommended program of study for each program. Advise for major first and the core second.

COB
• Yes.

COE
• Only know the rotation for CE. For all 3 programs know Capstone sequence.

COEHD
• Not typically.

COLFA
• This depends upon the major. Now, they will because of the 4 year plans.

COPP/DT
• They have a general idea and also refer to the archived schedule of classes.

COS
• No.
• Departments have done a three years course scheduling (indicating which courses are being offered).

Honors
• Not typically.

TRC
• N/A
• CHE 1003 offered as fall class.

24. Do you have any input in course scheduling? Should the advising centers have input in course scheduling?
CFAC
• No, CFAC does not have an input.
• Yes. Advisors should have an input in course scheduling.

COB
• No, but should.

COE
• Yes.
• No.

COEHD
• Not really. In Education, the scheduling issue is particularly important because many of the Certification students are taking courses both from the College of Education and the College of their major. Better communication between colleges and more consistent course offerings might alleviate some of the problems that students report with scheduling. Advising might provide data but shouldn’t be involved with scheduling per se.

COLFA
• Yes, each department calls in advisor to check what courses are needed. Sometimes, they send information to the department chair.

COPP/DT
• Yes, for the Downtown Core Courses.
• Definitely.

COS
• No, advising center does not have an input.
• Yes. Advisors should have an input in course scheduling.
• The advising center should be consulted on catalog changes.

Honors
Yes, for Honor’s courses; no for others. We do have some input in scheduling the Honor’s courses.

TRC
• Yes.

25. *What mechanisms are in place to find and correct advising that is flawed?*

CFAC
• An Advising Audit system. Random audit of 5 advising per month. [5 files per month per advisor.]
• Center has less than 1% error in advising.
• At freshman level, many of errors could be corrected early.

**COB**
- Capstone, file audits, different advisors crosscheck required.

**COE**
- No, all pretty much on same page.
- On-line survey.

**COEHD**
- Regular advisor oversight, analysis of petitions and audit forms, and periodic audits of student files are used for performance evaluation and to identify and correct advising errors.

**COLFA**
- The center conducts monthly audits to correct any mistakes. They usually correct the problem with a petition or find alternative course.

**COPP/DT**
- Monthly random file audits, 5 files per advisor are audited each month.
- Errors could also be caught by another advisor. If so, then this is brought to the attention of the director and that advisor. Steps are taken to correct the error.

**COS**
- Director checks the complaints and corrects with the advisor. Then, sends an email to all the advisors.
- Advising Audit system. Random audit of 5 advising per month. [5 files per month per advisor.]

**Honors**
- Advisors evaluate each other and assess error rates.

**TRC**
- Do file auditing throughout the year.
- Newly hired advisors are trained and all their files are audited for 6 months.
- On-line survey.

26. Do students who disagree with advisors have recourse to supervisors in the advising office? How are the students informed of this or encouraged to critically review the advice they are given?

**CFAC**
• Try to resolve the problem at student/advisor level first.
• If problems are not resolved, students are referred to Barbara Lamont.
• The Director intervenes when needed to talk to the parents.

**COB**
• Yes, is encouraged—directed not to argue with students and encouraged to see supervisor.

**COE**
• Yes, encouraged to go to department chairs and associate deans. If they disagree, then tell them to speak with next level.
• ABET accreditation.

**COEHD**
• Yes, students can meet with the Director to discuss problems, complaints, etc. Information is available on website – but improvements are needed in that area.

**COLFA**
• Yes. The supervisor is invited by the advisor and the option is also given to the student.

**COPP/DT**
• Yes. Students are made aware of this by the front desk staff and also the advisors.
• Students also put comments on the on-line survey.

**COS**
• Director meets with the students who have complaints.
• Students can petition the decisions by advisors.
• Advisors approve or disapprove petitions. They then submit the petition so the chair and/or Associate Dean can override and approve or disapprove the petition.

**Honors**
• Students can meet with the Director if they feel they need to. Students informed of this as part of advising.

**TRC**
• Yes, contact form that’s filled out at every session. Advisor and student read, sign and date. Copy is given to the student.
• Encourage students to speak to supervisors, Leticia Duncan or Dr. Glenn.
• Try to come up with positive solution for student and center. Students with TSI issues and misunderstandings are resolved and handled quickly.

27. How do you, as director, ensure that advisors are building good relations with their advisees? What specific measures are in place?
CFAC
- Service satisfaction measures.
- Data sent to Dr. McNaughton-Cassill and Dr. Williams shows 96% satisfactory comments.

COB
- Surveys, open door policy, advisor training,

COE
- Watching and listening just in general.
- Students waiting for specific advisor, come by just to joke with.

COEHD
- New advisors are assigned a primary and secondary mentor to help them during their initial advising period. The mentor meets with the new advisor once a week to see how they feel. New advisors meet with Director at the 30 and 90 day points, and informal meetings with the Director – who works with advisors to build a good relationship with advisees – are available anytime.

COLFA
- Looking at their files.
- Feedback over on-line evaluations.
- Listening and walking around to check on sessions.

COPP/DT
- For the “new” advisors, I observe them during their probationary period and provide feedback. For the “veteran” advisors, I randomly listen outside their office when they are meeting with students (appointment or walk-in).

COS
- Advisors are trained to provide service to students.
- Advisors participate in Roadrunner Days, UTSA day, Outreach program.
- Students who have not graduated or have other problems receive e-mails.
- E-mails are sent to undecided majors.
- Lone-star e-mail accounts are not utilized by all students.
- One advisor is a sponsor to the PA organization.

Honors
- Advisors are trained to treat students with respect and be friendly.

TRC
- PACE-Implemented caseload (student has contact with 1 advisor; quality advising is there). During peak times then any advisor.
68% of population is enrolled in a seminar class that is taught by an advisor so this gives advisor new perspective. Also allows for the student to meet with them (advisor) twice a week in the classroom.

28. In advising students, do the advisors advise students on the relationship between student work load, family obligations, and the time required to successfully complete the course load?

CFAC
- Yes. Developmental advising.

COB
- Yes. They review a sheet with time commitments.

COE
- They try. ME professor does time management sheet.

COEHD
- Advisors are cautious about going beyond purely academic advising. If it seems appropriate, referrals are made for counseling regarding non-academic issues.

COLFA
- Yes.

COPP/DT
- Yes. Many times the students ask the advisors what they would recommend or advise.

COS
- Yes.

Honors
- Not really a part of advising strategies.

TRC
- Yes, take comprehensive approach, what works for them.
- Many times deal with issues such as: 1st generation students away from home and refer as appropriate, discuss if morning or night person, areas strong in and weak in.

29. When is a degree audit conducted for graduation? (Semester before graduation, during semester of graduation?)
CFAC
• Not applicable to this center.

COB
• April for summer and fall graduation. One semester before graduation.

COE
• Students start coming in about 1 year before.

COEHD
• Because of Teacher Certification, a preliminary audit is conducted in penultimate semester. An official degree audit is conducted during the final semester.

COLFA
• We encourage the student to do it the semester before graduation (apply for a pre-audit). It is usually done at the beginning of the semester when the list of student schedules to graduate is provided by the Graduation Coordination Office.

COPP/DT
• Most students come in to confirm that they have everything before they register for class their final semester which is usually the semester before graduation.
• COPP audits are done the semester of graduation.

COS
• If students request degree audits, they are done prior to the last semester.
• Degree audit conducted for all students who have applied for graduation during last semester. Prefer to move up a semester and before the final add/drop date.
• Go by enrollment reports and create a degree plan even if student does not come in

Honors
• N/A.

TRC
• N/A.

30. How would conducting a degree audit when students have completed 30, 60 and 90 semester credit hours impact your center?

CFAC
• Not applicable to this center.

COB
• Lots more work-welcome change.

**COE**
• Not sure it would impact the center but help gain insight into course scheduling needs.

**COEHD**
• This would provide opportunities for additional intervention.
• More frequent audits would be useful for students, but advising centers would need more resources to handle the additional work.

**COLFA**
• Not much.

**COPP/DT**
• It would not have that large of an impact since students generally come in at least once a semester.

**COS**
• 30, 60, and 90 hours degree audit would impact the advising. It will take time away from advising time.
• Currently, one week is blocked for graduation audit.
• Perhaps need to hire part time employees to conduct 30, 60, and 90 hours degree audit. During the summer they hire a temp. to update Degree plans.

**Honors**
• N/A.

**TRC**
• N/A.

31. *How often are the 2+2 agreements with community colleges reviewed and updated? Are these agreements honored in all cases?*

**CFAC**
• Not involved with 2+2 agreement with Community Colleges.
• Yes the agreements are honored in all cases.

**COB**
• All new catalogs have new 2+2.

**COE**
• They are updated with each new catalog. Yes.
• Minor adjustments in between (Ex: ENGR 2370 at SAC result of faculty initiative)

**COEHD**
• These agreements are honored, and reviewed for changes regularly.

**COLFA**
• When the student is evaluated the question is asked. Yes, the agreements are honored in all cases.

**COPP/DT**
• They are updated with each new catalog. Yes.

**COS**
• New catalog.
• It was involved with 2002-04 catalog, but not with the 04-06 catalog.
• We honor what is listed in the transfer plan.

**Honors**
• N/A.

**TRC**
• N/A.

**32. How are your advisors involved with departmental faculty? (i.e. Faculty on selection committee? Faculty test knowledge of new advisors of curriculum? Advisors go to department frequently to meet faculty?)**

**CFAC**
• Classroom Outreach in Introductory courses.
• Will be attending the meeting organized with the College of Sciences faculty and department chairs.

**COB**
• Not on selection committee. Meet mostly dept chairs-invited to meetings, annual meeting with chairs. A specific faculty member in charge of transfer credits and to communicate with advising office.

**COE**
• Open door policy so faculty can ask questions, catalog procedures, work computer. Faculty are not involved in the training or hiring.

**COEHD**
• Some advisors have favored (i.e., responsive) faculty that they can consult, but there is not an extensive interaction of advisors with faculty.

**COLFA**

- The Dean asked for new faculty to meet the advisors. The advisors then meet with the Department Chair at least once a semester. They also communicate via email or phone.

**COPP/DT**

- For the COPP advisors, they meet with the Associate Dean and Department Chair once a semester. During this meeting, they get to talk with them about the curriculum and ask any questions. They are usually invited to attend the Department Faculty Meeting once in the Fall so they can meet the faculty and vice versa. Faculty members are not involved in the selection committee for advisors.
- For the other colleges, it may occur at 1604 advising center staff meetings or outreach with their counterpart advisor at 1604 to the specific department chair.

**COS**

- No faculty on selection committees.
- Invite department chairs and Faculty Advisors to meetings to address issues.
- No test is done to check the knowledge of Advisors.
- E-mail chairs and Faculty Advisors inviting them to meetings. Faculty Advisors are more open to attend meetings.

**Honors**

- Limited. Director, however, works closely with department chairs and faculty.

**TRC**

- Have relationship with faculty in the Learning Communities
- Phoenix program-Faculty Volunteer
- Advisors are additionally trained through liaisons with college advising centers.

**32-a How often the advisors are assigned to departments and the directors interact with the chairs.**

**COS**

- Director asks the chairs for meeting, but sometimes the chairs are not open to such meetings.
- The petition approval process involves:
  - Advisor
  - Chair
  - Associate Dean.
In your opinion, should the advising process include mentoring by faculty members?

CFAC
- Yes.

COB
- Advisors have Masters degrees. Only to answer questions related to career direction. Faculty advisors have research, teaching, etc; should concentrate on what they know best.

COE
- Yes.

COEHD
- Yes, we should increase articulation between advising and faculty. It would be useful to have some dedicated faculty who could help or “mentor” advisors, and to help with new advisor training.

COLFA
- Yes, especially in majors that have a small number of students. All the advisors should follow the same policy and procedures. This needs consistency.

COPP/DT
- Yes. It could initially just start with some general meet and greet sessions throughout the semester.

COS
- Yes.

Honors
- N/A.

TRC
- Yes, nice supplement, help UND students with career exploration.

What recommendations can you make for improving the advising process? What is the biggest issue you think your advisors face?

CFAC
- Better communication between student affairs, academic affairs.
- Better communication between advisors and department chairs.
- Improving the degree audit system CAPP. Not enough experience to resolve systematic problems.
• Faculty mentorship of students.

COB
• Need more advisors, extended hours training employees, need career ladder and improved salaries to stabilize personnel.
• More automation needed versus paperwork—would allow more student contact time.

COE
• Ever increasing student population and no classes available to put the students in (eg. CHE 1073).

COEHD
• Providing a well-defined mission and focus for institutional advising, clear-cut and consistent requirements (from departments), and motivating students to use advising effectively.

COLFA
• We could try to take the pressure off advising because they are the key.
• There are not a lot of compliments given and people lack recognition for their efforts; perhaps we could offer more rewards, increase in pay or yearly rewards.
• They have a full load and have a large advising ratio—the ideal is 100 students per advisor instead of 350 students per advisor.
• Another way to improve the process is to start with structured, intrusive advising at the beginning with freshman and new/transfer students.

COPP/DT
• Recommendations: Collaborate more closely with Department Chairs; Streamline some processes; Remove some tasks from the advisors and assign to “central processing group”; Decrease advisor/advisee ratios in the colleges; Identify ways for more cross-training and collaboration to occur between the College Advisors.
• Biggest issue: Time.

COS
• Biggest issues are:
  o Advisors do not have input to influence policies but are then the ones responsible for enforcing them so the student sees the advisor as the one preventing them.
  o When advisors are overloaded.
  o When noisy students get their ways. In this case, students are treated differently.

Honors
• More articulation with the college advising centers.
• Include Honors College Director as an “official” Director of Advising so that she/he will be involved in Directors’ Council meetings.
• Improve morale of advising staff.
• Improve internal evaluation system.
• Need an overall director of advising (position held by Linda Chalmers).
TRC
- Ideal ratio would be a little lower to improve on quality, Ratio of 300:1
- Time-just to get everything in; require Master’s degree but financially hard (Increase salary range); Have 1 more advisor to decrease caseload.

35. What mechanisms are in place to seek student advice on advising strengths and weaknesses? (How are you collecting student input?)

CFAC
- Surveys.

COB
- Survey, complaints, open door policy.

COE
- On-line Survey.
- Capstone course.
- Hard because they don’t distinguish between Faculty or Academic Advising.

COEHD
- Via evaluation surveys on-line and internal forms.

COLFA
- Online evaluations, surveys, and an advising fee committee. They have also done a survey about alternative means of communication.

COPP/DT
- On-line Survey.
- They can speak with the Director.

COS
- On-line surveys. Students can let the Advising Centers know about difficulties.
- Problems are discussed during staff meetings.
- Students on the Advising Fee committee can also express concerns.

Honors
- Informal reports.

TRC
- On-line Survey.
- Student evaluations.
- Student affairs survey cards.
36. When you/your staff make referrals, how or do you follow up?

**CFAC**
- Depends on where students are referred to.
- Followed up by e-mail if referred to Health Profession Advisor.
- Walk student to Counseling Center.
- Do formal referral form when sending to COS.

**COB**
- Depends on where: career services—will follow up to see if questions are answered.

**COE**
- Don’t have mechanism in place. Sometimes the student will come back and tell them.

**COEHD**
- No standard mechanism for doing this.

**COLFA**
- The advisor will email the other person to check in on them. Then, the email is put in the file. The student is emailed and informed of the person that they will be referred to. If the student has not seen the referral, then an email is sent to the student and he/she is asked to schedule the session.

**COPP/DT**
- Generally, when they meet with the student the next time. If they make a referral to counseling services, they usually walk the student directly over to them. Many of the other offices on the Downtown Campus refer students to us. During peak periods, students are referred to the DT Center by some of the 1604 College Centers.

**COS**
- Referrals are made to Testing Services, TRC, and Financial Aid.
- No follow-ups are done.

**Honors**
- No standard mechanism for doing this.

**TRC**
- Informally, Margaret Costantino in Career Services lets them know.
- Follow up directly with students, since they meet with them once a month.
37. If a student program involves two colleges (e.g., education degrees or honors college), what is the level of communication between the two advising centers? How can the communication be improved?

CFAC
- This center has good communication with all other centers.

COB
- Communicate catalog changes to other centers; meetings with TRC.

COE
- Honors just call when they need something. Biggest problem when minor completed.

COEHD
- Advising Center Directors’ Council allows for direct communication and problem solving among the various directors. It seems to be working well.

COLFA
- The Department of Education is good. The Honors College is weak, but this often happens. Honors students are advised by Honors but there has not been follow through with petitions, “double dip”, CLEP, most communication occurring during the degree audit. Communication can be improved.

COPP/DT
- Excellent.
- Since there are advisors for every college in this center, the student can meet with one advisor for one major, and then with the advisor for the other major. The 2 advisors generally dialog and discuss where each other course work would apply on their degree plans.
- For COPP Honor Students, they are usually referred to the COPP advisor the last semester before they graduate to confirm they have everything. We also send relevant information about the Major to the Honor and CFAC advisors.

COS
- No interaction with other colleges until the time of graduation.
- Honors are usually advised by Honors College – Sometimes problems exist.
- Training of other college advisors (CFAC).
- Have COEHD come and talk with them at staff meetings about Teacher Certification. COS refers the students to the Teacher Certification sessions.

Honors
- Generally very poor. Honors College advisors do not feel respected and, in general, the Honors College advising is perceived as being treated differently, as if of lesser importance. Communication with college advising centers described as “testy”.

• These deficiencies could be improved by establishing better links and more consistent communication between Honors College advising center and other centers, and by including Honors College director on Advising Council.

TRC  
• Referral form to specific advising centers, 45 hours declare.  
• Associate Director in the office attends Advising Center Director’s Council meetings.  
• Advising staff come and present during weekly staff meetings. Have liaisons with each college.

38. What is the level of communication between your center and CFAC? How can the communication be improved?

CFAC  
• Not applicable.

COB  
• N/A.

COE  
• Not everyday but if need something then chat.

COEHD  
• Very happy with the articulation here.

COLFA  
• Well. Students that come from there know what they need.

COPP/DT  
• Excellent, we have a CFAC advisor DT who works collaboratively with the 1604 CFAC, assists with the 1604 Orientations and then they send 1604 CFAC advisors to assist with the DT orientations. 
• The COPP advisors also send and discuss with changes with the CFAC and TRC liaison.

COS  
• Staff meeting with the representatives of CFAC. 
• Advising swap. 
• Send COS advisors to train CFAC advisors. 
• Send updates of programs.

Honors  
• See previous question.
TRC
- Have good communication. Know on personal level. Advisors and/or supervisors know who to contact.

39. What is the strength of your advising center?

CFAC
- Extensive outreach programs.
- Level of student satisfaction.
- Less than 1% in advising errors.
- Size-the number of advisors can support outreach programs.
- All advisors are cross-trained.

COB
- Knowledge, collaboration between advisors, long-term experience.

COE
- Know our students and know the faculty. High level of trust and communication.

COEHD
- Continuity and longevity in advising staff resulting in experienced advisors. Half of the staff have been here four years or more.

COLFA
- The whole team gets along with the student being the priority.
- They all have a sense of humor and keep their eye on the ball.

COPP/DT
- Accessibility.
- Commitment to students, willingness to answer questions.
- Teamwork.
- Collaborative.
- Willingness to help out colleagues (Counterparts at 1604, Downtown Roadrunner Days, Graduation).

COS
- Innovation and creativity of advisors.
- Proactive.
- Advising process is streamlined as much as possible.
- Constantly trying new things and outreach.

Honors
- Continuity in advising staff.
• Advisors know advisees very well.
• Advisors very active and committed to their jobs and to advisees.

**TRC**
• Approachable.
• Quality and Quantity.
• Build good rapport with students.
• Developmental approach, intrusive with students. Get information from the dorms and also parents.

**40. What areas of advising in your center need strengthening? How do you plan to achieve this?**

**CFAC**
• Improve communication level with faculty.
• Partnership with academic affairs.

**COB**
• Number of advisors, hiring but 9 people not enough.

**COE**
• Can’t think of any.

**COEHD**
• Establishment of an Advisor III category and the use of retention specialists. This specialist could do follow up on folks that did not graduate and probation students.

**COLFA**
• We need to redistribute advising load because the majors are growing,
• Increase contact with Department Chairs in a relaxed atmosphere (ex. Coffee hours – they come here),
• The PAS program needs to be redesigned so it can be done through WebCT.
• We need to increase communication.

**COPP/DT**
• More outreach to make students aware of our center. Have advisors contact professors and do 5 minute presentations to more of the classes. (Currently only being done for the Core classes by the DT CFAC Advisor)
• For COPP:
  o Do more intrusive advising of our at risk populations. Have the advisors do more follow up on a monthly basis with the students.
Outreach to students that have not been in for advising the past 2 semesters. Do phone calling and emailing over the summer to hopefully get them in or identify why they are not coming in or why not they are not attending UTSA. If the student is not attending UTSA identify why, encourage them and provide possible options if appropriate.

COS
- Availability of rooms for group meetings.
- Space for Advisors.
- Limited space for student waiting area.
- Try to get departments involved.
- Getting timely responses from departments. Some are willing, but not all.
- Things want to do, but unable to do.

Honors
- Improve ties to other advising centers.
- Internal evaluation.

TRC
- Time; Stretched to keep up with teaching and also seeing students during walk-ins; Coordinating Checkpoint or Phoenix workshop.
- Add just 1 additional staff to decrease caseload.
- Prefer individual advising for orientation.

41. What is the biggest issue you, as director, face?

CFAC
- Number of people supervising.
- Personnel issues.
- Performance issues.
- Working with a diverse group.
- Empowering the advisors.
- Management and communication.

COB
- Time, resources, automation, IT help.

COE
- Getting used to sequential degree plans.
- Summer-prerequisite check done manually.
COEHD
- The switch of advising supervision from Student to Academic Affairs.

COLFA
- Keeping the staff motivated.
- We need to cut the red tape to provide services to the students that need them.

COPP/DT
- Time.
- Compensation for advisors (In some cases, after interviewing and selecting your finalist, you may not get your top candidate because of the salary.)

COS
- Misconceptions.
- Reporting to both Associate Dean and Executive Director.
- Recognition by the Dean, Chairs, and faculty on what the advisors do.
- Being appreciated. Sometimes we get negative comments which are not true.
- Concerned that Associate Dean, Executive Director, Dean and students visions don’t always match up.

Honors
- Not being considered as a Director, thus limiting effectiveness.

TRC
- Keeping staff and students happy.
- Advisors: Stretched because of their obligations-teaching and advising.
- Students: They are frustrated because they have to wait.

42. What do you perceive to be the biggest barriers to student success? At UTSA? In your college?

CFAC
- Disconnect between student and the rigor of academic programs.
- Prior academic preparation of students.
- Bureaucracy --students have difficult time managing through bureaucracy.
- Students having difficult time establishing priorities.

COB
- Students who are not prepared are allowed to take classes.
- Work, family obligations, financial problems.
- Should increase requirements for college.

COE
• Economics (Students need to work).
• Non-traditional student body.
• Jobs.
• Set difficult priorities.
• Repeat courses (Pay repeat cost, Exceed 45 hours {Soon to be 30 hours}).
• Course offerings.
• UTSA can’t grow fast enough to put classroom up for students.
• Student preparation.

**COEHD**
• Family, work, and other things often take priority over education for many students.

**COLFA**
• We need to change the perception of the College and not have it viewed as a fall-back degree.
• We need to build up the reputation.
• We need to teach the students how to market themselves through building up their communication and critical thinking skills.
• Help students transitioning from another college (i.e. COB, COE) to let go of the old dream and come up with a new one.

**COPP/DT**
• Commitments-School, Family, Work.
• Recognizing the difference between college and HS.
• Being under prepared –developmental work.
• UTSA:
  o Course offerings not offered but once a year.
  o Hours required for a degree in some colleges.
  o Sequencing of courses.
  o Some University policies.
  o Support Work.
• College:
  o Limited faculty.
  o Required courses for CRJ not offered every semester.
  o Required courses for the major in other disciplines not offered.

**COS**
• Inadequate preparation of students in Math and Sciences.
• Financial issues.

**Honors**
• Personal situations – such as family and work commitments.
• Student motivation.

**TRC**
• Make successful transition from HS to college.
• Responsibilities.
• 1st generation students from out of town—pressure from back home.
• Provisional at risk—have to do a lot to get prepared to at least get them to be average.
• Longer time to graduate because of needing remedial coursework.
• Financial obligations.
Student Perceptions on Barriers to Graduation

Categories

- Course Offerings/Availability
- Conflicting Priorities
  - Work, Family, Personal Issues, Personal Attitudes
- Academic Advising
- Campus Issues
- Studying
- Tuition/Fees
- Degree Requirements
- Professors
- Policies
- Support Programs

Course Offerings/Availability

(COB Class)

- Very intense courses, having to focus on one more than the other.
- Intimidated by the class size; classes are especially difficult in Business…you have to take so many (math) courses in an area that you are not majoring in, therefore, may not be good at.
- Courses are only offered in the evening; retaking classes [lengthens time to graduation].
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- [Need] smaller courses (1604 campus).
- Class selection; not being offered but once a year, classes filling up fast, some classes being offered at one campus.
- [Need to] offer more classes (times).
- Selection of classes, having to go to multiple campuses.
- Selection of classes, class schedule, course loads (for graduating in 4 years), [having] classes at different campuses.
- Selection of classes; more classes should be offered.
- I have a friend…that isn’t allowed to graduate because they only offer some studios once a year which is holding him back.
- Size of classes too large, sometimes not enough 1 on 1 attention.
- …once you are approaching graduation, certain classes are only offered once a year or are cancelled at the last minute (this happened to me last semester).
- Too many courses that make you “well-rounded”; 60 plus hours of core curriculum needs to be between 30 and 40.
- Classes not being offered all semesters…BIG barrier.
- Accounting- more so classes that are unrelated to our degree that put us in non-major classes with student of that major who already have a better understanding of the class because of the other classes they have had to take.
- Scheduling difficulties.
- Barriers for me are econ and accounting, the only two classes I really struggle with.
- I think that maybe a lack of variety of classes may impede a student’s graduation.
- Some students might find certain curriculum to be a barrier because it is a difficult class…
- Availability of classes; attendance, [difficulty] of courses.

(COLFA Class)

- Scheduling classes.
- …lack of courses available to those closer to the DT campus rather than the 1604 campus.
- Some required classes are not always offered the semester it is needed, making it difficult to obtain the hours toward degree.

- Offering necessary classes only once a year.

- Only 1 [section of a] necessary class is offered with small amount of seats.

- Only have certain upper division classes offered once or twice a week.

- …some of the classes I need are only offered in the spring and would like to see them offered in the fall.

- …a lack of upper division choices within select majors, such as History.

- I also see a lack of night, evening and internet classes as a barrier….

- …the lack of classes offered each semester. Most classes offered in the catalog are not offered every semester…I have to take one more semester for one class that is only offered in the spring, otherwise, I would be graduating next semester.

- …the unavailability of classes when you need them…

- In my major (Geography), there are few courses to take during the semester. Some classes are also only [offered] once in the year…more courses and options would help many students graduate in a faster rate!

- Many of the classes needed to finish school are not offered…so some have to wait until the class becomes available.

- Barriers to my successfully graduating would be availability of needed classes during the times when I can come….

- I believe the most prevalent graduation barrier on campus is the lack of availability of mandatory classes (i.e. Scopes and Methods), as a result of bad times it is offered or a lack of teachers or the limited availability of seats in the classes.

- …not having the classes necessary to graduate available to students in a given semester…classes should be available if they are necessary for a student to graduate. I would also like to see more internet classes available….

- [Poor] availability of classes.

- [Poor] class availability.

- Not offering required classes frequently enough (i.e. Scopes and Methods for Political Science).
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- There are not enough classes offered. Also not enough choice in day of week/time. Too many classes are required to graduate and are then closed by registration time or limited to certain students (Law School Prep Academy).

- Not being able to get registered for the courses needed for the appropriate semester…class offered in the fall…not being offered in the spring.

- Course time offering. Only offered in fall when you are trying to “bulk up” or graduate during summer.

- Registration—when registering my last semester, there were few options on how to structure it [schedule]. Summer school was even worse.

- Need to offer classes needed in degree program over all semesters and summer sessions. [Student whose graduation date has been extended due to course unavailability.]

- [Lack of] class availability. Schedule conflicts (POL 2703 sessions offered are not enough.)

- Schedule conflicts (classes only available fall or spring).


- …not enough selection of courses applicable to their degree plan.

- Course scheduling [conflicts].

- [Should] offer the same class but with a wider variety of days and times. I can only come to campus a couple of days a week.

- Class availability by far. There are NO evening or weekend classes in my degree. In addition, there are no upper division classes offered for Anthropology in the summer….

- The barriers I’ve had the most are the class schedules. It seems the classes I need are on the same days at the same time…I can’t take the classes I need when I need them.

- More required classes need to be offered in the evening for students that work full-time.

- …my particular department does not offer any upper division classes at night or during the summer. I am a non-traditional student, and my situation does not always allow me to attend class during the day.

- The class selection times are not for working students!

- It’s hard to get into certain classes in the evenings. They are usually offered in the day.
- More importantly, the farther you go through the ranks as far as Junior and Senior status, the classes you need are not being offered in a timely fashion.

- …I work full-time and have to schedule courses at night. As I get closer to graduation and need specific course credits to graduate, it has become difficult to find available courses that fit both my scheduling needs and graduation requirements…for these reasons, graduation is simply taking longer than expected.….  

- Courses that are not used for real life work conditions.

- I believe that [lack of] available classes for upper division students may slow down graduation rates…I am graduating fall 2006 and found available, upper division classes were not offered in great numbers or variety.

- Getting the classes I need to graduate within my major.

- [In my major] there are not many teachers; therefore, the classes that are necessary to graduate are only offered once a year…if you mess up your schedule, do badly in a class or something else happens, you must wait a whole year to retake it.

- …some classes are only offered at certain semesters, so it’s hard to get that class.

- The lack of class[es] in each semester necessitates waiting 1 or 2 semesters to take pertinent degree classes.

- UTSA only offers certain classes during only one semester. Usually, they are prerequisites for other classes, so it can get your schedule off.

- Class Availability—I have to take summer school because I don’t know if the classes I need will be offered.

- …the blocks on courses needing advisor approval, all of a sudden. There should be a warning or something so students who want and need the blocked course will not have to fight with a ton of others for that course.

- Limited classes available, especially upper division level, to register for.

- …the limited class times available. If I didn’t have such an understanding supervisor this semester, I would not have been able to graduate in May. All the classes I needed to graduate were available at only one time.

- Some barriers are not having enough classes being offered and having to wait for them to open up.

- …the different times that the classes are offered. Many students work and some of the classes that are offered do not work with their work schedule.
The only problem that I have had is not getting the class that I want and [is] necessary to take in the last semester before graduation. So, in essence, class availability would be the only problem I have encountered.

Also, the availability of classes…If you say it’s available, make it available! I only found a handful of undergrad PSY courses for the fall. I want to graduate next May!

Need more PSY alternative classes—more variety. [Need] better Women and Gender Studies [classes]. I found 2 classes per semester.

[Need] flexibility of schedules (courses being offered).

Not enough upper level classes!! What I mean is different day the classes are held.

Class availability—not enough sections open for certain classes needed to complete degree requirements. Ex: Scopes and Methods

The amount of courses offered in certain semesters.

Last classes, as Seniors, harder to get because of fewer classes offered.

[Lack of] flexibility of times for certain required classes such as Senior Seminar, Scopes and Methods.

The lack of classes being offered because it seems that more and more, the university is offering far less courses than what is needed to try and graduate on time. Please offer more.

Limited upper division classes versus core classes.

Upper division classes are not offered at enough different times. Many are offered once a semester at inconvenient times (i.e. too early, mid-day, no evenings) or are not offered at all.

I, personally, am a mother of 3, so my schedule is difficult to coordinate. I would like to see a greater variety of Senior Seminar courses offered each semester.

Classes needed to graduate are not offered every semester. When they are offered, there is usually only one class time with a very limited number of seats. (Class selection is poor.)

Availability of classes needed.

The amount of classes are not offered enough. It has taken me 4 semesters to get into one class I need.

…it’s hard to graduate within 4 years due to…the limit of Poli. Sci. classes available each semester.
• …not enough courses are offered. There is a lack of variety. Some courses are only offered during a specific semester. There are not enough available spots for many classes. The days and times of the scheduled courses conflict with the students’ schedules.

• …limited selection of classes which causes people to put off graduation to another semester.

• Not enough upper division courses being offered at times that fit students’ schedules.

• The lack of AVAILABLE COURSES across the board—it really sucks having to wait for 1 class to graduate….

• Lack of courses available year round.

• …not many people have the flexibility to go to both campuses. There should be more classes here at DT….

• Hours of classes. Fall 2006, all classes needed are being offered in the evening. Keeps me away from family.

• Few options for upper division courses offered at specific times.

• Not offering more classes. In fact, I’m having to take an upper division class at TAMU-K San Antonio Center.

• The amount of classes offered. I can never get into the SOC classes I need. There aren’t a lot of SOC classes offered in my opinion.

• Class availability. Some [classes offered] only certain semesters.

• No night courses [offered]; not enough classes for upper division; courses are limited for the average upper level student because not enough classes available at night. Most students work full-time and must wait semesters for certain classes. If a specific class is required, then it should be offered all semesters. Not enough summer night courses!

• Availability of classes. Classes fill up quickly and many times students are forced to wait till the next semester or take a class not in their interest.

• …some needed classes have conflict with each other. More class times and fewer conflicts with upper division times. If a class is needed DT and the next class is at 1604, please set them apart with enough time to get there.

• Certain classes are only available at certain times….
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- ...availability of classes...for my friends who work and may not be able to come to school during the day time hours, they do have problems. In some cases, have to prolong their graduation.

- Some courses that are required to graduate are not offered when the person wants to graduate....

- Class availability. In terms of the times they are offered, the minimum # of seats or professors providing instruction. It's tough when you just need 2 or 3 classes but only one person offers it at one time.

- A barrier that would prolong graduation is when and how many classes are offered...I had two classes...and there was only one class of each with 30 seats....

- ...I wanted to take higher division classes during the summer, but I couldn’t because they were being offered at the same time. Same time and day classes. Not enough classes given during the summer, especially class that you need to graduate....

- Not enough availability for classes that are required toward my degree. Most of them only offer one class for 30 students.

(COS Class)

- In particular, two courses, which are part of my degree plan, are only offered at specific times. ...These three classes [for certification] fill up quickly and are limited in the number of students able to enroll in them. One of the classes...is now only offered in the fall semester.

- To make matters worse, as I reached my senior year, the courses I needed were not available around my work schedule. I had three semesters in a row when only one class was available around my work schedule.

- ...the classes I require to graduate are only offered during the day. For me, more evening classes or early-early morning higher math based classes would benefit me.

- In my situation, I have a minor in foreign language and seeking for ESL certificate. But I found UTSA doesn't offer those required courses often (meaning every academic year). As a result, I had to push my graduation date back to 2007 fall. And I’m still worried because nobody (even my advisor) is 100% sure that those required courses are ever going to be offered in upcoming semesters.

- I think people being more aware of the alternatives to taking classes would help people graduate on time. CLEP tests for example. Information about when classes will be in future semesters would help students plan their courses better.

- I, myself, have to work two jobs (one full-time and one part-time) just to afford to go to school and better myself through education. It is double jeopardy. I have to work to afford to go to school but work takes time away from studies (must eat and sleep sometime).
• Need to offer more undergraduate math classes in the evening…

• …sometimes, classes needed for completing majors are offered only once a semester or once every other semester.

• The schedule of classes is either difficult to register for or makes it nearly impossible to be employed during the week. Although it is preferable for a student to not have a job while going to school, this cannot be avoided for some. …some classes get cancelled. This is very frustrating when we finally get our schedule planned. Summer courses aren’t as available and the schedule of courses available during certain semesters is not well-published.

• Some courses are only offered once a year, and that has affected me before….I have had to retake a few courses.

• Certain courses are either DT or at 1604. Sometimes, one class is at one campus and the other is at the other campus. Then, you have, sometimes, 15 minutes during traffic hour to get to the other campus.

• …sometimes, the availability of classes would delay graduation.

• …the courses I take are very limited because I can’t attend school in the daytime. Also, some of the courses that I need to take are not always offered every semester, which makes it an even bigger challenge.

• Classes aren’t offered every semester (upper-level courses, usually).

• The courses that are required are only offered once a year and rarely during the summer. This makes it difficult to complete the coursework in 4 years.

• Not enough classes being offered for specific classes in a major…even if you finish a prerequisite, you have to wait a whole year to take the class you need…that class may also be a prerequisite for other upper division courses offered once a year.

• Required courses fill up and prevent students from progressing (cell lab).

• Many of the upper division classes in Biology and Chemistry have scheduling conflicts and only one class [section] is offered. I have had to carry around at least one add form to force my way into classes, to fight with this “full class” status. More courses, especially upper division, need to be offered during the summer, or again, the schedules need to change.

• Prerequisite classes only being offered in either spring or fall. Upper-level classes (or at the very least, labs) should be offered over the summer.

• …the time at which certain classes are offered limits the classes you sign up for.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- The times in which classes are being offered because: 1. students (a lot) work, 2. important (upper division) courses are only offered in 1 section at only one time.

- …offering only 1 class every other semester, sometimes, forces students to extend another semester….Also, with so many people needing these same classes, sometimes they fill up, and if you can’t get in you have to wait a year to be able to take the course. Not many upper level science courses are offered during the summer, or even in the evenings, when these would be the best time for students who have to work to take them.

- Classes that are only offered during fall or spring.

- Not enough classes offered over the summer for science majors.

- More advanced classes are needed in summer and evenings. Upper division courses offered only once a year—if not passed, increases length of time to graduate.

- …inflexible course offerings hinder graduation for many.

- Not enough upper division courses offered in the summer.

- No advanced classes in the summer. The needed courses are not offered or changed [refers to times available].

- The courses offered are so limited each semester and offered with such few number of spots in a needed course in the specific semester it is offered.

- Some classes are only offered in the spring and fall semester, so many classes have prereqs that if you drop, you’re screwed.

- …upper division course[s] are only available in the mornings and early afternoon…extremely helpful…offered in the evenings….some courses that are not offered every year or …only offered in a spring or fall…would be helpful for that to be put in the catalog.

- …the infrequency with which classes are offered. This creates a large stumbling block…

- Offer more classes in both semesters….put them in summer, too.

- More night and weekend classes will help…more variety of summer classes as well, both upper and lower division classes.

- Classes that are offered in one semester are not offered in another and for those who are Juniors and Seniors, it is tough to find the class you need.

- …I can say that scheduling for classes has become more difficult, especially due to the increased amount of students.
The lack of enough labs AT DECENT TIMES has slowed my degree completion.

Classes fill (unavailable) too quickly.

Can’t get the classes I want at the right times. Seems classes always conflict with one another…4th year, still need to take classes that are filled up.

Not enough lab space for Chem.

Scheduling of classes (need more hours during day). More Chemistry/sciences courses need to be offered, more than just ONE per semester.

Another issue, about labs, they over schedule them. They schedule them for 5 hours, while they only last 2-3 hours. They prevent us from taking other classes.

There are not enough times that classes are offered, given our working students…not enough science courses offered in the summer. Chem LAB hours too long. Lab complete in three hours most of the time.

Class availability—only available once a year, not available next semester. Lab size as well is a problem.

Cannot take courses whenever we want to take (depend on the semester…courses would be changed).

Many of the classes are full, and I am unable to sign up for them so I can graduate in a timely manner. My organic lab was scheduled for 5 hours when it only goes for about 3 hours. I am unable to sign up for required courses [during] that time.

Courses [with] conflicting times. Not enough upper division classes offered. Summer selection is poor. Labs advertised as 5 hrs, but only last 3 hrs.

…hours of the class are conflicting too much…good classes get full pretty fast.

Classes that are needed/required for major are conflicting with times.

…hard to get the classes I need at the times I need them (mainly in the summer)…need classes in the late afternoon and at night. For the past two years, there have only [been] 3 to 4 upper division Anthro. Classes to pick from and 2 of them are at the same time…BIO classes aren’t too bad but the labs are sometimes very hard to get into.

Some classes are not offered at other campus [DT].

Not enough summer class selections. Need a variety of time for classes, 7PM + night classes.

Class conflicts with times. Not enough lab space available.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- …labs require wait lists that ask students to sign up day of 1st registration.
- Courses may not be offered at specific terms needed for graduation.
- Some classes (especially science, labs and upper division) are not offered from semester to semester, so people are forced to wait and take longer.
- Conflicting class schedules, courses offered once a year.
- Conflict in scheduling for upper level courses also.
- There is not any night classes (science) offered in the summer. There are not enough night classes offered at UTSA. There are not enough lab spots to match the lecture spots. The Chem. labs are scheduled for 5 hours and they never take that long.
- Once offered, I have only that time to take the class because I do not know when they will be offered again.
- The classes I need are not always offered every semester…labs conflict with classes as well.
- Some classes only being offered once a year.
- Upper division BIO classes offered at same time on same days. Small upper division classes.

(COE Class)

- Course availability (40 responses).
- Scheduling conflicts (13 responses).
- Scheduling conflicts: Sometimes the classes I need to take overlap each other. It’s most annoying.
- I just hope the classes I still have to take are available when I need to take them.
- Class schedules are very hard to work with at upper level classes.
- Some courses are offered at the same time, meaning you can only choose one.
- Overlapping class schedules.

(COPP Class)

- …the schedule of classes.
- There aren’t enough evening classes.
One barrier most CJ majors have come across is the availability of classes...the classes offered are very limited. My suggestion would be more classes at varying times and days.

...very few CJ courses provided...only offering one class MWF only...

Classes that are not being provided. Classes that I need are all taken [full] and it is taking me longer to graduate. There is a big gap between classes and it takes up too much of my time.

Certain classes not being provided at the downtown campus, making it very difficult to go to the 1604 campus. Also, it seems when you get ready to register the class is already full....We need bigger classes.

[Need] greater range of electives downtown.

One of the barriers to graduation is the availability of classes. There were times when I needed to take a course and had to wait...the course got full quick, so having more [sections] of the same class as well.

...I feel a major barrier to me graduating in the fall is the limited number of available classes for me to take...the department is short a few teachers and the ones we have can only teach so many classes plus do their required research. UTSA is a big university, and I think that it is pathetic that there aren’t enough teachers for the students.

Not a lot of classes being offered....

Only offering certain classes one semester and not in the other.

There aren’t enough classes offered each semester.

Not enough classes offered. Many classes that you might want to retake are not always offered the next semester. You might have to wait 2 or 3 semesters before the class is offered again.

[Few] number of courses offered per semester.

There are not enough courses being offered.

It would also be better if there would be more CRJ classes available each semester at better times.

The number of classes offered in CRJ during each semester. The lack of CRJ classes in May mini-mester/summer sessions. [Not] getting full value for life experience in classes/internship substitutions.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Some classes are not offered in certain semesters for senior students to finish or graduate as scheduled.

- The limited amount of classes, especially upper level classes, offered during the summer. Also the limited class times for courses offered. Would like to see earlier class times or maybe, later evening classes in order to accommodate a full-time work schedule.

- One barrier here at UTSA blocking graduation is the limited amount of courses, namely CRJ 3013 offered per semester…with only one class…per semester…I had to wait an extra semester before applying for graduation.

- Another barrier to not graduating at UTSA would be if certain classes weren’t offered.

- …the limited number of classes and times offered in CRJ classes. This is especially true for a lot of the upper division classes. It’s hard as a single mother to come in the evenings. I’m always looking for morning classes, but they seem to be limited.

(COA Class)

- Not enough spaces in classes.

- [Poor] availability of classes. There are NO Interior Design summer classes.

- Being in Interior Design, we need more of a variety of class times. Example, History of Interiors is only offered at certain times. If it could be offered other semesters, it would greatly help!

- I noticed that barriers for my friends’ graduation have been the limitation to the courses offered and how often. They usually drop [stop out] due to having to wait 1 year to take a course.

- Course sequences. Courses should be offered every year in spring and fall.

- A large barrier to my graduation has/is the availability of classes. There are so many courses in my degree program that are so flooded with students each semester in each section. I have had to delay progress several times until I could get in. With a degree program that is in constant growth, it is an inevitable delay when there is only one or two sections per semester that several hundred students are competing for. Progression has become a competition of time rather than a process that moves smoothly. If you don’t register immediately or you have a temporary hold, you’re out of luck.

- Classes required for the degree that are not offered in the morning and/or every semester.

- In the ARC program, all the classes are cumulative, so you have no choice but to take certain classes in a row. For example, Design 1 & 2 : fall & spring—Design 2
was offered during the summer so people who started in the spring could catch up—but Design 3 isn’t offered so that you can get ahead.

- I think the most perceived barrier to graduating is the scheduling of Studios—the fact that they offer Studio once a year.

- Because studios are required courses, I think we should have more availability for classes. I, along with all of my friends, work while in school, and it makes it very difficult that they [studios] are only offered from 1-5 pm. That’s in the middle of the day, and it makes work schedules very limited.

- Length of some classes and/or the times they are held. It’s so hard, sometimes impossible, for older students who are currently employed full-time to take certain classes. NO considerations are given to us older students. Most classes are designed for students who do not work or work part-time.

- I think they should offer more classes in the summer and fall for ARC/IDE students. I want them [UTSA] to be able to offer classes in fall and spring, where some classes are only available one semester only.

- …you don’t offer all classes in summer and we, as students, are not able to get ahead in our degree. Last semester, I had a lot of free time because I only took 2 classes.

- Sometimes, particular classes are only available one semester and the times conflict. There needs to be summer Interior Design classes.

- Scheduling of classes at certain times, the lack of necessary classes at different times. Also the fact that classes are only offered during certain semesters. Some people do not always pass a certain class and have to wait an entire year in order to be back on track.

- …classes scheduled for certain times or for certain semesters…

- Scheduling of certain classes.

- Scheduling and availability of classes—time conflict with certain classes.

- …there are not enough classes to take on each semester; we have to wait up to 2 semesters to take a particular class…cannot take courses that we need because they are at the same time.

- Sometimes, classes fill up and people that need the class aren’t allowed in and have to wait one year until it is offered again.

- Offer more summer classes.

- Unable to get into classes that are for your grade level because upper or under classman fill the class because they have credits from other degrees.
• ...the courses that are offered are either small in size, not enough courses to fill the needs of students and flexibility and availability to take courses ahead.

• More classes [need] to be offered in the summer.

• They only offer certain classes in fall and spring so some times, students have to wait a whole year to take courses, making it longer for you to graduate.

• I think that class schedules—availability of times for classes hinder a quick graduation. The summer classes are very limited.

• ...there are not enough of the same courses being offered. Because of the courses being taught only in the fall or spring, if a class is full, you have to wait a whole year to sign-up for the class.

• …I think all classes should be offered every semester…because classes are not offered during that semester; this keeps us waiting for one year. I think the school has the amount of students enough to fill the classes.

• If they [studios] were offered in the summer, as well as other Arch. classes I need, I could move closer to graduation!

• The [lack of] availability of summer courses. The alternating of regular semester courses, making some available only every other semester.

(COEHD Class)

• Not being able to get into the classes I want or need.

• Having major courses available [only] once a year.

• Limited amount of classes offered for Health and IDS majors.

• Limited amount of classes offered such as only 1 class being offered or only 1 in spring or fall.

• Not having enough core classes offered a year. Some classes are not offered enough or at good times for all students.

• Not enough classes offered to finish the semester. I have to attend both campuses next semester to graduate in December. Not enough selection of times offered.

• Certain classes only have one professor who teaches a class during one semester..

• Limited class selection. Only offering a class you need in order to graduate in the spring or fall.
...classes are not offered as many times as they could. Meaning, that you are forced to stay in school longer to finish classes.

- Also, another big barrier is that some courses are only offered in the spring or fall, not all year. There are also not enough classes available at different times.

- The lack of classes they offer in the summer.

- Also, when classes are offered. I need to take Modes of Inquiry, and that is not offered this summer or fall.

- A lot of the summer classes are held at the same time. I wanted to take 4 courses this summer, but because of the times offered, I was only able to get into 2 courses. This just pushes my degree plan back another semester.

- Schedule of classes is another thing. There are some classes that are only offered a certain semester, which puts off graduation. Sometimes, there are not enough classes offered. Some classes are only offered in the day or only in the evening.

- Some of the classes that are needed are not offered at a variety of times and capacity is limited.

- I’ve answered this question last year and nothing was done. I think that the school is not offering enough classes. Sure! We have a bunch for the core courses and I understand that, but there are not enough upper division courses offered.

- Some of the classes I need are only offered at 2 pm or 4 pm during the day. This schedule does not help those who work. My friends have also had problems getting classes because there are not many sections offered.

- More online classes for students capable of being responsible (I am 44 years old) for their own education would be wonderful...next year (fall), I have 2 classes that could easily be done online—reducing my stress level and unnecessary financial hardship [referring to travel time and cost].

- Classes are not offered at the schedules of students or offered around all the same time.

- Class schedules.

- Class schedules are not well-balanced.

- Class scheduling. Certain classes are not offered until following semester.

- Not enough classes are offered each semester, or those that are offered need to be at varied times...In the two years that I [have been] at UTSA, it [class needed for graduation] was offered twice—both times during the summer, at night and at the DT
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

campus. Each time, I had other conflicts to attending the class. I finally had to request a substitution or I would never be able to graduate.

- 1604 only offers all the classes. Why can’t DT do the same? Offer the same classes? 1604 is too far.

- Barriers to my graduation are the number of classes available to take at several different times is inadequate. As I get closer to graduation, it is harder to get the classes I need. Also, there were not many History classes I needed offered this summer.

- Here at UTSA, I perceive class availability as a barrier to my graduation. The availability on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the English majors curriculum is very limited.

- There are not enough classes offered for the number of students who need them [refers specifically to prerequisite classes]. There are also not enough spaces in classes. There are not enough variety of times for classes.

- Not enough classes available; classes are filled too quickly.

- Another barrier could be such limited kinds of classes that are interesting.

- Not enough courses offered.

- The availability of classes after work—5:00 P.M. There are not many choices.

- Class schedules. [Lack of] availability.

- Not enough classes that are required or desirable are offered. Required classes [should] be offered at different times that don’t conflict with other required courses. Downtown needs to have a schedule that coincides with 1604. Conflicting times!

- A big barrier is class scheduling. I see this effecting and prolonging my graduation from UTSA.

- Not enough courses offered at various times. Most classes needed are all given at the same time. This causes completion of classes to be longer.

- …not being able to take the classes I need by the time I want to graduate. For some, it could be so discouraging that they don’t finish.

- I feel the Education program caters too much to traditional students who live at home or on campus and don’t have to work (or have children). It has been so hard for me to find classes to fit within my schedule.

- When classes are not offered that are required by the degree plan and conflicts in scheduling.
• Scheduling! An inability to register for the courses I need. Many multiples offered only at the same times. Come on guys! This isn’t a joke for single parents staying in school an extra year isn’t very cost effective.

• Awkward class times.

• Courses in the [GEO] minor that are not offered.

• Class offerings. The classes I need are not being offered at all or they are conflicting with others I need. I don’t want to spend years trying to sign up for classes you asked me to take!!

• [Poor] scheduling.

• [Poor] times and days classes are offered.

• Schedule of classes, like times and days that are offered. There doesn’t seem to be enough classes offered in the day. I also think the number of classes and/or seats needs to increase. Usually, by the time a Junior gets to register for classes, most of the needed classes are closed already.

• …our classes are being cut, so we are paying more to progress more slowly.

• The classes offered are at night (some of the ones needed to graduate).

• It seems that we are kept in college because classes are not available or enough time slots [offered].

• Not enough classes for everyone (they close too fast). Classes offered at only certain times. Needs a little more variety of times.

• The classes we have left are not offered at a variety of times or not available at all for a specific semester. This also makes it harder for those of us who work full-time.

• Schedule of classes (not many available courses).

• Only offer classes during fall or spring semesters only. Not enough summer courses. Not enough teachers teaching courses needed; therefore, limiting 25-50 people per class. Time conflicts.

• …the classes aren’t offered till the following semester and you have to waste a whole semester just for that one class. Basically, if they know a lot of students have to sign up for classes, they have to offer more!

• Most of the education classes are divided into fall/spring/summer and those are the only times you can take it…have to wait until next spring…they are being smart so we keep paying for tuition longer.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Not enough class sections offered, especially during summer!!!! I’m willing to take all the hours necessary to graduate on time but can’t even get into the classes.

- The scheduling and availability of some classes. The length (hours) of classes don’t match with other schedules in our lives (ex: 3-hour classes).

- Well, classes close very fast or sometimes they don’t offer them until the summer or next year, etc. And the Education classes are both at the same time, same day, etc.

- Need to make more of the same classes available at different times.

- [Poor] availability of classes.

- Not enough classes offered.
Conflicting Priorities: Work, Family, Personal Issues, Personal Attitudes

(COB Class)

- Not being able to concentrate on school due to hours at work.
- Wage rates; lack of study time due to work. [Low wages mean more hours working.]
- Having to work while in school.
- Taking only part-time hours (class) due to work.
- Work load too heavy, sometime affects my GPA.
- …many students are more actively involved with school and student activities, compared to myself who goes to school and work and very minimal involvement.
- Work- this has been a huge barrier for graduating. I have to work full-time….Most of the classes I want or need to take are during the day. I need classes at night and there aren't very many times available…
- Current work [load too heavy].
- Money! The biggest barrier that I have had to deal with is money, or lack thereof. My college career has been longer than I have anticipated due to financial responsibilities.
- Lack of courses (capstone) are offered during afternoon and morning hours. Most students about to graduate have more serious morning jobs. It is easier to take night classes and fit them into the schedules.
- Work vs. weird times the school offers required courses. A lot on my plate that I need to worry about other than my classes. Our age is [sic] with a lot more responsibilities-along with a more competitive work place.
- …not enough money. At times, students find jobs that pay well and they begin to see the need to put a hold on their degree.
- Work [too many hours].
- I only take 12 hours per semester because more would be too hard for me…working.
- Full-time job—working full-time to support yourself and your lifestyle gives you less time to study and less flexibility with school scheduling.
- The main barrier I perceive is having to work and focus on school at the same time.
- Housing costs; gas prices.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- I live 30 minutes away from campus so [it is] inconvenient to drive back and forth.
- …maybe because of financial issues.
- Children-family-money-time.
- …other commitments at home (such as kids).
- [Poor] health, family.
- Children.
- Children/family.
- Lack of motivation.
- Mind-block and “senioritis”: just focusing on the celebration day rather than caring about the process of getting there.
- There’s not a lot of incentive to get high grades. A lot of students job that “D” is for Diploma.
- Not being motivated enough.
- [Experiencing] culture shock.
- …confusion or lack of direction. I think students might begin to question their majors…so they might find it easier to simply keep going.
- Not knowing what comes after graduation…”Afraid to graduate”.
- [Lack of] motivation is a major barrier. With all the entertainment in the outside world, studying and not watching TV sounds crazy. If you stay out with your buddies late the night before, what motivates you to get up and go to class?
- A few friends lack motivation.
- … [Lack of] persistence to finish the classes with good grades.

(COLFA Class)

- Full-time students on financial aid who work, [experiencing] financial problems.
- In my own experience, college is quite difficult due to the fact that I work full-time as well as being a full-time student in order to pay my bills, rent, and other necessities.
• For me, it is the need to work full-time in order to support myself and to fund my education...in an attempt to not rack up student loans.

• ...have jobs which interfere with studies.

• Work conflicts—need to work versus school.

• Lack of time—due to work.

• Money—students take less hours when working part-time or full-time.

• ...financial. I am 23, married and have 2 children and one on the way. My husband is the only one who works...we depend on his income to make ends meet.

• Money, money, money...financial aid is available, but who wants to owe the government thousands of dollars? Why does tuition increase every year? Why do books cost so much? This intimidates people from going to school. Make school more affordable and students won't have to worry about working so much and can concentrate on school. This equals a higher graduation rate.

• [Lack of] finances.

• Money—I went to school for 2 years after I graduated [from high school] in 1996 but had to stop because of financial reasons. I started working full-time and then didn’t have enough time to go back to school. I will be graduating in May 2006.

• [Lack of] money.

• Working full-time job and going to school.

• There are not enough classes offered at night at the DT location. Most of my friends, myself included, work full-time, so the only time available for classes is in the evenings. For myself, the DT campus because I work downtown full-time. Also, traveling to the main campus takes up a lot of time from working hours.

• I work full-time and because of the class availability limitations, I’ve had to take only 1-2 classes a semester.

• I go to school 16 hours and work 35±, and sometimes, I am just so exhausted that I skip a class.

• First of all, money—or lack thereof.

• I, like many others, work a full-time job as well as attending school....some of the professors tend to forget this fact. Often, papers, projects, etc. will be assigned that consume an excessive about of outside work. I understand that to some degree, this is necessary but more flexibility from professors would be appreciated...dropping out to keep food on the table might be the tendency rather than graduation.
The main barrier to my graduation is working and going to school. Because I work 25-30 hours a week, I can only take 9-12 hours per semester.

- [Poor] financial situation.
- …for most people here, working is a necessity.
- The typical student at UTSA has a job along with a part-time or full-time course load.
- Education costs so much that working is almost always a necessity. Often, work loads combined with class work is overwhelming.
- Most students have to work. Create more on-campus jobs. That way, students don’t have to go very far!
- 10% Financial and logistical issues.
- Financial [issues].
- …money problems. That can’t help either.
- Students have to go more and more into debt or work long work hours, which means less sleep or study time. It’s a vicious circle.
- My nontraditional lifestyle and schedule. I work a full-time job and taking a full course load will drop my GPA and stretch me thin. I refuse to “hurry up and graduate” as I feel UTSA is pushing for. I cannot just live off extra financial aid. I need extra income.
- Students are working in multiple jobs out of necessity and can only take one or two classes per semester.
- …it is hard to graduate in 4 years because students work more; tuition keeps rising.
- [Lack of] money.
- [Lack of] finances.
- Work [too much or too many hours]. Money [lack of].
- Experiencing the death of a close relative.
- Priorities shift—marriage life…family matters.
- Personal life—if unforeseen circumstances keep you from staying enrolled.
- A barrier for graduation is child care. Child care is expensive. I don’t qualify for child care grants and it has been difficult finding quality child care.
- Family.
- Children.
- …many people who haven’t been on their own, a taste of the “wild life” can be the last…never get out of the “wild life” until it’s too late…weed, alcohol, etc.
- 30% personal issues of growing up, leaving home, learning self-regulation and time management.
- All things going on in life….
- Other commitments outside school.
- Pressure to go to school from outside influencing other than your own.
- Kids.
- My ADD [Attention Deficit Disorder].
- Some barriers that prevent students from graduating in a timely fashion could include: absolute laziness…or [the] idea that college life is all partying and drinking.
- Apathy—(Being too lazy to work and not really caring about getting a degree).
- Graduation won’t guarantee a job.
- Students tend to procrastinate….
- Apathy.
- I think people take a long time to graduate because they do not want to take the necessary amount of hours…many of my friends are only taking about 9 simply because they don’t want to “overload” themselves. Many of these people are not even working or paying for themselves, thus the issue is purely work ethic.
- The biggest barrier I fight everyday, myself.
- Students having a lack of vision…most students realize the need for a college degree but have no real vision and/or goal regarding what they will do with the degree.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Not having a clear cut idea about future ambitions. Perhaps, this stems from apathy. In either case, this issue creates anxiety. For some, particularly for younger students (I know this from past experience.); a barrier might have to do with immaturity combined with the aforementioned issues.

- Laziness. Prolonging graduation in an effort to avoid being in the “real world” and having to work an 8-5 job. Fear of having to become a “real” adult.

- Stress—trying to maintain my 4.0.

- 60% Motivation (the more internalized the better [my] chances of graduating).

- Lack of…motivation on student’s behalf.

- Procrastination and no incentives to complete work.

- The only barrier to graduation is myself. I just need to focus more. I’m just making it hard for myself.

- Lack of motivation, no real interest in graduating.

- …the financial barrier involved with secondary education. College is very expensive and many students lack the funding, or even the ability to receive funding that is necessary to pay for a college education.

- [Lack of] money.

- Working and studying while being a university student.

(COS Class)

- The only issue preventing me from completing college quickly is money. I am 35 years old with a mortgage and three kids. I cannot afford not to work. I can handle 9-12 hours…while employed…but 9-12 hours of coursework per semester is not enough to complete a degree in the expected four years. …my husband took a job offshore. Because of his increased income we can afford for me to not work for one semester, although, we are operating in the red. I am taking 18 hours with no spousal support so that I can graduate this May.

- [Lack of] money.

- Since I’ve been working full-time for quite some time now, I’ve become accustomed to my current lifestyle; therefore, not allowing me to just give up work to attend school full-time.

- Working is distracting.

- Graduating in 4 years is almost impossible when working.
Most students work so that limits the availability they have to take certain classes.

…have attended school full-time and worked part-time….As far as my friends are concerned, many of them also work because they have to support themselves. Many middle class do not qualify for the benefits of financial aid and are also no longer supported by their parents; therefore, they must work extra hard.…. 

Too many students have to work to pay for school, not leaving enough time for school or summer school.

People have to work! And more now because UTSA likes to raise tuition and fees every semester, a parking pass @ $200?! My financial aid will not cover the bill. It barely covers the fees!

Working while attending school (not enough aid offered).

…I would say that most people have to work and go to school so graduation is harder for them.

Another factor is many students work along with going to school, which can cause them to take an extra year or two due to semester with few hours or with unsatisfactory grades.

Work is a factor.

Have to work to provide for food and bills. Can't juggle 12 hours + of school and 40 hours working.

Take courses while working [too many hours].

Also, time (I work).

Fewer hours in a day to study with work and commuting.

Class times conflict with work schedule and work is necessary in order to survive.

I used to work full time. My grades did decrease slightly, but that also meant taking only two or three classes a semester, pushing back my graduation.

The cost, a lot of students have to work to pay for school and don’t qualify for financial aid. Takes fewer hours [course hours] to go to work.

Conflicts with class and work schedules.

I currently work full-time, am married and have a 5 year-old son which makes it a challenge to take classes.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Not concentrating hard enough on school. Reasons for that being, having to work too many hours and having children to care for…I have been a single parent throughout my college career….

- …I know my problem this semester was allergic reaction to penicillin, which took me by surprise…if you miss out on a certain number of days; it is hard to make it up….

- Primary [barrier]—personal. Ex-job and family.

- …going to take a year off to have second child.

- …some people are just lazy.

- I believe it is the student’s fault due to lack of commitment and laziness.

- No emphasis on graduating in 4 years as in the past.

- People just aren’t as motivated as they should be. Seems like maybe they are unhappy with the school or just don’t really try hard enough. I’m going to graduate, but hopefully, from UT and not from here.

- Inability to focus in classes due to early burn out.

(COE Class)

- Financial need (44 responses).

- [Too many hours] work (11 responses).

- Family commitments [15 responses].

- The university only allows so much financial aid and such limit is less than what it takes to live and go to school with; therefore, I work 2 jobs and attend UTSA full-time.

- Working to support my living needs.

- The pressure to graduate in 4 years by taking high course loads.

- I work 18 hours per week.

- Unfortunately, my job gets in the way of my studies, and my grades have been affected a great deal because of that.

- Time struggles, trying to work and study for classes. Engineering places a huge demand on students.

- Financial need versus time required [for school].
- Financial support (going to work and going to school).

- Right now, the financial need is needed because I have to work to pay for school and plus, I don’t want to take out a loan so I’d rather pay my whole school by myself.

- Money to pay for summer school, distance of school from home [travel cost].

- I have to work full-time, and I can only take 2 classes a semester.

- Working part-time while going to school.

- Not enough hours to study because of work [load].

- Financial need is a tough barrier to overcome. Have to work 30+ hours a week takes a toll on studying.

- Having to work 24+ hours [per week].

- Jobs take away from study time.

- In order to help my family and remain in school, I have to hold a job. On the positive side, I am able to attend school. But at the same time, this consumes valuable time that could be used to study more or take more classes.

- I work outside of school.

- I work a lot of hours (70 hours a week).

- …having a wife.

- Lack of motivation.

- Social problems.

- [Lack of] a support system.

- [Lack of] self discipline and goals.

- Getting past my immaturity.

- Interference with non-school related activities.

- Pressure felt by family to finish in 4 years or less.

- Not limiting my life experiences with only school.

- Alcoholism.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- I believe it is a general lack of motivation towards school, academics and the strive to succeed. I’ve met countless peers who just don’t give a damn about their grade…they work just as hard to get their ‘F’ as I do to get my ‘A’.

(COPP Class)

- Work schedule and class schedule conflicts. Finances!

- Economic difficulties. A lot of people at the university are first generation college students and come from a background of poverty.

- …only offering one class MWF only and some of us work and are not able to take that class…[should not] require a class when you do not provide times flexible enough for students.

- The fact that I have 2 jobs because I live on my own…gives me less study time…also very difficult to work around my school or work schedule. I have to make it all fit in.

- This [lack of course availability] makes it difficult because some students need to work and can’t find classes that will fit into their work schedule.

- Money. Trying to balance school work with a job to pay for school. Working and going to school and still have to do an internship at the same time.

- Balancing job and school.

- Some people have full-time jobs, which conflict with school.

- I think [lack of] money would be a barrier to graduation….

- Family responsibilities…a significant segment of people that cannot cope with student responsibilities and family responsibilities.

- Friday classes are not good for me because I have 2 children in 2 different schools and sometimes, they have early release.

- For friends of mine, having children to take care of creates many barriers because they require attention and doctor’s appointments.

- …lack of desire to work hard and take classes that require a lot of work.

- Laziness….

- Laziness.

- Well, first let me say, the biggest barrier to graduation is me. Other people can provide support but only the student can motivate themselves.
(COA Class)

- Financial needs. Expensive materials, lots of time at school. Hard to work and earn more money.
- The only barrier to my graduation is money…
- Money would be definitely the main barrier that can prevent me from graduating sooner. (This also applies to my friends.)
- I think that money is a big factor. The school is getting expensive every semester.
- Mostly financial concerns, tuition costs on the rise, conflicts in scheduling for those who must work as well as study.
- The always increasing cost of tuition…as it forces some to have to work more (or take out more loans); therefore, not allowing as much time for studies and in some cases some classes would be dropped.
- Financial issues. You must support your family.
- Class time interfering with work schedules and management of the two. Stress brought on by balancing work and school.
- Money/financial issues.
- …friends with children or husbands often experience different pressures.
- Other goals in life also get in the way of me graduating. I want to travel, but I can't while at school. The juggle of life puts school in a light that makes it seem like a luxury.

(COEH Class)

- Financial barrier.
- Most people work full-time in San Antonio.
- Personal issues.
- Personal problems.
- I also can't afford to do student teaching (and not work)…
- Money issues. Drop out because…can't afford to pay tuition.
We need to stop being lazy and shape up.

Job. [Lack of] transportation.

Lazy. Work conflicts with class/study time.

I have a son. I work full-time and go to school full-time.

I have to travel 1 hour to school and 1 hour back home—gas VERY expensive now.

Money is a big issue. Time which is relating to class schedules or some students work.

Costs. Work.

Also, money is a big issue.

Money and having to put yourself through school.

A barrier is getting proper [class] scheduling to go with work schedule.

I am a student that requires a job to sustain myself while I am going to college...availability of classes...makes it harder for me to have both a job and obtain my degree in a timely and convenient fashion.

[Lack of] money!

[Lack of] money.

[Lack of] money.

Laziness.

Laziness.

Financial needs. Having to work and go to school. No support from parents and family.

Barriers are everyday life. There are certain things that happen that [does not] permit us to graduate.

Upper division course work interferes with work schedules.

Money for expenses of tuition, books, living. Full-time job and full-time school (not enough hours in the day). I only know 1 friend of mine that graduated in 4 years...Needless to say, her parents were rich and she never worked or worried about money, which led to full concentration on school, which is impossible for most.

Burnt out. Too stressed. Some have too many bills and rather work more hours than go to class.
• [Lack of] child care.


• Conflict of work and school schedule.

• Family issues. Work issues.

**Advising**

(COB Class)

• Failure to communicate with advisor about what courses are needed, what courses would not be used [may refer to lack of communication by or to the student].

• [Advising] services and accessibility.

• Advisor sometimes do not know or give you the right information.

• Lack of proper advising; every advisor tells you something different.

• I personally feel that there is a poor system at UTSA to help students progress through education. The 1st problem is that student counseling [advising] is terrible. I went to advising every semester…and was told something different.

• Sometimes insufficient counseling [advising]; their limited times aren’t all that great either.

• Do not really like how the advisors advise.

• Not knowing you need a 2.5 to declare a major; not knowing you need certain classes to declare major. Both resulting in delay of graduation. Not taking enough hours.

• …I would definitely say the advisors! Lack of proper communication from advisors; any new amendments to the degree plan being followed are not being conveyed to students.

• Counselor [advisor] oversight.

• I had a friend who wanted to graduate and got held from graduation because a math class was overlooked and the class wasn’t offered until the fall.

• No good counseling [advising] or incorrect classes taken.

• Sometimes the advisors in the dept. don’t communicate with each other or keep up with the new policies enough. Many of my friends had to delay graduating or didn’t have
enough time to receive a teaching certificate before graduating because of different
advisors telling students different things.

(COLFA Class)

- I think it would be helpful if freshmen had a mandatory conference with a counselor to
  outline exactly what classes and prerequisites are needed. This would help students
  plan their schedules, help them avoid taking courses they don’t need, and in my opinion,
  speed up graduation. …get helpful feedback from the advisor about what direction to go
  in.

- When at a junior college, I was working a 2+2 program and was supplied a “degree plan”
  for my chosen degree/major. After transferring, some classes do not transfer with the
  student.

- …I have had 4 different advisors because of their leaving UTSA. I visit and
  communicate with my advisors regularly and when a new one comes in, it’s like starting
  all over. Or even more frustrating is when the new advisors don’t get back to you timely
  because they don’t know you or your plans or because they are too busy because they
  are filling in for others who are out….

- The school changes which classes you have to take. One day your advisor may say you
  only have to take classes A, B, and C and the next time you go into see him/her, they’ll
  change their mind and say that classes B and C you didn’t have to take because now
  the requirements have changed. You have to take classes D and E. I have a lot of
  friends who have had graduation delayed because of this.

- One of the major barriers that I’ve noticed is that many students are unaware of the
  courses that they need to take for their majors.

- Also meeting with…academic advisors is impossible.

- Maybe having an online system that can tell us what classes we still need to take, a
  checklist that updates when we finish a semester [Recommendation].

- …not enough access to counselors [advisors]….  

- Confusion about the progression of courses.

- I think that UTSA does a poor job of informing students about graduation events or
  requirements. What are the exact procedures??

- [Dis]comfort with competence of advisors (being set back because took wrong classes,
  etc.).

- Some times, over the years, some advisors may tell you that you need specific courses
  and then you take them and find out later that they don’t count.
• Advisors don’t tell you the correct info. (sometimes).

• The advisors here at UTSA don’t take the extra time needed to inform students on how to graduate sooner.

• Inept advisors who mislead you about classes.

• Sometimes difficult to get answers quickly in areas concerning requirements for graduation.

• When you are an incoming freshman, the advisors persuade you to take 12 hours instead of 15. This automatically puts you on a 5 year plan.

• Having to deal with advisors that confuse things more. Bureaucracy.

• …the revolving door of advisors that I have encountered since I have been a student at UTSA…Being my own advocate and keeping record of all my discussions with advisors has led to me graduating this May.

• COLFA advisor doesn’t know a thing about the education certificate I am trying to get. Therefore, I am always spending my time either in the COLFA Advising Office or the Education Advising Office. It seems like the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing.

• Also, the advisors for COLFA are not helpful AT ALL. In my experience, the advisors only make things worse.

• Not knowing exactly what classes to take….

• The advisors’ lack of knowledge of the courses needed for graduation.

• Not sufficient or adequate access to advisors—too many students, too few advisors.

• [Need] more meetings with advisors to discuss graduation requirements.

• The advisors!! Each time I go to an advisor I find that not only do I have a new advisor, but I also find that I need yet another class to graduate that was never mentioned previously. Or, I find out that I just took a class I didn’t need but was told I should take by a previous advisor. My graduation has been delay[ed] a year because of this.

• Advisors not knowing all the information and misinforming students.

• Advisors are getting harder to get a hold of because of their hours.

• Having to speak with an advisor. I work full-time and come to school full-time. I wish we got emails or something that would let us know the classes we need to take to graduate, or if we [could] email advisors….
…getting advised wrong OR getting advice from the university advisor that doesn’t really fit degree plan.

[Need] maybe more emphasis and individualized attention from advisors to graduate. Big problem: inconsistencies with advisors. Advisors change all the time. Inconsistent, sometimes not knowledgeable.

Difficulty in meeting with COLFA advisors for some majors.

Advisory mistakes.

For me, my advisor is not helpful at all, and I’m in the dark about classes I need to take or so on.

I also think that the undergraduate advisors need to be easier to make an appointment with.

…lack of communication between student and advisor….

Advising. Some [advisors] aren’t aware of opportunities.

The main problem is the advising staff inaccurately informing students of which classes to take and which classes count or don’t count for certain requirements. Also, there is little cohesiveness among advisors. For example, when a new advisor is hired…they have been very vague in their explanation of courses, etc. Thus, leaving me, the student, confused about the meeting….

Bad advice from counselors [advisors]!!

Advisors in COLFA office not giving proper information…I was told by my advisor that Electronic Media was learning web design, which is NOT true. Tech. Communications is web design. After realizing that, I had to add Tech. COM to my degree plan.

Instability as far as who my COLFA advisor is.

(COS Class)

…hindering the graduation rate, is improper advisement. Transferring over from a community college, I first consulted my academic advisor for guidance….He advised to only take 12 hours per semester…the only semester which was discussed was the one I was enrolling for. When meeting with the advisor, I specifically stated I wanted to get my degree in math with certification. I was advised to follow the Mathematics Concentration degree plan…Upon careful consideration; I decided to meet with the advisors from the College of Education. …the advisor informed me that I still needed to take …hours from the General Mathematical Studies even if I obtained the Mathematics Concentration Degree. Obviously, the advisors from the College of Education and the College of Science do not communicate with each other.
- ...the incorrect information given to students from advisors. Most times I have visited an advisor I was given conflicting information. EX: Mathematics major and teaching certification requires College of Science and College of Education. They need to communicate better.

- Here, I have to make an appointment to speak to an advisor, write down my questions, I have a time limit, and many times they can't answer all of the questions I might have. It just seems like they are there because it is their job and that is it. Many times, the secretary is rude and uncaring.

- ...even though I provided the course descriptions and had the chair of the Applied Math dept. give me indications that he would give me credit for some of my math classes, this “secret” advisor for the education math dept. decided that I could not transfer any of my EGR [MAT] classes.

- The main barrier for students in Chemistry is the counselors [advisors] and the lack of knowledge of the courses....

- Some students have no guidance....

- ...advisors who do not work closely with their department is also a problem.

- SCIENCE ADVISING CENTER has no idea what our degree plan is, so cannot answer questions on what to do next.

- ADVISE! We need someone that knows what we need in order to graduate. We can read a book, too. But we need someone that knows about all the departments and their requirements and STOP! Blaming others. We need them to know what is going on....

- For me, it was initially being misadvised....

- Advising inconsistencies (HUGE).

- Advisor to Chemistry does not understand degree plan.

- There is a lack of communication and organization between the chemistry department and college of science.

- The lack of science advisors familiar with chemistry courses and ability to aid students in choosing classes and planning.

- The “take your basics first” approach isn’t very conducive to graduating in 4 years due to the prerequisites.

- It is not helpful when you go to one counselor [advisor] to get info. and then, a little later, another counselor tells you something different.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation—Appendix

- …the lack of advising to help guide the students in the right direction. As a transfer student…I finally found the information needed to graduate in my degree plan on my own.…

- And the advising center clearly has no idea how to “advise” the students. They are more detrimental than anything else because they have no idea what is required to achieve the degree.

- Advisors not knowing all details and at time of graduation, all of a sudden, find another course!

- Advising needs to know the standards, meaning, all advisors should know exactly what students need or not for their degree.

- I would like to see that UTSA can, at least, improve their advising with more helpful, detailed advising for students.

- Too difficult to meet with advisors (appointments always full).
- No direction. Need better advisor to assist.

- Advisors aren’t thorough, seem impatient! We lack guidance.

- Not enough emphasis on core classes. Advisors are not as helpful as they should be. Basically, students have little or no guidance.

- Poor advising—ineffective course description by advisors with bad schedule layouts. The advising is counter productive in building knowledge in a cumulative manner.

- [Should be] a required meeting twice a year with the advisors. I’m not pleading ignorance, but I’ve only seen an advisor twice.

- Also, the advisors push us to graduate on 5-year plans, so UTSA gets an extra year’s tuition (I’m not stupid!).

- …my experience with advising has been a bit of a runaround (with the exception of Ross Julson @ DT campus).

- Advisors are advising us to take classes that would be helpful, rather than what is needed.

- The advising here is useless.

- Different counselors [advisors] tell you different things. My roommate went to a counselor to withdraw [from] a class and later found out he withdrew her from the university.

(COE Class)
- [Poor] advising (12 responses).
- Advising—[advisors] didn’t tell what to take other than major [courses].

(COPP Class)

- I would like to see more counsel for graduating seniors. Making sure all their classes are being met. That would be beneficial for the last 2 semesters. I had advising as a return student and ended up taking a class I didn’t need, which was bad for me since I don’t receive financial aid or student loans.
- Another barrier I encountered was misinformation between the counselors [advisors] and the graduation office.
- Transfer credits counting as different courses each time I meet with the [advisor].
- …lack of proactive counseling [advising].
- Last minute classes that your (our) advisors fail to tell us that we need to have instead of letting the student know during their senior year.
- The advising center is working well, but I received better counseling [advising] at SAC than I did here. They seemed more willing to get involved and find out what I really was interested in. Anyway, UTSA is a great school.
- Until Monica left, I would have said poor academic advising. Students who attend DT only, having to go to 1604 for advising. Advisors not being able to tell a person which classes will classify for other majors.
- Walk-in advising times are not very flexible. CRJ advisors are not all willing to talk/discuss matters which are important to students even when a walk-in schedule allows a maximum of 20 minutes per student.
- Lack of information. Counselors [advisors] are not very helpful in educating students on how the system works.

(COA Class)

- A need for more advisors (at least, within the architecture department).
- [Need] a clear explanation of what is necessary to graduate (i.e. what courses, deadlines to be met, etc.).
- Students who are thinking of quitting…usually don’t have anyone to turn to. Sometimes, it takes weeks and weeks to talk to any type of counselor [advisor].

(COEHD Class)
• UTSA Counselors [advisors]. I think that many of them advise you wrong. Lack of information.

• UTSA needs better advisors for each major because one advisor will tell you one thing and another advisor will tell you something else.

• Advisors giving incorrect or not all information needed to meet requirements.

• I’ve had advisors give me incorrect information that caused me to stay an extra year.

• Not having time slots for all students at the advising office. Advising officers telling students different things.

• The advisors should focus more on the students that are near graduation (Juniors and Seniors, instead of Freshmen). Also they should inform us about the upcoming classes that we need in order to graduate.

• Incorrect information from advisors or not complete information from advisors.

• I perceive lack of communication or knowledge between students and their advisors. I have visited my advisor once every semester since I have been here and found that they did not inform me with the correct information….regarding my graduation course requirements.

• Also, the student advisors are not up to date on individual plans. Sometimes, they don’t know what classes should be taken.

• Advisors not advising so well.

• My graduation has been delayed due to improper advising….I filed an appeal to take the approaches blocks together, it was denied (although many people I know are doing it). I, now, have 9 hours in the fall and 6 in the spring.

• Unfair advising. Tell one student one thing, hold back others.

• Advising is horrible! [So,] I don’t get it at all.

• ADVISING terrible for COEHD…they are horrible.

• A barrier to my graduation has been insufficient counseling [advising]…my counselor has limited hours and it is difficult to see him when I am available too.

• Advisors are too busy to deal with me (I’m graduating—SUPPOSEDLY—in 2 semesters). Audits take too long prior to graduation.

• The advising staff is my biggest pet peeve because every time I go, I talk to a different advisor with different information.
• Most counselors [advisors] are not very helpful in giving the facts and assisting students to take the classes they need.

• Advisors making you take classes you don’t need.

• ADVISING!!! Every time I go and ask a question, I get a different person and a different answer. If they do answer my question, it is something I already knew or could have figured out on my own.

• Bad advisors.

• I believe one of the reasons why students don’t graduate in 4 years because some of the advisors can mess you up. They don’t tell you that you have to take certain classes to get into other ones, so that pushes you behind.

• Don’t feel they were advised properly. (Should take degree plan and do exactly the courses the paper states without being advised.)

• ADVISORS! Number of unnecessary classes that I was told to take from advisors.

• The Education advisors. They never know anything and have put all of us on the wrong degree plans!

**Campus Issues**

(COB Class)

• [Should make] the school more academically prestigious.

• [Lacks] a 4-year “University” appeal.

• Prestige of [UTSA] not high enough; rather go to UT Austin, St. Mary’s, private universities.

• “Better” universities outside San Antonio, not being aware of UTSA’s rankings, certifications, research programs, etc.

• I think a GPA minimum needs to be met to keep up the reputation of the college/school.

• UTSA doesn’t have a very strong appeal to many students. Lots of students I know have started school here simply because it is local and to get their GPA up before transferring to a “better” school.

• High book costs.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Food prices on campus are outrageous.
- [Need] more activities to do on campus. [Low] school morale.
- [Large] size of school, crowded with too many goof offs.
- Lack of students involved in campus activities. Students who are more involved have more vested in their education and it’s not so easy to quit or go somewhere else.
- Everything being more expensive- food, parking, etc.
- Books are expensive.
- Lack of on-campus housing.
- [Lack of] transportation.
- Not wanting to travel (cost).
- …financial… [need] income.
- Economic factors.
- Students leave if they can’t find a parking space.
- [Having to] pay so much for parking.
- Parking could be easier.
- Parking lot “mess”.
- Parking at 1604. I’ve heard [about] people not going to class because they can’t find a space, and they end up missing something in class.
- [Experiencing] parking issues.
- [Lack of] parking.
- UTSA should also consider the caliber of students they admit. A bad student is bound to drop out regardless of college assistance.

(COLFA Class)

- Lack of being prepared for college life (coming from high school).
- Financial aid [lack of].
• Financial issues (having to work full-time while trying to go to school).

• I perceive a lack of good quality public transportation to and from school as a barrier.

• Need to teach [students] how to access financial aid and scholarships.

• …the lack of financial [aid] support.

• [Should] have a better financial aid program for ALL students. Everyone needs to know about it and all that it offers.

• In all my years here, the only problem this university has is parking…and the two story parking garage was a big rip-off.

• …they keep reducing parking. That prevents people from wanting to come to class.

• The second would be parking. It sucks and is a significant deterrent to class attendance and therefore a graduation barrier.

• The importance of education is not stressed. Student to faculty ratio deprives students of intimate relationships with professors.

• Financial [aid] among non-minorities. Scholarship, aid of any kind is difficult for the “middle class” family…too rich or aid, too poor to pay all alone.

• Parking spaces (NOT ENOUGH). Too many students. Not enough instructors or classrooms.

• Financial Aid. The lack of explanation as to why you cannot get aid. The unwillingness by the Financial Aid Office to help.

• Having to drive between two campuses.

• Campus Police and unfair illegal ticketing.

• Certain barriers are the horrible, horrible parking! Sometimes, it's so hard to find a spot I just go home. The library is also not good enough.

• …the fact that UTSA is not as well known or respected by as many employers as other universities are.

• Class size. It is understandably difficult to find more Ph.D. faculty, but something needs to change.

• Financial Aid. I am not able to receive financial aid from the government. I probably will not be able to receive money for another 2 years.

• Lack of involvement….
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Parking sucks.…
- I would gladly have taken more classes per semester were the books more affordable.
- CAPP program [refers to Curriculum Advising and Program Planning].
- The high cost of textbooks.
- …not enough scholarship opportunities to those that apply and are well qualified to receive scholarships.
- Financial Aid—age limit including parents.
- …may hold students back from graduating or even attending is parking. The school at 1604 is over crowded and the attitude of some faculty and staff is terrible.…
- Also, the fact that UTSA is in transition as far as its academic ranking makes it hard for professors to maintain equal standards.
- I’ve received absolutely no financial aid the past 2 semesters when I had been receiving some before for about 2 years!

(COS Class)

- High school prep for college is non-existent. I got as far as “collecting like-term” in high school and that is it! I taught myself the math I know [coming into college].
- [Need] better books for math and statistic classes.
- …students have “difficulty” graduating on time or at all because most lack a sense of belonging. I have struggled with this myself and most of the time; I feel the university doesn’t care about the student…specifically, in the realm of customer service. The attitude of some employees is cold and apathetic. I also feel that I am burdening the staff when I have questions….I would not describe this school as friendly or even caring.
- Books are pretty expensive, too. We hardly get any money back when we sell them back.
- First off, the money is something that I think is the most difficult barrier.
- UTSA accepts everyone that applies, so students that aren’t as motivated or dedicated enroll, but then, never finish.

- Parking problems discourages people from coming to class.

- The financial aid department is very hard to work with. I had to devote hours to standing in lines and even arguing to receive the money that was already awarded to me (many of my semesters).

- Also, the fact that UTSA accepts nearly anyone who applies to this university, such as those who demonstrate a poor academic performance at other universities or high schools, may also entail a poor graduation track record for this university.

- The public perception of UTSA is a four year junior college.

- UTSA lets in too many people, increasing the odds for drop-outs or transfers.

- [Should] help create an environment that helps the student find their purpose in college for the future workforce.

- School here is not fun. We need to get more for our money! More events that ? the students. Joining SGA sucks, Fiesta UTSA, Best Fest are fine and on days that are convenient for the students not just the teachers. Better Greek system, better science labs, more on campus housing and stuff that will get kids interested in school for more than a week.

- I feel there is no sense of “pride” at the school making students highly frustrated or not care.

- …if CAP students were not counted in the graduation rate, or the CAP program did not exist, graduation rates would be much higher. About 25% of UTSA students are here with no intention of graduating from here in the first place. This also gives the impression of UTSA as a second-rate school that is nothing but a backup to UT Austin.

- My only problem: The name UTSA means nothing.

- People at UTSA are not all proud to be students here and often, lose sight of the value in following through with an education here.

- Financial aid said my parents should have had money to provide for school. They didn’t, and I had to wait a year and a half to get financial aid…that 1 ½ years, I could not afford to go to school.

- Most of my friends and I have been financially independent since fresh./soph. year. Unfortunately, tuition is too high and I get aid based on my parents’ $75K income instead of my $14K. For this reason, I have had to work 40-60 hours/week for about 4 out of my 5 yrs. For obvious reasons, my GPA and percent completed hours has ↓. Financial aid advisors [are] not helpful or as knowledgeable as should be. Don’t find time to explore options or opportunities with student.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- I have seen friends struggle financially, so it takes longer. Loans can be confusing.
- It seems to me that the admission requirements are too low.
- There is no “community” here.
- The DT campus library is poor.

(COE Class)

- Financial need.
- Travel [expenses].
- [Lack of] parking.
- Broken equipment in the labs.
- Computer lab not consistent.

(COPP Class)

- Never able to meet with a scholarship counselor.
- Difficulty to acquire financial aid.
- Meetings/informationals are held during the day while I am working.
- …[need] financial help. People have to take classes a little at a time so they can afford it.
- There are grants and loans that I never seemed to qualify for.
- One other thing I noticed from others is the lack of school pride…many are just here to transfer or do not get involved in activities or sports.
- Another barrier is that most of us are not aware of all the resources that are available to us.

(COA Class)

- Thus far, I have not heard of any good things about higher education here at UTSA. Computer lab is not sufficient for all students of ARC. Make computer programs more accessible to students for their laptops.
- [Lack of] updating technology such as computers, software and computer hardware.
- Conflicts with resource centers [computer labs] and class scheduling and commuting require some students to either extend their time in school or take on a strenuous class schedule.

- …the lack of some of the resources that this school is missing. They expect us to have a lot of work in a quick period of time. I think that if there were places like a woodshop or a photo room, we wouldn’t have to outsource those resources, making our process more efficient.

- Financial Aid processes often take too long and the monetary support can be minimal.

- Not enough campus jobs for students, so you must find jobs off of campus—which makes it harder.

- If funding can’t be provided for the necessary classes, more and more students will be apt to go to other institutions that can provide the necessary education. I believe that the lack of funding which can go toward the needed issues, like professors and class objectives is KEY.

- Not enough emphasis on scholarship opportunities.

- For downtown students—the distance barrier created from the 1604 campus (information gap). Not enough signage for those students who don’t use Lonestar as a primary means of communication or awareness of events.

- Find a better way to link students to the Lonestar account. I tried to have it forward to my hotmail, but it was kinda complicated.

- Finding ways to improve communication of information between students and departments might be of some benefit. It is needed.

(COEHD Class)

- Parking.

- Childcare is offered for younger children but not for school-aged at later times when some classes are scheduled.

- Barriers I have experienced the most here at UTSA are issues with registration and financial aid.

- Parking because I get frustrated and just leave.

- Parking. Prerequisites not showing on ASAP.

- Lack of financial aid (eligibility).
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- [Need] work-study for students who have been in Texas less than a year.
- Hierarchy of registration is NOT efficient. I’m a Senior but have to register as a Junior—this doesn’t work. [Student reports due to graduate in 2 semesters.]
- The interest seems to be keeping us for economic reasons rather than completing our college education and considering it a priority.
- Cost of books.
- Registering for class = very hard and time consuming.

Studying

(COB Class)

- Not studying through the semester, only studying at the end.
- Finding time to study and work. Many classes require group work and with people working it is hard to find time to meet.
- Too much, too soon [affects motivation].
- Time management: mine [is horrible]. I devote more time in other activities rather than studying. I cram before tests. My friends and I party and go out when we should study.
• My study habits are not as strong as [they] should/could be.

• [Too many] social activities: parties…Greek Life.

• …completing the coursework….

• [Lack of] studying.

• [Lack of] comprehension of material seems a barrier.

• [Not enough] time.

(COLFA Class)

• Poor time management skills.

• Too many homework [assignments] from instructors. Knowing it’s the last semester and not putting enough effort or work [into courses].

• Some barriers are: classes requiring too much work when that is not the only class…students take, [and] not enough written work is given such as essays, papers, etc. Therefore, not enough writing experience when we get out into the big world after graduating.

• …I’m having trouble in a few classes because these professors just lecture, and I’m more of a visual learner.

• [Low] GPA.

• The biggest impediment I have for graduation is time. I have a full-time course load and a part-time job and a family. It is difficult to find the time necessary to do well at school.

• Accomplish[ing] required credit hours. Knowledge of field of study.

• …not maintaining the grades in order to graduate.

• Making “the” grade. Keeping up with the workload in our classes along with work (job).

• The barriers that I face are all about grades, GPA and tests, [which] are very stressful. Some people don’t test as well as others do.

• …there should be…fewer papers to do.

• …on exams, questions are irrelevant and students don’t do well because there was no review and questions weren’t from the proper sources [textbooks].

• My lack of knowledge about APA formatting. Could you please offer a workshop? Lack of knowledge about SI.
Another barrier could be time management. Many students have to juggle school, work....

Being unprepared (high school) for college.

Time constraints.

(COS Class)

It’s my perception that students who do not attend class and complete homework on their own are at risk for failing class, not completing a prerequisite for another class, and of having to retake the class, delaying graduation by 6 months or a year.

If teachers would promote group studying, convincing students to make their own “SI” like sessions would help get grades higher and make more people pass the first time.

...some classes are extremely difficult.

Because they didn’t study so much before coming to university. In university, the study materials become harder and harder. Students who don’t know how to study can’t catch up with class...I am often surprised because students can’t solve chemistry questions with math calculations.

Most students need a stronger general fundamental knowledge of course. Some professors’ expectation of the amount of knowledge that they want students to achieve is overwhelming.

...the lack of knowledge coming in as a first time freshman...the lack of being prepared for college courses.

Students don’t read the material in the book or they skim through it.

Lots of material to learn, not enough time. Studies material but takes a while to understand. I need to put in more time. I usually put in about 6-10 hours weekly.

I’m so busy drowning in my coursework; I have not run into any problems in the system yet. I will say having to use Web CT for quizzes, etc. is a nightmare.

For the most part, K-12 public education doesn’t prepare some incoming freshmen for university life and education.

Compared with lectures, tests are much [more] difficult, may need to retake classes (even study harder).

One of my worst problems is procrastination. I tend to wait until the last minute to study, which I know has a huge impact on my grades along with my academic potential.
• ...time management problems...

• The degree requirements seem to be increasing (more demanding).

• Simply taking high levels (3000-4000) series of courses and the struggle with those courses—trying to meet demand while struggling with other duties.

• Taking more classes than you can bear.

• Large amount of lab work required.

(COE Class)

• [Poor/lack of] study skills (30 responses).

• [Poor/lack of] high school preparation (21 responses).

• Calculus II [content].

• Study skills...[need] more help outside of class, recitations not helpful.

• High school preparation has played a great deal in my college development. I feel that high schools are not as hard on students as they should be. I come from Mexico, and before studying in the U.S., my professors demanded a great deal out of me. After I transferred to a high school in El Paso, I saw the difference.

• [Lack of] time. I drive 10-12 hours a week to and from campuses.

• Bad high school preparation for engineering curriculum. For example, I didn’t take advanced chemistry or physics in high school.

• [Poor] high school preparation was a good reason. I had to take 1 ½ years of remedial reading.

• Not passing some courses did not help, but that was my fault for not studying like I should.

• I don’t live near UTSA, so I can’t get together with study groups.

(COPP Class)

• Lack of understanding of the APA style.

• ...inability to write coherent essays and papers.

• Workload [refers to course work]. Assignments such as papers and essays are cut too short in time that they are due. Papers weigh heavy on your final grade and a hard, lengthy paper can affect your entire grade and hurt you come graduation.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- …the lack of free time to study and prepare myself for exams…working 40 hours a week and having 2 kids makes time an issue.

- I don’t like APA style in essays. Too many essays in some classes.

- …time constraints.

- …not enough study guides in order to do well on an exam.

(COA Class)

- The unbelievable amount of work load [coursework] I am expected to complete everyday. It creates a huge amount of stress while trying to balance a job and other previous activities I have to do in a day. Some days I honestly don’t think I can handle it and I just want to give up.

- Under prepared for college because of inadequate high school curriculum. No time management skills.

- …the juggling or management of courses that are required.

(COEHD Class)

- Amount of course work in some classes.

- Difficulty of classes.

- Educational background not strong. 2nd language learners. Classes or teachers, at times, are very difficult.

Tuition/Fees

(COB Class)

- [UTSA should not] include services (overall) which are not used by individual students; keep tuition reasonable.

- Students leave to take classes at community colleges…it’s cheaper.
- Too many fees!
- [High] tuition.
- [High] tuition.
- [Lack of] money for raising tuition cost.
- [Need] fast money to pay the high cost of education.
- [High] cost.
- Cheaper at community colleges.
- There are cheaper schools less reputable like SAC, NW Vista, St. Philip’s and such. If I were paying for my own school/education, I would much rather do the 2+2 plan—2 years at a community college would save a lot of money on student loans.

(COLFA Class)

- Tuition is increasing and those not qualified for financial aid are being punished. Students have to work to pay for [their education] and living. A discount should be given to students who pay in cash. This would encourage students to go to school on a regular basis.
- I think that the continuous tuition hike has prevented many people from attending college on a consistent basis. To keep up with the rising tuition rates, students are working longer hours, and thus, causing school work to suffer.
- The ever increasing rise of tuition and now the rise in student loan APRs.
- …rising costs of attending this university is the largest barrier to graduation.
- The tuition keeps increasing, making it harder for some to continue their education.
- The major problem I see is money. The university wastes so much money on needless projects that they have to continuously raise fees to pay for everything. Fiscal responsibility.
- …the overall cost of going to school (i.e. rising tuition, book costs related with the amount of books a professor may ask you to purchase and the rising cost of fee [such as] parking).
- Too many FEES!
- Tuition increases.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Rising cost to attend school. At this rate, you’d almost need to be a CEO to afford paying back your student loans. By the time I graduate, Pell Grants won’t even cover tuition by themselves.

- [Rising] tuition costs.

- …the fact that prices are going up…just to take a couple of classes…after all, this is not a private institution.

- High fees [are] a distraction for students.

- …rising tuition costs….

- Barriers are costs and rising costs of tuition.

- I would say the cost…financial aid is available, but some times, it is not enough…the cost of summer school is a discouraging factor.

- The cost has nearly doubled in the past few years. Parking alone has doubled…, there are several unnecessary fees: …gym fee which you may not even use…, …library fees…, …computer lab fees…as many students print at home and will never use the allotted amount of paper.

- Classes for summer are very expensive.

- Having to pay for school without financial aid help is also a big problem.

- Tuition is too expensive.

- …tuition.

- …the rising tuition, parking, standardized tests….

- The biggest barrier is the astronomical increase in tuition….For those of us who are not minority and whose parents are living, that are not eligible for Financial Aid., it is extremely difficult to pay tuition….if you don’t have the means to pay it, you register late or maybe don’t get all the classes you need. Therefore, you are in school much longer OR you drop out.

- Tuition is relatively expensive and it makes it hard to afford every semester.

- Tuition is becoming more and more crippling to students.

- Rising tuition costs.

- …tuition keeps going up but not their financial aid.
The primary barriers to graduation here are the increasing tuition rates and rising costs of textbooks.

Tuition has risen almost 1,000 dollars for my 4 classes [since] I started back in ’03.

Also, tuition is too high resulting in students working more and taking less hours.

The biggest barrier towards graduation is being able to afford the increasing tuition and fees.

[High] tuition.

High tuition rates. Too many books for a single class. They should be limited to maybe 1 or 2 [due to cost].

Cost of tuition.

Too many fees that aren’t necessary.

…the cost of tuition that is going up every day.

Higher tuition rates….

[Need] money (tuition, books, etc.)

Tuition costs.

Money [lack of]…when fees and tuition go up, students are less and less able to pay them.

Unreasonable tack-ons on tuition costs as well as no justification for increased tuition.

Cost of tuition, university fees.

(COS Class)

…students do not graduate on time is the high cost of tuition. My father refuses to help me [with tuition] because he says that when he was a college student he was forced to work…it made him try harder in his classes knowing that it was his hard earned money that paid for them. It’s too much work to be in school full-time and work full-time. Most students then realize that if they worked to support themselves rather than school, they wouldn’t be struggling financially.

First and foremost, money—money for tuition, text books, parking permits and supplies.

The biggest barrier I have been aware of is being able to afford continuing an education at UTSA. Many of my friends have had to take a “break” of a semester or so in order to work for the extra money they need for their classes…when fees and such are raised,
they can no longer afford to take the same amount of classes. As a result, they take fewer and delay their graduation date.

- As far as money, paying $2000 a semester for 5 years is a lot of money and over that period of time is causing us to go in debt and work longer hours just to get through our next semester.

- My friends and I have a hard time with tuition. Some of my friends are originally from another country…but haven’t been able to get their green card (or whatever it is) so because of this they can’t apply for scholarships.

- I think this university has a lot of issues that are going on and one of the biggest ones is the price of tuition that keeps going up. It’s hard enough paying for an education while other expenses here are costing more.

- I believe the rising cost of tuition….

- Cost of attendance.

- Price of education increases and financial aid is not easy if you live with your parents no matter the amount they make but they still pay bills and taxes.

- Tuition continues to increase, which makes it very hard to continue the education necessary in order to achieve goals.

- The fees here are outrageous. UTSA charges premium tuition for minimal services.

- …another barrier is the cost of school and not enough grants.

(COE Class)

- Tuition keeps going up.

(COPP Class)

- Payment Plan—No VISA (dispute), cannot pay in person, must pay online (inconvenient), [must] pay a CONVENIENCE FEE for online usage [payment].

- …the cost of attendance fees.

- …tuition increase.

- Tuition!

- The fees involved just in graduating.

- …the tuition is too high considering the lack of quality teaching/learning you get here at UTSA.
- UTSA should look at lowering the price of attendance cost because the surrounding communities are low to middle class.

- [High] tuition.

- Rising tuition is going to make things difficult for those students that do not receive financial aid and work for their living.

- Another large barrier is tuition increasing every semester. When I began, it was 75% of what it is now.

- Cost of attendance keeps rising. Financial aid can only pay for so much of our tuition.

(COA Class)

- Tuition rising causing more concern to be put on keeping up work hours.

(COEHD Class)

- [Expensive] tuition.

- Paying for school and books.

- COST! COST! Prices for classes keep going up, making it hard to take as many classes as one would like.

- …the cost of graduating.

- The cost of tuition, the cost of books.

- [High] tuition rates.

- Tuition is too high.

- Tuition keeps rising…. 

- Another is tuition costs, which seem to only be increasing.

- Price to complete program [expensive].

- Tuition too expensive.

- Tuition increases.
Expense—have to take only a couple of classes a semester because of cost so it takes forever.

Cost [expensive].

Cost = too much!

It seems like they don't want any of us to graduate. They would rather have our money!!

Cost. Tuition is going up.

Cost to attend.

Tuition cost.

Tuition keeps going up.

The cost.

Cost of tuition

The cost of everything.

Price [of tuition] is a barrier.

Tuition costs = It is hard to take the number of hours for full-time and pay the tuition prices.

High tuition costs.

Tuition is too high.

School costs (tuition) [is expensive].

Tuition is too high.

Cost [is high].
**Degree Requirements**

(COB Class)

- Meeting all the requirements and prerequisites.
- Number of required courses is overwhelming on top of major requirements…work, internships, etc.
- All of the prerequisites to classes that must be taken in order (…classes in succession). You may have to take one class that has nothing to do with your major just to be able to take a required course.
- Not planning your degree plan correctly which can make you take too many hard classes together…
- Prerequisites- the large amount.
- …the school of business core which must be completed before declaring their major…
- [Need] more clarity on what the requirements are to graduate.
- Status of Degree Audit; graduation information location; [what are the] process steps.
- Not knowing what you have to do to graduate: applying degree audit, etc. The process is unclear; most students don’t know what to do.
- I have bounced around to several schools (transfer).

(COLFA Class)

- Learning the process….
- I also see rigid course catalogs that aren’t realistic given the limited amount of courses offered for degree plans.
- [Too many] degree requirements.
- …my chosen ignorance on the matter [graduation process].
- Too much class work and credits needed.
- The requirements needed for certain degrees and how they change.
Not knowing who to go to for information. I am only a Junior, but I have no idea who to go to or what building they are in [for graduation process].

PSY students need too many prerequisite courses. Too many requirements needed to finish the degree….

Required electives. More so an unnecessary amount of hours required for classes taken just to fulfill “elective” part of degree plan.

We need too many electives instead of focusing on our majors.

The amount of electives (often pointless) I have to take.

I think that all of the “extra” classes that don’t pertain to our major/minor are huge barriers.

…because of prerequisites, I dropped the minor.

…not being as informed as students should be about deadlines and applications.

Classes that aren’t necessary. I understand the point of being well rounded, but classes need to be more interesting and have a better variety of choices.

Narrow deadline for graduation audit and deadline. Students wait too long to choose a major and take upper division classes.

Taking a class that doesn’t or will not help me in my career such as College Algebra. If you’re not going to be a Mathematician, why should you have to take College Algebra?

…all of the strict stipulations put on classes [may refer to prerequisites] during registration as a major barrier.

…lack of …clear, concise degree plans in the catalogs.

…it’s hard to graduate within 4 years due to the amount of credits needed….

Some majors require not necessary credit hours.

Often times [classes] require other classes be taken as a prereq before them.

…info. for graduation isn’t out there enough. I haven’t really seen that much information available….

Too many seemingly unrelated courses I’m required to take. It seems like school is making us take so many classes because it wants the money regardless of the class necessity. [Prerequisites.]

Amount of credit hours [needed to graduate].
• Accounting is not really necessary and it sure is hard as hell to pass.

(COS Class)

• There doesn’t seem to be consistency between the math education [COS] and the education math [COEHD Certification]…programs.

• I keep changing majors. Requirements for graduation keep changing.

• The catalogs’ changing so frequently also poses a problem.

• Degree plan changes too much. Prerequisites for upper division classes aren’t spelled out well for transfer students. Prerequisites, some times, have nothing to do with the upper division classes.

• The constant change of prerequisites and catalogs.

• The biggest barrier was silly prerequisites. I don’t mean a prereq such as descriptive before organic, I mean silly prereqs such as Tech Physics lab before physical chemistry…having something [the lab] so small prohibiting p chem. pushed me back an entire year!! I don’t think the faculty…realize how pointless it is to our degree plan….

• Changing catalogs each year can increase the difficulty of graduation.

• …I changed my major and added a minor.

• …how many prerequisites there are and if you don’t plan your degree perfectly, you hit a wall when it’s time to take the upper level chemistry courses.

• Course prerequisites need to be clearer.

• Prereqs???. Why so many? I have to take 2 years of “crap” that I will never use! Redesign degree plans for all studies to reflect the most needed fundamentals, and base it on a 12-15 hr. semester. No, 17-20 hours and summer school to catch up! 126 hrs. is too much. 5 years in school and 20 years to pay back the loans!

• Also, many students decide to change majors, which increases their years in college.

• A lot more people are switching schools trying to find the one that best fits them.

• Took time off to attend UTHSC. Changed degree plans.

• More requirements are added on once certain classes have been taken to satisfy areas of my degree.
(COE Class)

- The prerequisites at UTSA are beyond horrid. The math department is bad, but slowly getting better.
- [Having] the wrong major for 2 years.
- Switching majors and starting over.
- Complicated degree program, [many] prerequisites.
- ROTC requires more hours to graduate $\approx +20$ hours.
- Complicated degree program.
- I still have a few prerequisites to cover before I can get to many senior level courses.
- Prerequisites not preparing for necessary engineering classes.
- …I have usually only taken four courses per semester.
- Personally, the strict prerequisite requirements in the Engineering program have set me back. Even having to re-take one course can postpone graduation for a semester.
- Changing majors has been a great barrier to graduation.
- …the university sets up the degree plans in such a way that the student has to enroll in courses that are not related to their degree. This, in my view, seems like the university is trying to secure their employees’ positions by having students repeat core curriculum courses taken in junior colleges.
- Prereqs are not based as they should, excessive load in engineering classes. Hours per class are a lot more than considered in current catalogs.

(COPP Class)

- Degree plan muddled (need blue print); transfer credits [need to be] more in tune (If not, why?).
- [Need] maybe like a little seminar on our last semester for helpful information like grades, graduation, alumni, etc.
- Some friends have had to take remedial math 2 to 3 times.
- Classes which seem meaningless that are needed to graduate.
- It is complicated coming from one institution to another, trying to familiarize yourself with university level academics.

(COA Class)

- There are too many prerequisites so you can not take any courses to speed up the process of graduation.
- Our degree plan doesn’t always graphically describe all of our prerequisites, and we don’t take the classes we need.
- So many hours for core classes. My degree should have already required core classes to be out of the way before starting with the degree.
- Not enough information on dates or possible dates students could walk [for graduation] or what’s necessary for the graduation, what needs to be done.
- Prereq system in stone. Too many people slip through the cracks, then others get mad because they don’t get to slip through, making them stay for another year.
- Not knowing enough about graduation information. Not being able to find out the process to graduate. Need meetings to inform them [students] on process.

(COEHD Class)

- I believe that UTSA should have a clear and definite degree plan for each major. With mine, it changed from year to year. It set me back at least 2 semesters.
- Requirements. Class/course always changing.
- A lot of the courses are very repetitive. I feel like most of the classes I take are the same class with a new teacher.
- Too many hours needed to graduate. Catalogs changing.
- Changes in course requirements.
- …all of the changes in the course requirements.
- Prerequisites!! [May refer to the number required.]
- Too many changing policies on degree plan requirements. Lack of clarity in explaining policy changes and how they affect students’ degree plans.
- Too many Education courses. Some of the courses could easily be combined into one.
- Also, all the fieldwork for the education classes. There should be a limit required.
- Some courses are not at all useful to my degree.
- Something else is not having all paperwork or requirements because we aren't informed about such things. Communication is key.
- [Too many] prereqs, deadlines.
- Having to pass the THEA exam to continue on with my certification courses.
- Degree plans too long!
- Catalog changes in the Geology department. [Minor]
- I am currently an Education major, and I just find it very hard that there are so many classes and hours (i.e. approaches that you have to take) and it's time consuming.
- The number of classes needed to graduate in 4 years is too many unless one attends summer classes.
- [Being required to] take your approaches separately.
- Keep adding in courses every semester/year to degree plan.
- Hours to take for your degree. In order to graduate in 4 years, one has to take, at least, 15 hours a semester and take summer courses. People need a break. Order of pre-regs = we have to take classes in a certain order, and if the class fills up, then you have to wait till next semester.
- Too many of the classes are doubled with the same information. Three classes could be rolled into one. It is a waste of money for students and waste of time. The unexpected changes in classes being accepted by transfer [is also a barrier].
- Too many classes [required for degree]. Having to take summer school [to graduate faster].
- Not willing to compromise with take prerequisites at the same time as my final classes (approaches). Therefore, I may be left behind a whole semester or two.
- ...the increase in credit hours needed to graduate. Also many students enter UTSA as an undecided/undeclared major. When the major is decided, there are a number of classes needed to complete the major that it takes more than 4 years.
- Change of majors.
- The [large] amount of classes we have to take to graduate.
Professors

(COB Class)

- Staying in a course due to professors saying that the student can catch up, when the student knows it is not possible…and failing.

- [Too much] emphasis on research rather than teaching can potentially affect the success of future UTSA students…should not lose sight of the most important aspect of any university- the student body.

- Crappy politics and history teachers for core classes.

- Some classes are taught in a format that doesn’t require learning. This will cause people to not learn or to forget material quickly.

- …professors who teach introductory classes like the students are supposed to already know the material.

- Even though students are allowed one year to appeal a grade, most professors will not change the grade because it looks bad on them.

- Teachers who are not good at teaching or those who are more focused on their research.

- Bad professor communication; 2 tests per semester!

- …no good feedback from instructors and overload of information. No dedication or interest from the teachers to help the student….Sometimes, the teacher only takes into consideration the tests for final grades [and not homework, etc.].

(COLFA Class)

- Certain professors and their [poor] teaching methods.

- …inconsistency in professors’ abilities to educate…several take no time in explaining course material.

- One of the barriers that are preventing students [from graduating] is the run around faculty gives you. Pay more attention to your students and their needs.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Finding a professor to do independent study is very difficult.
- Finding a professor to do an independent study.
- Senior Seminars without #@!&#%! Liberal professors and communists!
- In class participation negatively affecting grade.
- Professors are sometimes unable to teach anything because of the language barrier.
- Professors who only come into the classroom to teach...if professors made themselves readily available, more students would be comfortable about approaching them.
- The professors don’t take the time to help students bring up their grades; therefore, GPAs stay low.
- Closet racism. Some instructors, even in this day and time with all the different nationalities attending school, seem to always find a way to say how stupid some scholars find the Indian and Black race[s].
- A lack of faculty unity in regards to supporting the students as a whole. It would be helpful if the faculty of each department could come together once a year with the students to help on degree plans, class choices and grad. school.
- Limited access to instructors ([need] feedback, tutoring).
- Lack of pride on behalf of the professors (some) toward the school.
- ...certain professors believing they are the only class you are taking in a semester; some need to re-evaluate their curriculum.
- Teachers not giving enough extra credit to help a student in need.
- ...some professors here at UTSA accept bare minimum effort.
- Unfair professors. Some professors find it necessary to try and stump students.
- I feel that a barrier to my graduation is a lack of relationship between student and teacher. I feel teachers do not care enough about their students.
- I think that many professors don’t have the greatest tools of teaching [refers to techniques].
- [Need] better professors.
- I also think an average student is a “B” student; and because the way the school is written, professors are giving more “C’s” (average now) than “B’s” ....
- Weeding out classes. Professors have the idea that it is fun to make classes as hard as possible. Those types of professors should choose another line of work because teaching is not for them.

- The lack of professors that want to see students succeed and will help them in any way possible to ensure they are confident in their classes, major, etc. Professors who do not offer help or advice outside of class and grades are very discouraging and make it feel like graduating is almost impossible.

- Another barrier is professor office hours. They are normally only one hour, and it is a hit or miss chance that you get to talk to them.

(COS Class)

- ...I wish the final course grade did not hang in the balance of the final exam. Even if [I] show in attendance everyday, study continuously, and ask for help...just the pressure of one exam determining my semester's grade is difficult.

- ...change in professors. For some of our courses, we don't have much to choose from [professors] already and we try to carefully choose an instructor that teaches well. There are many math teachers that either don't teach well or make a course horrible to go through and it is extremely crucial to have a good instructor.

- I had a professor...for two different classes. One class I failed and the other one I had to drop. Certain professors teach one way but test completely opposite.

- ...professors lack of caring whether students succeed or not. There are two things I have noticed in my upper division math classes: many professors will walk into class on the first day and never ask if anyone comprehends—then they give no feedback on extremely difficult tests, or many professors cannot speak English very well and are impossible to understand. I have been very frustrated...I see my classmates struggling just like me.

- Hiring unqualified professors.

- Teachers’ lectures don’t coincide with test material.

- Every semester, I seem to have at least one instructor who does not teach well.

- The new generation is dealing with more stress and [it] seems teachers and professors are demanding more.

- My Chem. II teacher was terrible.

- I was not prepared by most of my professors. Meaning, everything was multiple choice or I’m given the answers to the exact test the day before.

- [Poor] quality of professors.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

(COE Class)

- [Poor] faculty (7 responses).
- [Some] professors are indifferent.
- Some of the faculty do not teach their courses well.
- Professors who lie, cheat and blackmail.
- Cars/projects, professors making too much work for what the class is worth.
- Teachers that cannot speak English, [offer] no partial credit, poor UTSA Math department.
- Bad grading done by certain teachers.
- Bad grading.
- Availability of the teachers, not enough support, ratio of many students to 1 teacher.
- Professors that teach one thing and test on another. One thing is that some professors just don’t know how to teach the material. There are good professors and then there are bad professors.
- Teachers are not organized, easily confused.
- Substandard lab TAs; Project Planning/Senior Design needs to be geared toward connecting students with sponsors and mentors that can help them with their future employment, not just with faculty who want their own personal projects worked on.

(COPP Class)

- Professor attitudes DT versus 1604 [may refer to one group having poor attitude compared to the other].
- The professors deciding who they want in the program, and if they don’t like you, F and out of the program.
- One barrier is not receiving exam grades back from the professor sooner than later. This semester all my professors are taking 1 ½ to 2 weeks before returning exams.
- Professors who have no clue on what it takes apart from academics.
- Several instructors are not taking the time to meet with the student in order to help in what they [students] can do…to make a better grade, or tutoring.
(COA Class)

- I think we need more variety of teachers to be able to choose.
- Not enough encouragement to students [from professors].

(COEHD Class)

- My Stats teacher—Professor Kennedy—who doesn’t grade fairly nor does she clearly explain the material needed to pass my tests.
- Teachers. [Refers to poor ability.]
- Professors not caring!
**Policies**

(COB Class)

- Not meeting deadlines; not being able to drop a class and failing.
- Drop date is too early in the semester.
- I believe it’s unfair that you can’t drop individual classes at any time during the semester. This is only hurting the students and making it difficult to graduate.
- Having to drop all classes after a certain date when you only want to drop one (also goes for GPA barrier).
- …the drop system…there needs to be more time for upper classmen, not just freshmen to decide whether or not they want to stay in their classes.
- Not being able to drop one class only at the end of the semester.
- Dropping same courses again in order for grade not to be part of your GPA.
- [Not] allowing grade to substitute completely if a student has to retake a course.
- [Should] replace the “F” (not average of the F and new grade).
- Not being able to replace a grade in class if you take it again.
- …counting classes that we failed after they are retaken if I understand the system right.
- When you fail a class and retake it, it doesn’t replace, it averages. So if you make an “F” the next time you have to make an “A”.

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With the new rules implemented regarding dropping classes and the new rule of which you retake a class and they don’t drop your old grade and replace it with the new but average the two together, some students were perturbed by this (me).

Not knowing you have only one semester after to retake a class and replace the grade.

…I think if students fail a class and then retake it and make a higher grade, the high grade should replace the “F”, not be averaged with it.

[Disagree with] 3-peat Policy.

If you drop a class 3 or more times, you have to pay more.

One of my friends is graduating late because…not all of her classes transferred.

Getting billed for a course twice once you’re taking it for the third time is extreme. Sometimes you are just trying to raise your GPA but you can’t because of the additional fee.

[Needing] extra money to retake classes.

If you try to focus on separate classes and realize that you can’t take a class twice without paying extra. [Refers to giving more attention to one class resulting in a low grade in another and believing there is an additional charge for a 2nd retake.]

The way they calculate it [may refer to Grade Replacement Policy].

There is no uniform grading system for all classes.

GPA standards are not very “high”. A “D” can be counted for credit…where other institutions require a “C” or above for credit.

Do not like how the school has some of the procedures, according to calculating GPAs.

Some students prefer to take 12 hours a semester because…it is easier to maintain a higher GPA….This prolongs the time needed to graduate…

[Poor] grades.

Your GPA is the most difficult thing to fix…Once your GPA has taken a hit you have to get two good grades just to rectify one bad grade.

(COLFA Class)

GPA requirements. Registration holds.
- GPA cautions.
- ...bad policies in degree plans.
- I think that an important factor for timely graduation is communication issues between community colleges and universities. After transferring, some classes do not transfer with the student [student participated in a 2 + 2 program].
- I feel they should not be taken with such a bureaucratic manner in terms of which ones are permitted [transfer courses].
- The biggest hindrance is having too many core courses. I took a lower division art class, which I felt was completely useless.
- Having a class taught by a doctor [Ph. D.] who leaves then is replaced by a non-doctorate individual and being told you have to repeat the class over because it wasn't [taught] by a doctor.
- Transfer credits [not being accepted].
- Issues with transfer credits and pre-college exam grades.
- ...I do think it should be a little easier to transfer in. I know of many people who lost a lot of transfer hours and had to retake them. It should be, at least, allowed a better chance at an appeal.
- Being stricter about transfer credits than other “higher ranking” institutions.
- Another problem would be making everyone’s core requirements the same. Why does a Communications major need 2 sciences?
- I was on a 2 + 2 program. However, once I arrived, I found “Oh no, my degree plan was changed” so that added an extra year of classes, going full-time.
- ...all the classes I took at SAC in order to be able to transfer to UTSA that were taken off the required list after I had already taken them!!! wasted so much time and funds.
- Attendance and lack of professors using online resources (Web CT). Many professors keep extensive attendance records and will take off 10 points from the final grade for 2 or more absences.
- Core courses have no relevance to my direction for a career.
- As a transfer student, I never know which of my non-UTSA credits count toward common curriculum or my major....
- I transferred in and lost upper division credits...
- Difficulty transferring courses from other institutions [refers to acceptance of credits].

- When someone’s GPA is low you generalize why it’s low. There are not only kids going to college. Then, you suspend up for a year when we have responsibilities.

(COS Class)

- Another issue that I find to be very stupid is having to repeat a course…students having to pay more money to repeat this one course.

- …Certification process [is halting student progress]. A student must have completed 9 hours at UTSA before being able to apply to the Certification Program. Students transferring over with their core requirements complete are unable to progress in the Certification Program, for the second set of classes are restricted. [Student transfers to UTSA and in their first semester, takes the first set of cert. classes totaling 6 hours. The student loses a semester of progress because they need 9 hours to take the second set of cert. classes.]

- The school’s requirements for what exactly a free elective is—is dumb and not fair….a free elective should be FREE and you should be allowed to use any course as a free elective. I’m a statistics major and all stats majors are being told that their free electives can only consist of classes where statistics is “actively” applied…we are restricted to only taking business, engineering, psychology and health…we have to take extra classes, even though, we may have other classes we took [thinking they] would count as free electives.

- I am prior military, so I have taken courses from several colleges. Few of my classes transferred here. NO credits were transferred for previous Biology classes I had taken, not even the lowest level courses. A MAJOR set back considering I am a Biology major. Other universities seem to be more accommodating to veterans with concern to transfer credits…we have little control over our home of record while serving on active duty.

- My credits did not all transfer from junior college and Texas A&M.

- …students that transfer usually lose about a year of school because not all credits transfer.

- MBRS-MARC program is great, but the qualifications and terms to get in are insane!

- Attendance should be mandatory.

(COE Class)

- More requirements of unimportant classes such as English, History, Government and writing component classes, and knuckleheaded advisors that won’t accept equivalent classes taken during first degree at another university.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- …transfer of courses and paperwork to get classes accepted.
- Transfer red tape.
- Credits not transferring for degree holders.

(COPP Class)

- UTSA doesn’t accept many [transfer] credits because they are not so called “upper division” yet the class structure/learning is the same if not less here.
- Also many students have to wait an extra semester to graduate because UTSA does not take [transfer] hours toward degree plan.

(COA Class)

- [Student on Academic Probation] I am on the verge of flunking out every semester even though I have yet to fail a class in my new major. This, to me, is a terrible, unfixable reality. I wish I could only be considered for the classes pertinent to my current major.

(COEHD Class)

- Not having the ability to take a pre-req with another course. [May refer to concurrent enrollment. Prerequisite with required course.]
- Also, I think they should allow D’s to count toward credit for your major. If you make a D, you still pass the class yet you don’t receive credit for it! That’s unfair.
- Attendance. Too strict of rules for some (less than 2 absences for example).
- Limits on amounts of scholarship money deserving students may receive.
- If you are a transfer student, the hours lost when transferring from a different institution [is a barrier].
- With my transfer from another 4-year college, I have retaken 3 classes that I should have had credit for.
- [Need to] accept courses past 20 years.
- There are lots of hours that seem unnecessary for your degree like 2 histories, 2 politics and 2 sciences.
- Transfer equivalency, acceptance, etc.
Support Programs

(COB Class)

- Initiatives to help freshmen are important but there are lots of others- transfer students, for example…

- GPA and retention issues can be addressed with higher quality teaching faculty and intervention programs when possible.

- Not looking for tutoring when you need it.

- [Lack of] tutoring.

(COLFA Class)

- Not all classes have SI or appropriate tutorials. One of my psychology classes, Theories of Learning, does not have SI or tutors to help on the subject. Making study hours for tutors a bit more flexible like on weekends or late at night [would help].

- [Lack of] information on disability services (psychological disabilities).

- References to professionals in the field in question [major] would also help.
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation-Appendix

- Have the library open at all hours to include the [computer] labs to fit any student’s schedule.

- The library has NO new resources. All this money on construction but no new books for research. Which one is more important?

- …when Web CT is not used [in] the course, it is very difficult to get notes and assignments from other students.

- Not enough guidance in early collegiate career towards choosing a major that maximizes skills and reflects interests. This leads to changing major one or more times, making completion more difficult.

- Could you please offer a workshop [on APA format]?

- One of my main concerns is the COM lab hours. The lab is open during times that other COM classes are going on. There are very few courses that require you to use the MAC lab and not a PC. This is very frustrating when you are trying to complete an assignment on time but have to sacrifice not attending another class.

(COS Class)

- Not many tutors for upper level courses or recitation for upper level courses.

- Need more places for tutoring and need qualified tutors that care to help people.

- No peer grouping in this class. Students come here [to] experience the “college life”, no studying.

- Need more SI.

- Students should be given an interest survey when they begin their freshman year. This survey would allow the student to determine what career or subjects they might be interested in studying.

- Not enough graduate fairs or guest speakers in class to give people career ideas.

- The laboratories are extremely inadequate.

(COE Class)

- [Lack of academic] support system (5 responses).

- Most important, support system for the course (i.e. Structures needs tutorial section by the teachers).
The transition from high school to college contributes to the time spent in obtaining a degree. Helping students with that transition through advising and support could facilitate their college career.

Language barrier.

(COPP Class)

- Tutors in the Tomás Rivera [Center] not having the proper training to tutor.
- If you being college without a specific major in mind, there is very little help available…to assist in your decision [about a major].

(COA Class)

- I think we need to have mandatory internships in the summer, where they [UTSA] help us get one.

(COEHD Class)

- Not enough knowledge of resources on campus.
- …SI meetings. These are not very “working student” friendly. [Refers to times sessions are held.]
Graduation Initiative’s Research on Barriers to Graduation

May 2008
Identifying the Problem

The purpose of our research was to develop a deeper understanding of the barriers facing UTSA students and the context in which those barriers existed. Research was based upon a grounded theory approach in which we began with observations and looked for themes and patterns among the various observations. We then triangulated the emerging themes with both available data and further interviews and surveys.

From our research, we identified five common themes that were regularly voiced by informants in each of the seven colleges. Theses themes were:

1. Problems with academic advising
   a. Student dissatisfaction
   b. Inaccurate advice
   c. Access and availability
   d. Lack of consistency
   e. Unworkable structure
2. Student underpreparation
   a. Academic preparation
   b. College literacy ("college knowledge")
3. Course availability
   a. Infrequent course offerings
   b. Shortage of faculty
   c. Shortage of classroom space
4. Reliance on adjunct faculty
   a. Impact of part-time faculty on learning
   b. Need for pedagogical training
5. Cost of education
   a. Increasing cost of tuition and fees
   b. Impact of employment on education
   c. Excessive levels of student loan debt

Type of Research

- Primarily qualitative and exploratory
- Very general research question: “What barriers do students encounter in pursuing their degree?” This was often followed by “What affordances aid students in successfully achieving their degree?” if there was time.

Sampling & Informant Identification

- Available subject sampling for students.
- Purposive sampling for faculty and staff, specifically those with significant student contact or those having responsibility for establishing academic requirements, providing instruction, or both.
Data Sources
We gathered data from a variety of sources, including surveys, personal interviews, available records, published survey results, and national standards.

Surveys and Interviews
We conducted many individual interviews of faculty, staff, and students. We also conducted several surveys of students to expand the volume of data gathered.

Faculty Feedback
Fall 2007
n=196
Focused on tenured and tenure-track faculty members. Included some full-time adjuncts. Spoke with faculty from every department and also spoke with department chairs in all colleges except for Honors.

Student Feedback
We collected data from students using many different means. Students were surveyed, interviewed, and participated in focus groups. In addition, students participating in Graduation Initiative programs provided feedback on barriers they encountered.

Freshman Seminar – Fall 2007
n=770
Selected comments (many positive, few problems):
• Having problems with advising, getting different answers, problems unsolved

Sophomore Reclamation (Dialing for Freshmen) – Summer 2007
n=237
Selected comments:
• Couldn’t see advisor because of work schedule
• Requested change of major, but was not done
• “Advisors didn’t know what to do with me”
• Advisors are always helpful
• Only problem is with advising
• Had trouble getting to see advisor
• Having trouble making appointment to meet with advisor, unable to register
• Had trouble talking to advisor, was turned away

2002 Late Intervention – Spring through Fall 2007
n=138
Selected comments (from single college):
• Frustrating experience with advising, was told all student needed was online when met with advisor
• Walk-hours for advising not convenient
Graduation Initiative’s Barriers to Graduation—Appendix

- Long wait times for appointments
- Got bad advice on what classes would count towards degree
- Holds not being removed after requirements met
- Make multiple appointments to ensure will be able to get in to see advisor
- Inability to get appointments
- Not working with advisor because gets too many different directions from different advisors

2001 Late Intervention – Spring 2007
n=80

Focus Groups, Student Meetings, and Classes – Fall 2007
n=603
Various focus groups and meetings with student organizations or major specific classes:
- COA – Class (25)
- COB – Student organization (20)
- COE – Student organizations (23+27=50)
- COEHD – Classes (50+20+22+50=142)
- COEHD – Student organizations (5)
- COEHD – Student surveys (205+17+35=257)
- COLFA – (9)
- COPP – Class (20)
- COS – Student organization (58+17=75)

Published Surveys and Available Records
We reviewed published survey results as well as other relevant documents to provide a more complete picture of academic advising at UTSA over the past decade. These sources appear below in reverse chronological order.

Student Satisfaction Inventory – 1998 & 2003
n=not reported
In 2003, UTSA compared the results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) conducted at separate times – 1998 and again in 2003. While overall satisfaction with academic advising showed improvement from 1998 to 2003, it remained a significant concern with students in that the satisfaction levels fell below expectations. Further, UTSA’s 2003 results for academic advising fell below that year’s national average for all institutions reporting results.

NACADA Consultant Bureau Report – March 2005
This was a consultant-conducted business process analysis of advising at UTSA “...to determine what we should improve and should we raise fees to hire more staff.” Source of the reference to the academic advising organizational structure as “unique (if not puzzling).”
Graduation Task Force Barriers Study – Spring 2006
n=712
Students from upper-division courses were asked a single question: “What do you perceive as barriers to your or your friends’ graduation here at UTSA?” Students could identify one or more barriers in their response. Every student surveyed provided a barrier that fell into one of the top three categories:

- Course offerings/availability
- Conflicting priorities
- Academic advising

General Concerns
- 48% of students who reported academic advising as a barrier stated that they had received incorrect information from academic advisors in their college, particularly due to lack of knowledge of the degree plan.
- Inconsistencies between advisors within the same center, as well as inconsistencies between centers were also reported to cause graduation delays.
- Students reported numerous times that they did not have access to their advisors, because of the center’s advising schedules.
- Another concern would be the reports of advisor indifference students experienced, stating that advisors were not helpful at all and did not seem to care to help students.

Concerns within Specific Colleges
- Students within the College of Sciences reported that academic advisors for their college did not know the degree plans for their majors.
- A number of reports from students in the College of Liberal and Fine Arts stated that advising was inconsistent among these advisors, often citing advisor turnover.
- College of Education and Human Development students reported conflicting information received from these advisors and other colleges’ centers.

UTSA Graduating Student Survey – Fall 2007
n=587
Selected results (combination of agree and strong agree on a five point scale). Results are averages across all college advising centers.
- 70.8% – Provided accurate information
- 62.5% – Provided help in exploring educational goals
- 59.7% – Provided help in thinking through educational choices
- 56.8% – Were accessible and available when needed
- 61.9% – Provided sufficient time to discuss issues
- 61.7% – Over all effectiveness (on a four-point scale)
NSSE – Fall 2003 and Fall 2007

Following table shows comparative NSSE results on the “Advising Experience” question for the UT component institutions drawn from the 2007 NSSE survey. NSSE national averages for 2007 were 76% (First Year) and 69% (Seniors).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UTA</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>1071</td>
<td>1129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>92.1%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTB</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTD</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>1168</td>
<td>1320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTEP</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>1019</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTPA</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>1228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTPB</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTSA</td>
<td>64.6%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>1097</td>
<td>1220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTT</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From: UT System Accountability and Performance Report 2007-2008 (p. II.2.9).

UTSA senior responses to selected NSSE questions (including “Advising Experience”) ranked below the average of responses from peer institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Survey of Student Engagement 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Responses, Good or Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would Attend Again (Yes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UTSA selected the following universities as peers for comparative purposes:

- California State University-Fresno
- Eastern Michigan University
- University of Nevada-Las Vegas
- University of Memphis
- University of North Texas
- UT Dallas
- UT El Paso
- Texas Tech University
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee


**Advisor Headcount**

Seeking to determine how UTSA compared to other universities, we looked at the ratio of students to academic advisors across UT System components and national recommendations from NACADA. Comparative UT System ratios appear in the table below, while NACADA recommends an approximate 300:1 student to advisor ratio (Habley, 2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th># Advisors</th>
<th>Students / Prof. Advisor</th>
<th># FTE Advisors</th>
<th>Students / FTE Prof. Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UTA</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>108.4</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTE</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTC</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTEP</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTPA</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTPB</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>614</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTSA</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>80.2</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTT</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Average</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UT System Academic Institutions, THECB

Addenda: 2006 Barriers Study Comments on Advising

The following responses were provided by students in the 2006 Student Perceptions on Barriers to Graduation Study conducted by the Graduation Task Force. In this study, students from selected upper-division courses were asked a single question: “What do you perceive as barriers to your or your friends’ graduation here at UTSA?” Responses were categorized into a range of themes with the top three (most responses) focusing on (a) course offerings/availability, (b) conflicting priorities, and (c) academic advising.

Reproduced below are comments from student respondents to this survey dealing with academic advising. These are grouped by the source of the comments (if the comments came from an upper-division Business, Engineering, etc. class).

**COB Class**

- Failure to communicate with advisor about what courses are needed, what courses would not be used [may refer to lack of communication by or to the student].

- [Advising] services and accessibility.

- Advisor sometimes do not know or give you the right information.

- Lack of proper advising; every advisor tells you something different.

- I personally feel that there is a poor system at UTSA to help students progress through education. The 1st problem is that student counseling [advising] is terrible. I went to advising every semester…and was told something different.

- Sometimes insufficient counseling [advising]; their limited times aren’t all that great either.

- Do not really like how the advisors advise.

- Not knowing you need a 2.5 to declare a major; not knowing you need certain classes to declare major. Both resulting in delay of graduation. Not taking enough hours.

- …I would definitely say the advisors! Lack of proper communication from advisors; any new amendments to the degree plan being followed are not being conveyed to students.

- Counselor [advisor] oversight.

- I had a friend who wanted to graduate and got held from graduation because a math class was overlooked and the class wasn’t offered until the fall.

- No good counseling [advising] or incorrect classes taken.

- Sometimes the advisors in the dept. don’t communicate with each other or keep up with the new policies enough. Many of my friends had to delay graduating or didn’t have
enough time to receive a teaching certificate before graduating because of different advisors telling students different things.

**COLFA Class**

- I think it would be helpful if freshmen had a mandatory conference with a counselor to outline exactly what classes and prerequisites are needed. This would help students plan their schedules, help them avoid taking courses they don’t need, and in my opinion, speed up graduation. …get helpful feedback from the advisor about what direction to go in.

- When at a junior college, I was working a 2+2 program and was supplied a “degree plan” for my chosen degree/major. After transferring, some classes do not transfer with the student.

- …I have had 4 different advisors because of their leaving UTSA. I visit and communicate with my advisors regularly and when a new one comes in, it’s like starting all over. Or even more frustrating is when the new advisors don’t get back to you timely because they don’t know you or your plans or because they are too busy because they are filling in for others who are out….

- The school changes which classes you have to take. One day your advisor may say you only have to take classes A, B, and C and the next time you go into see him/her, they’ll change their mind and say that classes B and C you didn’t have to take because now the requirements have changed. You have to take classes D and E. I have a lot of friends who have had graduation delayed because of this.

- One of the major barriers that I’ve noticed is that many students are unaware of the courses that they need to take for their majors.

- Also meeting with…academic advisors is impossible.

- Maybe having an online system that can tell us what classes we still need to take, a checklist that updates when we finish a semester [Recommendation].

- …not enough access to counselors [advisors]…. 

- Confusion about the progression of courses.

- I think that UTSA does a poor job of informing students about graduation events or requirements. What are the exact procedures??

- [Dis]comfort with competence of advisors (being set back because took wrong classes, etc.).

- Some times, over the years, some advisors may tell you that you need specific courses and then you take them and find out later that they don’t count.

- Advisors don’t tell you the correct info. (sometimes).
The advisors here at UTSA don’t take the extra time needed to inform students on how to graduate sooner.

Inept advisors who mislead you about classes.

Sometimes difficult to get answers quickly in areas concerning requirements for graduation.

When you are an incoming freshman, the advisors persuade you to take 12 hours instead of 15. This automatically puts you on a 5 year plan.

Having to deal with advisors that confuse things more. Bureaucracy.

…the revolving door of advisors that I have encountered since I have been a student at UTSA…Being my own advocate and keeping record of all my discussions with advisors has led to me graduating this May.

COLFA advisor doesn’t know a thing about the education certificate I am trying to get. Therefore, I am always spending my time either in the COLFA Advising Office or the Education Advising Office. It seems like the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing.

Also, the advisors for COLFA are not helpful AT ALL. In my experience, the advisors only make things worse.

Not knowing exactly what classes to take….

The advisors’ lack of knowledge of the courses needed for graduation.

Not sufficient or adequate access to advisors—too many students, too few advisors.

[Need] more meetings with advisors to discuss graduation requirements.

The advisors!! Each time I go to an advisor I find that not only do I have a new advisor, but I also find that I need yet another class to graduate that was never mentioned previously. Or, I find out that I just took a class I didn’t need but was told I should take by a previous advisor. My graduation has been delay[ed] a year because of this.

Advisors not knowing all the information and misinforming students.

Advisors are getting harder to get a hold of because of their hours.

Having to speak with an advisor. I work full-time and come to school full-time. I wish we got emails or something that would let us know the classes we need to take to graduate, or if we [could] email advisors….
• …getting advised wrong OR getting advice from the university advisor that doesn’t really fit degree plan.

• [Need] maybe more emphasis and individualized attention from advisors to graduate. Big problem: inconsistencies with advisors. Advisors change all the time. Inconsistent, some times not knowledgeable.

• Difficulty in meeting with COLFA advisors for some majors.

• Advisory mistakes.

• For me, my advisor is not helpful at all, and I’m in the dark about classes I need to take or so on.

• I also think that the undergraduate advisors need to be easier to make an appointment with.

• …lack of communication between student and advisor….

• Advising. Some [advisors] aren’t aware of opportunities.

• The main problem is the advising staff inaccurately informing students of which classes to take and which classes count or don’t count for certain requirements. Also, there is little cohesiveness among advisors. For example, when a new advisor is hired…they have been very vague in their explanation of courses, etc. Thus, leaving me, the student, confused about the meeting….

• Bad advice from counselors [advisors]!!

• Advisors in COLFA office not giving proper information…I was told by my advisor that Electronic Media was learning web design, which is NOT true. Tech. Communications is web design. After realizing that, I had to add Tech. COM to my degree plan.

• Instability as far as who my COLFA advisor is.

**COS Class**

• …hindering the graduation rate, is improper advisement. Transferring over from a community college, I first consulted my academic advisor for guidance….He advised to only take 12 hours per semester…the only semester which was discussed was the one I was enrolling for. When meeting with the advisor, I specifically stated I wanted to get my degree in math with certification. I was advised to follow the Mathematics Concentration degree plan…Upon careful consideration; I decided to meet with the advisors from the College of Education. …the advisor informed me that I still needed to take …hours from the General Mathematical Studies even if I obtained the Mathematics Concentration Degree. Obviously, the advisors from the College of Education and the College of Science do not communicate with each other.
• …the incorrect information given to students from advisors. Most times I have visited an advisor I was given conflicting information. EX: Mathematics major and teaching certification requires College of Science and College of Education. They need to communicate better.

• Here, I have to make an appointment to speak to an advisor, write down my questions, I have a time limit, and many times they can't answer all of the questions I might have. It just seems like they are there because it is their job and that is it. Many times, the secretary is rude and uncaring.

• …even though I provided the course descriptions and had the chair of the Applied Math dept. give me indications that he would give me credit for some of my math classes, this “secret” advisor for the education math dept. decided that I could not transfer any of my EGR [MAT] classes.

• The main barrier for students in Chemistry is the counselors [advisors] and the lack of knowledge of the courses….

• Some students have no guidance….

• …advisors who do not work closely with their department is also a problem.

• SCIENCE ADVISING CENTER has no idea what our degree plan is, so cannot answer questions on what to do next.

• ADVISE! We need someone that knows what we need in order to graduate. We can read a book, too. But we need someone that knows about all the departments and their requirements and STOP! Blaming others. We need them to know what is going on….

• For me, it was initially being misadvised….

• Advising inconsistencies (HUGE).

• Advisor to Chemistry does not understand degree plan.

• There is a lack of communication and organization between the chemistry department and college of science.

• The lack of science advisors familiar with chemistry courses and ability to aid students in choosing classes and planning.

• The “take your basics first” approach isn’t very conducive to graduating in 4 years due to the prerequisites.

• It is not helpful when you go to one counselor [advisor] to get info. and then, a little later, another counselor tells you something different.
…the lack of advising to help guide the students in the right direction. As a transfer student… I finally found the information needed to graduate in my degree plan on my own.…

And the advising center clearly has no idea how to “advise” the students. They are more detrimental than anything else because they have no idea what is required to achieve the degree.

Advisors not knowing all details and at time of graduation, all of a sudden, find another course!

Advising needs to know the standards, meaning, all advisors should know exactly what students need or not for their degree.

I would like to see that UTSA can, at least, improve their advising with more helpful, detailed advising for students.

Too difficult to meet with advisors (appointments always full).

No direction. Need better advisor to assist.

Advisors aren’t thorough, seem impatient! We lack guidance.

Not enough emphasis on core classes. Advisors are not as helpful as they should be. Basically, students have little or no guidance.

Poor advising—ineffective course description by advisors with bad schedule layouts. The advising is counter productive in building knowledge in a cumulative manner.

[Should be] a required meeting twice a year with the advisors. I’m not pleading ignorance, but I’ve only seen an advisor twice.

Also, the advisors push us to graduate on 5-year plans, so UTSA gets an extra year’s tuition (I’m not stupid!).

…my experience with advising has been a bit of a runaround (with the exception of Ross Julson @ DT campus).

Advisors are advising us to take classes that would be helpful, rather than what is needed.

The advising here is useless.

Different counselors [advisors] tell you different things. My roommate went to a counselor to withdraw [from] a class and later found out he withdrew her from the university.

**COE Class**

[Poor] advising (12 responses).
- Advising—[advisors] didn’t tell what to take other than major [courses].

**COPP Class**
- I would like to see more counsel for graduating seniors. Making sure all their classes are being met. That would be beneficial for the last 2 semesters. I had advising as a return student and ended up taking a class I didn’t need, which was bad for me since I don’t receive financial aid or student loans.
- Another barrier I encountered was misinformation between the counselors [advisors] and the graduation office.
- Transfer credits counting as different courses each time I meet with the [advisor].
- …lack of proactive counseling [advising].
- Last minute classes that your (our) advisors fail to tell us that we need to have instead of letting the student know during their senior year.
- The advising center is working well, but I received better counseling [advising] at SAC than I did here. They seemed more willing to get involved and find out what I really was interested in. Anyway, UTSA is a great school.
- Until Monica left, I would have said poor academic advising. Students who attend DT only, having to go to 1604 for advising. Advisors not being able to tell a person which classes will classify for other majors.
- Walk-in advising times are not very flexible. CRJ advisors are not all willing to talk/discuss matters which are important to students even when a walk-in schedule allows a maximum of 20 minutes per student.
- Lack of information. Counselors [advisors] are not very helpful in educating students on how the system works.

**COA Class**
- A need for more advisors (at least, within the architecture department).
- [Need] a clear explanation of what is necessary to graduate (i.e. what courses, deadlines to be met, etc.).
- Students who are thinking of quitting…usually don’t have anyone to turn to. Sometimes, it takes weeks and weeks to talk to any type of counselor [advisor].

**COEHD Class**
- UTSA Counselors [advisors]. I think that many of them advise you wrong. Lack of information.
• UTSA needs better advisors for each major because one advisor will tell you one thing and another advisor will tell you something else.

• Advisors giving incorrect or not all information needed to meet requirements.

• I’ve had advisors give me incorrect information that caused me to stay an extra year.

• Not having time slots for all students at the advising office. Advising officers telling students different things.

• The advisors should focus more on the students that are near graduation (Juniors and Seniors, instead of Freshmen). Also they should inform us about the upcoming classes that we need in order to graduate.

• Incorrect information from advisors or not complete information from advisors.

• I perceive lack of communication or knowledge between students and their advisors. I have visited my advisor once every semester since I have been here and found that they did not inform me with the correct information….regarding my graduation course requirements.

• Also, the student advisors are not up to date on individual plans. Sometimes, they don’t know what classes should be taken.

• Advisors not advising so well.

• My graduation has been delayed due to improper advising….I filed an appeal to take the approaches blocks together, it was denied (although many people I know are doing it). I, now, have 9 hours in the fall and 6 in the spring.

• Unfair advising. Tell one student one thing, hold back others.

• Advising is horrible! [So,] I don’t get it at all.

• ADVISING terrible for COEHD…they are horrible.

• A barrier to my graduation has been insufficient counseling [advising]…my counselor has limited hours and it is difficult to see him when I am available too.

• Advisors are too busy to deal with me (I’m graduating—SUPPOSEDLY—in 2 semesters). Audits take too long prior to graduation.

• The advising staff is my biggest pet peeve because every time I go, I talk to a different advisor with different information.

• Most counselors [advisors] are not very helpful in giving the facts and assisting students to take the classes they need.
Freshman Advising Proposal

- Advisors making you take classes you don’t need.

- ADVISING!!! Every time I go and ask a question, I get a different person and a different answer. If they do answer my question, it is something I already knew or could have figured out on my own.

- Bad advisors.

- I believe one of the reasons why students don’t graduate in 4 years because some of the advisors can mess you up. They don’t tell you that you have to take certain classes to get into other ones, so that pushes you behind.

- Don’t feel they were advised properly. (Should take degree plan and do exactly the courses the paper states without being advised.)

- ADVISORS! Number of unnecessary classes that I was told to take from advisors.

- The Education advisors. They never know anything and have put all of us on the wrong degree plans!
Freshman Advising Proposal:

A Plan to Strengthen the Freshmen-Sophomore Connection

Submitted by Joan Tsacalis and Barbara Lamont

May 28, 2008

Intention

This document summarizes the services and programs offered by the Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center which positively impact the transition of freshman students to their respective colleges. Included in this overview are future recommendations and systematic strategies for enhancing and strengthening this transition and reinforcing the identity students have with their colleges and the university.

Freshmen advising will be examined through three broad lenses: communication, training, and programming.

Background and Current Service Delivery

The Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center was formed in fall 2002 in order to provide comprehensive services for declared majors with less than 30 hours and to firmly establish a direct connection for freshmen to their respective colleges. Prior to this time, all freshmen were advised in the Tomas Rivera Center regardless of major, undecided status, or admission status. Presently, the Tomas Rivera Center advises undecided or provisionally admitted students, whereas, the CFAC advises the remaining declared students or those students who are undeclared within a college. The guiding principle for CFAC advising practice is reflected in the following mission statement:

The Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center (CFAC) offers ethical, empathetic, and accurate academic advising to all UTSA freshmen who are undeclared within a college, have a declared major, or who participate in the University of Texas at Austin Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP). Our advisors are dedicated to providing students with tools for academic, professional, and personal success in an environment that fosters diversity in thought, purpose, and scholarship.
Freshman Advising Proposal

The Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center serves approximately 5914 students (based on current enrollment statistics), including 68 majors, 35 BA, 15 BFA, 15 BBA, 19 BS, and an average of 1000 CAP (Coordinated Admissions Program) students with the University of Texas.

Advising services are delivered by means of both appointments and walk-ins throughout the year along with small group advising by college during freshmen orientation. Appointments can be made one day in advance and the average wait time to see an advisor during a walk-in period is 10 minutes. Each CFAC advisor is assigned to a college as a liaison and specializes in the majors housed in that particular college. There are four COE/COS advisors, four COLFA advisors, three COB advisors, two COEHD advisors, and one COA/COPP advisor. The number of advisors deployed to each area is calculated given the freshmen enrollment by college (see UTSA Fall 2007 Enrollment Data) providing for an average advisor: advisee ratio of 1: 375. In 2007, the CFAC advisors saw 3856 students at freshman orientation (see student feedback results attached), and an additional 9953 students as both appointments and walk-ins at the CFAC from 1/1/2007-12/30/2007.

Because first year students have many developmental and transitional needs, all CFAC advisors are cross trained in all majors in the first 30 hours so that they may be prepared to furnish counseling for the large number of first-year major changes, Texas Success Initiative students, and for specific college policies. Last year, the CFAC processed 1489 major changes, and advised 1600 students one or multiple times deemed “NCR” (Not College Ready) across all majors. Cross training eliminates the need for constant referral to other offices and enables CFAC personnel to provide accessible, comprehensive service while also offering major-specific advising via the college liaisons.

Communication

The CFAC college liaisons receive information from our partners in the college advising centers in a variety of different ways: attendance at staff meetings, emails, college advising center websites, and the collaborative training-immersion program,

Advisor Swap, whereby CFAC advisors spend a work week at the college advising center of their specialization, in order to enhance their knowledge of degree plans, degree audits, and college-specific policies and procedures. In addition, the college center directors have also sent college center advisors
to the CFAC in order to learn more about first year students, TSI, freshman orientation, and UT CAP students.

Thirty advisors have participated in some aspect of the Advisor Swap. CFAC advisors reported increased learning about degree audit, advanced prerequisites, and graduation processes. Upper division advisors learned more about freshman orientation, first year retention programs and file documentation (survey data Fall 2006-Spring 2008).

While the communication between the CFAC and the college advising centers is well established, improvements can be made in the consistency and regularity of the communication:

Some colleges regularly include freshman advisors in staff meetings and some do not.

- It is recommended that CFAC advisors attend advising center staff meetings with regularity, and that college advisors or designated representatives have scheduled attendance at the CFAC staff meetings. It is also recommended that meeting agendas and/or minutes are exchanged between college centers and CFAC staff.

Both college-advising center personnel and CFAC personnel have attempted to meet with department chairs in order to strengthen existing ties to faculty, with success in some areas, and not in others.

- It is recommended that the CFAC director and corresponding advising center director have a regular meeting with department chairs and/or associate deans at least once a semester.

CFAC advisors administer several retention programs for freshmen students, but program data by college hasn’t been widely available to interested academic parties.

- It is recommended that CFAC will work with Executive Director’s office or some other reporting body to establish reporting schedule by major for programs like mid-term maintenance and probation recovery in order to communicate key academic
Freshman Advising Proposal

Information like GPA, academic status, and math readiness of freshman students to advising center directors, department chairs, associate deans, and deans.

Training Theory

Established in 2002, the Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center’s (CFAC) training and professional development program has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of the university’s missions and goals. With that, of course, come those areas that are unique to academic advising both at the freshman level and as college liaisons. To assist in building a program to fit the needs of an expanding freshman advising center, CFAC references Virginia Gordon and Wesley Habley, experts in the vast academic advising field.

In one of the most well-read and respected chronicles in the field Academic Advising – a Comprehensive Handbook, Gordon and Habley suggest there are three components of effective academic advising training programs:

1. **Concept** College freshmen are a unique population with many universally similar characteristics and traits. As such, CFAC advisors possess a strong foundation in student development theories and processes and are well-versed in the personal, social, career, and academic issues that impact this group. Additionally, as recommended by Higginson, “advisors should remain cognizant of institutional trends and issues in order to provide students with relevant information and support” (p. 303). For example, at UTSA, foremost on many agendas are retention issues and topics related to student success.

2. **Information** According to Habley, “the substantive information falls into four groups – the internal environment, the external environment, student needs, and advisor self-knowledge” (p. 303). Built on the premise that a well-trained advisor makes a more informed advisor, the CFAC’s new hire training program is an intensive and collaborative initiative that incorporates the broad knowledge base and experience of the entire team.
3. **relationship** The advisor-advisee relationship, founded on trust, incorporates both conceptual understanding and informational resources (p. 306). There are no shortcuts. Effective communication is essential, and students must feel fully supported by academic advisors who are well-trained and committed.

With advisor commitment, according to Higginson (p. 305), comes accessibility. During the CFAC training program, emphasis is placed on the absolute necessity for putting the student first. The turnaround time for returning phone calls and e-mails is generally no more than 48 hours even during the busiest times. Despite the fact that the CFAC declared and UT Austin Coordinated Admissions (CAP) program student population exceeds 6,000 freshmen, these students do not need to wait for several weeks to schedule an appointment.

**CFAC New Advisor Training**

Every new advisor is assigned a mentor – an experienced veteran who is the primary point of contact during the training period. For three weeks, the new advisor receives individualized training on modules that cover topics such as “the colleges” (majors, minors, major-specific, math and prerequisite requirements), undergraduate credit limitation (the 45/30-hour rule), 6-drop policy, TSI policies and procedures, UT Austin Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP), and outreach programs such as Chaparral Village Advising, SWAP (with the colleges), and Sophomore Transition.

Cross trained in the majors offered at UTSA and the health professions at UTHSCSA, the CFAC academic advisors possess a wide knowledge base. College liaisons, in particular, become experts in their areas and are the point of contact and reference for the other CFAC advisors. Their on-going collaboration with advisors in the colleges insures that information exchanges are current and flawless. The college center directors, advisors, and students have come to expect that the CFAC staff not only appropriately advise students during their freshman year but also provide them with learning assistance resources. Students who deviate from recommendations, change majors, and/or are not prepared to meet minimum requirements and prerequisites are exceptions.

Following this intensive introduction is a two-three week period when a new advisor observes walk-in and appointment sessions with students. During this time, the advisor and his/her mentor discuss the
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advising session and, at a mutually agreed upon time, the new advisor begins advising under the guidance of the mentor.

Once the mentor and associate director ensure that the new advisor is comfortable in his/her role and has mastered the necessary academic advising skill set, the advisor is prepared to advise solo.

Throughout this period, new advisors are also trained by systematically and diligently reviewing students’ files, both real and “mock.” A variety of advising scenario is posed, addressed, and discussed – always with the mentor and often with other advisors, new advisors, and/or the associate director who is responsible for the training program.

File Audits

Monthly file audits of every academic advisor are conducted as part of the CFAC’s continuing efforts to insure that its training and development program meets the highest standards. Four files per advisor are selected randomly and reviewed for both administrative and academic advising errors. Results are addressed individually and, if necessary, as a team during regularly scheduled staff meetings. CFAC advisors had less than 1% error rate last year across all advisors.

Academic Advisor SWAP

Implemented by the CFAC to enhance cross training, and further cement college liaison relationships, SWAP participants share advising experiences and gain additional knowledge of college degree requirements, policies, and procedures. Depending on the length of the SWAP, commitment of the college directors, and nature of the duties, advisors are trained as if they were hired to advise in that particular college.

The summer SWAP experience has been particularly enlightening for the college advisors whose previous exposure to freshmen was either very limited or non-existent. They were shocked to discover just how unprepared these students were in many cases and how much information needed to be
disseminated during the orientation advising session. Parental involvement was also a common factor that college advisors rarely experienced.

**College Liaisons**

An essential component of the CFAC’s on-going and current training is the information that is collected and disseminated by the CFAC’s college liaisons. Information of immediate importance such as the addition of math classes during summer orientation/registration is communicated immediately while routine information such as changes in the 2008-2010 catalog may be disseminated during a CFAC staff meeting.

**COLLEGE TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS**

While the CFAC’s training and development program has increased its efficiency and effectiveness over the years, there are always opportunities for improvement and innovation. In fact, some of the recommendations to follow will fall as a natural extension of this training and will, with the collaboration of the college directors, further enhance and strengthen the connections between the CFAC and the colleges.

**College of Architecture (COA) and College of Public Policy (COPP)**

- CFAC liaison will be added to COA distribution list to improve communication
- CFAC will forward weekly staff meeting notes to CFAC liaison and downtown director
- Extensive COA and COPP training for new advisors will be conducted at the Downtown Undergraduate Advising Center
- Additional training on how to complete COA and COPP degree plans will be provided on an as needed basis
- CFAC liaison will attend COA and COPP advising meetings and retreats
- COA and COPP experienced in degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
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- CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed

**College of Business (COB)**

- Extensive COB training for new advisors will be conducted at the COB undergraduate advising center
- Additional training on how to complete COB degree plans will be provided during the extensive training
- CFAC liaison will attend COB staff meetings
- COB advisors experienced in degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
- CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed

**College of Engineering (COE)**

- Extensive COE training for new advisors will be conducted at the COE undergraduate advising center
- Additional training on how to complete COE degree plans will be provided on an as needed basis
- COE advisors experienced in degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
- Continue to participate in SWAP
- CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed

**College of Education and Human Development (COEHD)**

- Extensive COEHD training for new advisors will be conducted at the COEHD undergraduate advising center
- Additional training on how to complete COEHD degree plans will be provided on an as needed basis
- COEHD advisors experienced in degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
- Continue to participate in SWAP and staff meetings
- CFAC director will accompany COEHD director to departmental meetings
- CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed

**College of Liberal and Fine Arts (COLFA)**

- Extensive training will be conducted at the COLFA undergraduate advising center
- Additional training on how to complete COLFA degree plans will be provided on an as needed basis
- COLFA advisors experienced in degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
- CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed
- Continue to participate in SWAP and staff meetings
- CFAC liaisons will meet COLFA undergraduate faculty advisors
• COLFA advisors will provide additional PSY and COM training (2010-2012 catalog)

**College of Sciences (COS)**

• CFAC liaisons will attend staff meetings as necessary
• COS advisors experienced in degree plans and degree audits will provide training to the CFAC liaisons
• Continue to participate in SWAP
• CFAC liaisons will assist with preliminary degree audits, semester-by-semester plans, and other administrative tasks as needed

**Additional Training Recommendations**

According to King, the primary goal of an advisor training program is to increase the effectiveness of advising services provided to students, thus increasing student satisfaction and persistence (p. 290). However, in her (1993) article “Adviser Training in the Community College,” Portia Weston suggests additional outcomes for advisor training that include, but are not limited to:

- Enhanced communication between faculty and staff
- Creation of a more student-centered institution
- More collaboration and less barriers between academic, student affairs, and administrative divisions
- Validation of academic advising contributions to the university

**Programming**

In addition to orientation advising programming, the Colleges’ Freshman Advising Center provides a number of additional retention and special-population programs offered to freshmen along with programs offered jointly with the college advising centers and the Tomas Rivera Center. The programs are listed below accompanied by brief descriptions, along with success highlights.

1. **Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP):** approximately 1000 students served; joint program with UT Austin; students must earn 3.2 GPA for 30 hours of approved college coursework in order to transfer back to UT Austin; 49% of 2007 cohort met criteria to transfer back
2. **Mid-term Maintenance Program:** alert sent to freshman students falling below 2.0 at midterm; 1983 declared freshman students fell below 2.0 Fall 2008 midterm; 724 students were seen by CFAC; 71% of those seen showed GPA improvement when final grades were posted.
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(3) **Sophomore Day (offered with Tomas Rivera Center):** partnership with college advisors for freshmen transitioning to sophomore status featured guest speakers, college center advisors, lunch with faculty, information packets, and refreshments; 800 students attended; 99% rated event as good or excellent (Fall 2007).

(4) **Residence Hall Advising:** offered each week throughout long semesters and special night sessions during peak registration times; 20 students per session (Spring 2008).

(5) **Classroom Outreach:** CFAC advising personnel visit core and developmental classes for general pre-advising questions; 30-50 visits: WRC 0103, WRC 1013, WRC 1023, MAT 0203, MAT 0213, RDG 0113, at 1604 and DT campuses.

(6) **Career Services Workshops:** 16 students attended Spring 2008; majors included CRJ, BIO, POL, BUS.

(7) **TSI Compliance:** 20% freshmen are not TSI compliant, and an additional 10% are not college-ready for math, i.e. passed THEA but do not have necessary cut scores or placement to get into college level math.

(8) **UT Tele-campus:** CFAC assures TSI compliance for students taking classes via Tele-campus.

(9) **Residential Learning Community Advising:** oversee advising of declared students in both learning communities and residential learning communities.

(10) **Other Special Populations:** GATES students, Upward Bound Students.

Programming common to all advising centers include student open house, majors fair, advisor swap, roadrunner days, and “meeting of the college” at freshman orientation.

In order to further enhance the students’ connections to their college advising centers and the faculty who teach them the following program improvements are proposed:

- **Reinforce freshmen to sophomore connection through innovative use of registration holds, leading students to faculty members and college advising centers early and often.**

  A. College of Science has approved hold for students with GPA less than 1.0
  B. Students at 30 college hours must see faculty advisors, enforced by faculty advising hold
C. New Admissions standards for COE and COS may create opportunities for advising and enrollment tracking, i.e. COE advisors see freshmen who are placed into MAT 1214; CFAC advises all other COE freshmen “pre-majors”

D. Required pre-advising for all freshman COE majors with specified liaison personnel

- Provide added incentives for students who attend events like sophomore day, i.e. advanced registration.

Global Recommendations and Steps Forward

Building upon the strong connection CFAC shares with the college advising centers is one key way to help students feel engaged in their colleges. It is important to recognize however, that freshman students often take time to reconcile both major and career choices, calling for comprehensive and flexible service for the first year. Alongside students who are exploring, advisors also see students who are confirmed and academically prepared for their original major selection. Our current model provides for both students, and is reflective of a developmental approach and respectful of individual differences.

In addition to professional advising (CFAC and college), other components of the college, such as faculty mentoring, course offerings, and course availability strengthen the extent to which freshman students identify with their colleges. In order to strengthen the connections to the colleges, it would be helpful if each dean communicated his/her freshman support needs directly to the CFAC. Additionally, the 2005 NACADA Consultants’ report included faculty mentoring, advising as part of new faculty training, the formation of an advising senate comprised of faculty and staff, and revival of the University Council for Academic Advising. These are all significant collaborations transcending faculty-staff lines, providing for a global approach to helping students, and a more unified advising and retention effort.


Weston, P. “Adviser Training in the Community College” In M. C. King (ed.), Academic Advising: Organizing and Delivering Services for Student Success: New Directions for Community Colleges, no. 82. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1993.