

Academic Advising + Career Development= the Key to Student Success

Creating an Informational Bridge for Students between Academic and Career Advising

Cross-Training

Suggestions below are designed to help academic advising and career staff expand the breadth of their knowledge to create bridges for students between academic and career goals.

Roundtable/Brown Bag -- Sponsor an event where academic advisors, career coaches, and faculty share:

- What they wish students knew about how, when, and why to reach out.
- What information would you most like your colleagues to know about your work with students?
- What knowledge or preparation best serves students before a visit.
- What are the referral best practices that would help you help students better? What can your colleagues say in addition to “ask your advisor” or “ask your career coach”?
- What questions are students asking you?

Peer Observation -- Find a half day to observe your career or academic counterpart during student meetings (with student permission).

- What is the “insider information” that the advisor shares with students?
- What is the student experience of the meeting -- what is the occasion for the meeting, the problem to be solved, and the take-away?
- What is the pattern of the meeting? What can you glean from the content and narrative of these sessions to better prepare students for referral?

Class Observation -- Are there key classes your students ask about or that you struggle to explain, whether from the academic or career perspective? Can you speak with faculty about observing a class section to get a better sense of the content, teaching goals, and classroom community? Occasional observation of different classes over a period of time can enrich discussions with students about course content and transferrable skills relevant to educational and career plans.

Application in Career and Advising Meetings

- **Rich Referral** -- Point students toward academic and career advising with an explanation of the expertise of that office and what students can prepare or bring to maximize the meeting. What can they ask for and expect? What can they learn?
- **Name the Transferable Skills** -- Collaborate to establish where and how students use transferrable academic and career skills to navigating the university and name them in discussion with students. Contacting faculty about potential classes and opportunities *is* networking.
- **Map Career and Academic Accomplishments Together** -- Career and academic advisors can collaborate to establish a working list of the kinds of academic projects and courses that students should document as professional experience on resumes. Use this information in academic and career advising to help students establish the link between academic and career skills and craft the academic experience as a professional achievement.

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Collaborative Messaging

Team up with your counterpart in academic or career advising to contextualize student-facing information in terms of both academic and career goals; make implicit connections between academic and career planning explicit for students. Here are a few opportunities to collaborate in student-facing information:

Office-to-Office Referral -- Referrals offer the opportunity to prepare students to transition between offices proactively with clear expectations and preparation. What do you know about this student that they should share? It's also an opportunity to explain how academics and career connect. What would your counterpart like you to share with students when referring them to career or academic advising?

Publicizing Events -- When publicizing or discussing campus events, connect transferable career and academic skills that students may already have mastered. Networking at a job fair is like networking with a guest lecturer or contacting a professor. Resume writing skills draw on the same intellectual work a writing a convincing paper with strong evidence for a specific audience.

Group Advising or Events -- Collaborate and tackle issues from both the academic and career side: What are transferrable skills and how do students build and document them? How do students build professional experiences for their resume from their academic and co-curricular work? What skills do students learn in a major and in specific coursework; how do those skills apply in other fields and workplaces?

Classroom Visits-- Consider making collaborative classroom visits in required classes for majors to explain how students can use both career and academic advising as part of their holistic development. Where can both advisors do to support students' plans and interests?

Career Classrooms -- Academic Advisors can visit career classes to help facilitate student and career instructor discussions about how to connect academics and career development.

Email -- Regular calendar announcements can be connected to both academic and career development:

- Academic Advisors -- involve your career counterpart in announcements about class choices, speakers, academic events, and honors to contextualize these topics with messages about how they are meaningful in career terms.
- Career Advisors -- Involve your academic advising counterpart in outreach for career fairs, site visits, professionalizing experiences to discuss how classroom and co-curricular involvement can help them prepare for and engage in these opportunities.
- Reach out to student groups and create student-facing information about the professional and academic skills that student will learn through these organizations; do work with major organizations to publicize how extracurricular opportunities can enhance career and academic development.