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January 18, 2011

AVC BARBARA SAWREY
Academic Affairs
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Subject: Report of the Undergraduate Academic Advising Implementation Team

Dear Barbara:

On behalf of the Academic Advising Implementation Team (AAIT) I am attaching a proposed implementation plan to address the recommendations contained in the 2010 Undergraduate Academic Advising Task Force (AATF) Report. You will recall that the AATF report contained recommendations in several areas:

- Improved Communications
- Improved Use of Technology
- Improved Training of UG Academic Advisors
- Reduced Bureaucracy
- Curriculum Streamlining

Understanding that our advisors provide an essential service, our approach was to think about the assignment from the perspective of our students (how can we provide the information that's needed most effectively and in a timely way), as well as from the perspective of our advisors (how can we design a system that reduces time spent on mundane or bureaucratic processes and increases time available for productive personal contacts with students). To understand how best to proceed we talked with colleagues along the entire spectrum of the advising function— frontline and management, both in the colleges and in the departments— individually, in groups, or by survey. We also talked with colleagues in key central offices, solicited best practice information from sister campuses, and we scoured the advising websites of other institutions. We learned much and, with the exception of the Curriculum Streamlining item that is being addressed by the academic departments, we have identified initiatives in each of the recommendation categories. The most significant of these are to:

- Establish a college/department advising council that would function similar to the Academic Business Administrator group to facilitate communication within the group and between the group and key campus partners, and to provide a supportive networking and development environment for our advisors.

- Establish a virtual academic advising center that would provide a one-stop-shop for entering and continuing students, providing easier access to various advising resources. [Note: Any work in this area should ensure that web pages are accessible to students and others with disabilities.]
- Ensure the availability of more consistent and robust training and developmental opportunities designed to upgrade the professional skills and workplace experience for academic advising staff. Rejuvenating the stalled Academic Advising Certificate Training Program should be a high priority.
- Identify funding/staffing resources to expand and maintain technological solutions including process automation and consolidated resources.

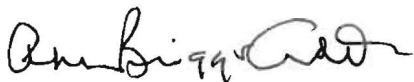
With respect to Curriculum Streamlining we join the Academic Advising Task Force in asking that academic departments be encouraged and incentivized to appropriately reform the curriculum, given its direct relationship to the advising function.

We expect that implementing these initiatives will lead to a more effective undergraduate academic advising function, but we see them as the beginning of a process of continuous improvement in this area. We have included details of these and other ideas in the attached plan.

With respect to next steps, we advise that under your leadership the AAIT continue to play a role in overseeing the implementation of AAIT initiatives and the development of the UAAC. As a first step, because of the expanded role, we suggest that the group adopt a new name—the Academic Advising Steering Committee (AASC).

I'd like take the opportunity to express my sincere thanks to you and to my AAIT team members. It was a rewarding experience working on this project. Please let us know if there are questions.

Sincerely,



Ann Briggs Addo
AVC Academic Affairs

Attachment

cc: M. Española
S. Harlow
N. Hartley
K. Johnson
Y. Lin