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Using Academic Advising To Increase Motivation And Engagement In First-Year College Students

Lisa Remsing
Wayne State University,

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**USING ACADEMIC ADVISING TO INCREASE MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT
IN FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS**

by

LISA M. REMSING

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2013

MAJOR: INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Advisor

Date

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Elizabeth and Anthony Remsing,
who taught me the importance of hard work and education.

Thank you for your love, unwavering support, and encouragement to
aim high and achieve my dreams.

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I have many people to thank, those who provided guidance, support, friendship and even sacrifice to see that I finish this study. I will forever be grateful to those that joined me on this journey and cheered me on through the finish line. My life is forever changed thanks to these kind and selfless individuals.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	xi
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Purpose and Research Questions.....	3
Theoretical Perspective.....	4
Epistemology.....	5
Definition of Key Terms.....	6
Assumptions.....	6
Potential Limitations.....	6
Rationale and Significance.....	7
Summary.....	8
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	9
Motivation and Motivational Design.....	10
What Motivates College Students.....	11
Positive Sense of Self.....	11
Perceived Academic Control.....	14
Social Engagement and Sense of Belonging.....	16
Student Satisfaction.....	18
Academic Advising.....	20
Types of Academic Advising.....	22
Student Preference in Advising.....	25

Summary.....	28
Chapter 3 Methodology.....	29
Research Design.....	29
Setting.....	30
Population and Sample.....	31
Data Sources.....	33
Data Collection Methods.....	34
Phase 1.....	34
Phase 2.....	35
Phase 3.....	35
Phase 4.....	36
Data Analysis.....	36
Internal Validity.....	39
External Validity.....	39
Summary.....	40
Chapter 4 Findings.....	41
Phase 1.....	41
Instrument Design.....	47
Phase 2.....	61
Student Surveys.....	62
Advisor Journals.....	64
Student Interviews.....	66
Researcher Journal.....	71
Conclusions for Phase 2.....	72

Phase 3.....	78
Student Surveys.....	79
Advisor Journals.....	81
Student Interviews.....	82
Researcher Journal.....	86
Conclusions for Phase 3.....	87
Phase 4.....	88
Student Surveys.....	89
Advisor Journals.....	91
Student Interviews.....	92
Researcher Journal.....	97
Conclusions for Phase 3.....	98
Comparison Among Phases.....	99
Selecting Courses.....	100
Personal Relationships.....	100
Goal Setting.....	101
Summary.....	102
Chapter 5 Discussion.....	106
Research Question 1: What motivates and engages first-year college students?.....	107
Theme 1: Selecting Courses.....	107
Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship.....	108
Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals.....	108
Research Question 2: What impact does academic advising have on the Motivation and engagement of first-year college students?.....	109
Theme 1: Selecting Courses.....	109

Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship.....	110
Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals.....	111
Research Question 3: What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of college freshmen?.....	112
Theme 1: Selecting Courses.....	112
Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship.....	112
Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals.....	113
Research Question 4: What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?.....	113
Theme 1: Selecting Courses.....	114
Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship.....	116
Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals.....	117
Limitations.....	118
Significance of Study.....	119
Implications for Instructional Technology.....	119
Motivational Design.....	120
Advisor Training.....	122
Suggestions for Future Research and Instrument Redesign.....	124
Instrument Redesign, FACT.....	124
Instrument Redesign, First-Year Advising Syllabus.....	125
Summary.....	127

Appendix A: Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), Part V.....	128
Appendix B: First-Year Advising Syllabus.....	131
Appendix C: Advisor Journal Feedback.....	135
Appendix D: Student Interviews.....	140
References.....	156
Abstract.....	162
Autobiographical Statement.....	164

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Research Design.....	38
Table 2: Summary of AAI Results: 117 Student Responses.....	46
Table 3: Phase 2 Student Survey Results.....	64
Table 4: Phase 2 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary.....	71
Table 5: Summary of Design Change Based on Feedback in Phase 2.....	76
Table 6: Phase 3 Student Survey Results.....	81
Table 7: Phase 3 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary.....	86
Table 8: Phase 4 Student Survey Results.....	91
Table 9: Phase 4 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary.....	97
Table 10: Summary of Design Change Based on Feedback in Phase 2 through Phase 4.....	102

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: AAI Results: Developmental/Prescriptive Advising (DPA) Scale.....	43
Figure 2: AAI Results: Personalizing Education (PE) Scale.....	44
Figure 3: AAI Results: Academic Decision Making (ADM) Scale.....	45
Figure 4: AAI Results: Selecting Courses (SC) Scale.....	46
Figure 5: FACT Questionnaire.....	53
Figure 6: First-Year Advising Syllabus, advisor role article.....	55
Figure 7: First-Year Advising Syllabus, student role article.....	56
Figure 8: First-Year Advising Syllabus, academic goals articles.....	57
Figure 9: First-Year Advising Syllabus, first-semester timeline and course selection articles...	59
Figure 10: First-Year Advising Syllabus, updated timeline and checklist.....	73
Figure 11: First-Year Advising Syllabus, updated final page.....	74

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The transition from high school to higher education is often a traumatic time for adolescents (Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, Clifton & Chipperfield, 2005). This age group has different motivational needs, as they are developing autonomy and self-efficacy in an unfamiliar academic environment. The fear of failure can be overwhelming, which may significantly affect a student's confidence and overall motivation (Perry et al., 2005). The freshman year of college is a critical time when students most often make the decision to stay enrolled or withdraw; where foundations for effective learning are established, and a time when universities can make the greatest impact on retention (Tinto, 2007).

Among current research on motivation of early college students, a trend has emerged around social belonging, active participation, regular peer interaction, and learner autonomy (Lynch, 2006). First-year students are less likely to realize their own academic strengths and weaknesses, or understand that they are no longer passive learners. Many freshmen have not yet grasped the need for autonomy at the collegiate level. First-year students may lack confidence in their academic abilities, and are motivated extrinsically by grades and the need to please their parents (Lynch, 2006). In response to these findings, Lynch (2006) suggested that universities and faculty members must work at making students more self-aware of their abilities and weaknesses, and establishing effective study strategies. Researchers agree that colleges and universities must provide motivational instruction to students early in their college careers, since the transition can often be traumatic and learning patterns of this age-group can still be influenced and changed (Perry, Stupnisky, Hall, Chipperfield & Weiner, 2010).

Suhre, Jansen, and Harskamp (2007) suggested several implications for practice for universities, faculty, and academic advising. Advisors can influence student motivation by helping students set obtainable educational goals, and designing instruction around student

strengths and interests. Distribution of study load is also important, as classes arranged in a block structure allow students to concentrate on only one subject, which contributes to more effective study habits and regular academic progress. Finally, it was recommended that setting clear study behavior expectations at the very beginning is important to creating student motivation. Advisors and faculty should also provide plenty of information about a student's chosen major and profession at the very beginning of the freshman year, to prevent discouragement from not being able to immediately apply the knowledge being learned (Suhre et al., 2007).

“Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience” (Light, 2001, p. 81), and if done well can add value to a student's college career (Light, 2001). Academic advising can have a significant role in providing the motivational strategies first-year students need for success (Tinto, 1993). Effective academic advising plays a crucial part in referring college students to resources and opportunities that “support their engagement, success, and the attainment of key learning outcomes” (Campbell & Nutt, 2008, p. 4). Advising can contribute to student motivation and overall success by setting high expectations, providing academic and personal support, offering meaningful feedback, and through frequent student contact (Tinto, 1993).

Statement of the Problem

According to ACT Educational Services (2010), the average first to second year retention rate at U.S. colleges and universities is 66.7%. More than one-third of college freshmen will not progress to their sophomore year. As of February 2012, 17 states including Michigan have proposed higher education performance funding models, which directly correlate state funds to student retention and graduation rates (Jesse, 2012). Retention is vital for universities to maintain prestige, quality, and financial stability (Gupta, 1991). As higher education continues

to suffer from diminishing resources, there is a heightened focus at both institutional and state levels to increase retention and graduation rates (Tinto, 2007). Competition is increasing among colleges and universities, and there is strong public demand for the accountability of tax dollars (Elliott & Healy, 2001). Such funding issues will continue to put pressure on universities to implement programs aimed at retention of undergraduate students. Schools are beginning to understand that it may be less costly to invest in current students, than to expend extra resources to attract new students (Elliott & Healy, 2001).

Research shows that student motivation and engagement are key factors in academic persistence among college freshman (Lynch, 2006; Perry et al., 2010; Suhre et al., 2007). Academic advising offers interpersonal interaction with a caring adult (Wade & Yoder, 1995) and connects students to essential services on campus (King, 1993). Researchers have explored various factors that may relate to academic advising, such as applying the ARCS model to advising, or regular online interaction through social networking and email (Kim & Keller, 2008). Motivational design is the process of arranging resources as a catalyst for change in an individual's motivation (Keller, 2010). John Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design is an application-focused theory that provides a systematic approach to instructional design. Motivational design can be utilized in educational settings to improve student's motivation to learn (Keller, 2010). Motivational design applied to academic advising practices may promote increased motivation and social engagement among first-year college students. An increase in motivation and engagement through academic advising may positively impact first-to-second year retention rates for students enrolled in the School of Business Administration.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this design-based research study was to document the design, implementation, and evaluation of a motivational-based academic advising intervention for first-

year students in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What motivates and engages first-year college students?
2. What impact does academic advising have on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students?
3. What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of college freshmen?
4. What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?

Theoretical Perspective

My study was conducted from the Symbolic Interactionism perspective, as I understood that college students have different meanings of *academic success* and *motivation* based on their interaction with family, previous educators and their community. Symbolic Interactionism is the understanding that an individual's culture, personal relationships, and social interactions shape the way one sees themselves, others and the world. Individuals place meaning on items, or create significant symbols based on these social interactions (Crotty, 1998). I sought a motivational intervention that embraced and suited these individual interpretations.

The methodologies used in this study were survey research, phenomenological research, and design-based research. I used cluster sampling to collect survey data from Business students who attended mandatory new student orientation over the summer before their freshman year. I also surveyed and interviewed freshman students who came into the Office of Student Services for advising during the fall semester of their first year. Advising is not mandatory, so the sample consisted of only those students who voluntarily came in to see their advisor. I had

the academic advisors keep reflective journals, to collect honest data on their lived experiences with the advising intervention as it happened throughout the semester. I then reviewed all qualitative data to search for themes. I took an iterative approach to the research, design, implementation, and evaluation of the motivational academic advising intervention for first-year students in the School of Business.

Epistemology

I followed a constructionist epistemology, as I believed a student's first-year college experience is greatly shaped by their unique backgrounds and cultures. From the constructionist perspective, meaning is not discovered but rather constructed. There are no absolute truths, rather truth is interpreted, is highly contextual, and relative to the situation (Crotty, 1998). I approached this study with the assumption that there is no one right answer to be found. The conclusions of the research were based on the findings from the specific students, in the specific academic program, at the specific university I was studying. The perspectives of the students in this study were based on numerous factors such as family upbringing, background, culture, religion, and social interactions.

Definitions of Key Terms

There are a few higher education related terms that may need defining in order to get the full understanding of this study. This research revolved around the use of *academic advising*, which is the guidance and planning of courses in order to meet educational goals. Academic advising can also include career counseling and personal counseling on occasion. Academic advising can be conducted by professional advisors or faculty, but this study was focused on the role of professional advisor (Common Data Set Initiative [CDS], 2012).

This study used the terms *freshman* and *first-year student* interchangeably, but literature also uses the term *FTIAC* (first time in any college). This study focused on first-year college

students who had not previously enrolled in any college or university. The term *matriculation* refers to a student who is admitted and enrolled into a degree seeking program, rather than just taking classes with no end goal in mind (CDS, 2012). The students in this study were matriculating students.

The purpose of this study was to research the potential impact of academic advising on the motivation of first-year students. *Motivation* refers to what people desire, choose, and commit to do (Keller, 2010). It explains the goals that people set for themselves, and how actively they pursue those goals. *Motivational design* is the “process of arranging resources and procedures to bring about changes in people’s motivation” (Keller, 2010, p. 22).

Assumptions

In this study, I made the assumption that the survey and interview participants were random, and was a fair representation of the general population of freshman students in the Business school. It was assumed that student participants were first-year students, and answered questions truthfully without feeling pressured by peers or the researcher. Similar assumptions applied to the academic advisors who were asked to keep a reflective journal throughout the study. It was assumed that they would answer honestly about their job responsibilities and their perceptions of the effectiveness of the advising intervention. They would feel comfortable in answering truthfully, and would not feel pressure from peers or superiors to answer in any certain way.

Potential Limitations

There were some potential limitations anticipated in my study. First, I realized that I was studying a small group of students in one academic program, at one university. My research was narrow and bounded. There were also time limitations to my study. I planned to do designed-

based research, and I expected there may be time limitations in completing any and all necessary iterations of the project.

Another potential limitation I anticipated resulted from the survey and interview data collection methodology. By conducting a second survey and optional interview of only students who voluntarily came in for academic advising, I could have been missing a piece of the target population. Advising is not mandatory, unless a student is on academic probation. Therefore, advisors see many highly motivated students who take the initiative to see an advisor, and those that have academic probation holds based on low grades. Despite these limitations, I attempted to get a fair and valid sample of my target population.

Finally, motivation and engagement are only two factors that impact freshmen retention. There are many factors that were not addressed in this study. It was difficult to isolate the variables of this study from the many other factors that impact academic success among first-year college students. Factors including academic preparation, financial stability, family support, and work hours can have profound effects on the first-year experience. In addition, academic advising is only one way of reaching and impacting these students. Admittedly, other freshmen success strategies such as peer mentoring, social networking and learning communities were not the focus of my research.

Rationale and Significance

Retention of high quality students is not only a financial necessity to universities, but also directly impacts academic prestige and overall program quality (Gupta, 1991). According to ACT Educational Services (2010), the average first to second year retention rate at American colleges and universities is 66.7%. More than one-third of college freshmen do not make it to their sophomore year. In addition to the financial benefit to the university, attainment of a college degree is key to student success, and contributes to a functioning local community, a

skilled workforce, and a sustainable economy. College graduation rates have significant impact for individuals and society as a whole.

There has been significant research conducted on motivation and motivational instructional design. However, far less research exists on the motivational potential of academic advising. Academic advising is a complimentary service to which all first-year college students have access. Academic advising may be the first and only interaction a freshman student has with a caring adult, which has been shown to be an important relationship to first-year students (Wade & Yoder, 1995). I hoped to narrow this gap in research by exploring the connection of motivational design to academic advising, and the potential impact this connection has to first-year student success.

Summary

College retention is important to students, universities, and society as a whole (Gupta, 1991). Research shows that first-year students are often most vulnerable to dropping out of college, and have a unique set of needs to ensure success in their freshman year. Motivation and social engagement are key factors in academic success, especially during the first year in college (Perry et al., 2005). Academic advising has a significant role in providing students with useful social interaction, and connecting students to important campus resources (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). This literature review and design-based research study explored the use of motivational instructional design in academic advising.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been conducted on what motivates college freshmen to work hard and to surpass the challenges of their first year (Lynch, 2006; Perry et al., 2010; Suhre et al., 2007; Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Among the current research on motivation of early college students, a trend has emerged around social belonging, active participation, regular peer interaction, and learner autonomy (Lynch, 2006). An equally thorough study of motivational instructional design is available in the literature. Motivational design is the “process of arranging resources and procedures to bring about changes in people’s motivation” (Keller, 2010, p. 22). The ARCS Model of Motivational Design is an application-focused theory that provides a systematic approach to instructional design. Motivational design can be utilized in educational settings to improve student’s motivation to learn (Keller, 2010).

The role of academic advising in college student success has been a popular topic of research since the 1970’s. Initial research viewed student success from a psychological stance, that early attrition was directly related to individual characteristics, skills and motivation. It was believed that students who did not remain in college were somehow less able, less motivated, and did not work hard enough (Tinto, 2007). However, in recent years the focus of higher education literature has shifted to institutional responsibility in student retention. The focus has turned to the developmental role of academic advising, with an emphasis on the first-year experience (Tinto, 2007).

Effective advising has an important role in referring students to resources and opportunities that can “support their engagement, success, and the attainment of key learning outcomes” (Campbell & Nutt, 2008, p. 4). Advising can contribute to student motivation and success by setting high expectations, providing academic and personal support, offering constructive feedback, and through frequent student contact (Tinto, 1993). Research suggests

advising can be especially impactful on college freshmen, as their learning strategies can easily be influenced and changed (Perry et al, 2010).

This literature review will focus on the use of motivational instructional design on the advising of first-year college students. In addition to literature on motivation and academic advising, I will review studies on the first-year experience, and how student engagement and student satisfaction can impact persistence and academic success. This review will try to answer the question of what role academic advising has on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students.

Motivation and Motivational Design

Motivation refers to what people desire, choose, and commit to do (Keller, 2010). It explains the goals that people set for themselves, and how actively they pursue those goals. There are many theories used to explain the framework of motivation, including human physiology and neurology, behaviorism, cognitivism, and studies of emotion and affect (Keller, 2010). Motivational design is the “process of arranging resources and procedures to bring about changes in people’s motivation” (Keller, 2010, p. 22). Motivational design involves the following three strategies (Keller, 2010):

- Connecting instruction to the goals of learners
- Providing stimulation and appropriate levels of challenge
- Influencing how learners will feel after reaching their goal or experiencing failure

Keller’s ARCS Model of Motivational Design is based on review of motivational literature and the categorization of motivational ideas grouped by their shared attributes (Keller, 2010). It is an application-focused theory that provides a systematic approach to instructional design (Keller, 2010). The categories include Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction.

Attention includes variables of capturing a learner's interest, and stimulating their curiosity to learn. Attention in a motivational setting is different from that in a learning setting, as it is intended to get and sustain attention rather than directing attention as used in a learning context (Keller, 2010). Relevance pertains to meeting personal needs and goals of the learner in order to affect a positive attitude. Students must understand how the content will meet their individual needs and must feel connected to the setting (Keller, 2010). Confidence addresses a student's belief that they will succeed, and are in control of their academic achievements. Too little or too much confidence can impact a learner's motivation (Keller, 2010). Finally, the category of satisfaction concentrates on reinforcement with both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. If students feel good about a learning experience, they will want to continue learning (Keller, 2010).

Motivational interventions can be contained to only one of the categories of the ARCS model, but often will have several motivational effects. Motivational design is used in any workplace environment to motivate employee performance, or even in coaching sessions to motivate people toward a career path or to increase self-efficacy and self-confidence. Motivational design is also utilized in educational settings to improve student's motivation to learn (Keller, 2010).

What Motivates College Students?

Positive Sense of Self. Self-efficacy is “the learner's belief in his or her capabilities to successfully manage situations that may include novel or unpredictable elements” (Richey, Klein, & Tracey, 2011, p. 62). Situations may include tasks that are new or unexpected, such as those students often face during their first year in college. Self-efficacy is also the ability to effectively plan, organize and complete specific tasks (Bandura, 1986). Students place a greater value on those tasks that they expect to perform well (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is a key factor in student behavior (Richey et al., 2011), and must be carefully considered in studies of

first-year success. The following studies explore the connection of self-efficacy to college student success.

Solberg Nes, Evans, and Sergerstrom (2009) studied the effects of optimism and positive outcome expectancy on college success. They surveyed more than 2,100 students at the University of Kentucky at the beginning and end of their first year, using the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R), which measures positive outcome expectancy. The results of the study proved the hypothesis that optimism is a predictor of motivation and that academically motivated students are more likely to stay enrolled in college. They also found the more optimistic a student was, the more motivation the student possessed to complete difficult tasks, and the less stress they experienced during their first year (Solberg Nes et al., 2009).

Results of their study also showed a positive correlation between academic optimism and cumulative GPA (Solberg Nes et al., 2009). Lynch (2006) found similar results in his study on the correlation between motivational factors and course grades, concluding that college freshmen often lack confidence in their academic abilities and are motivated extrinsically by grades. Through the use of an adaptation of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) given to 500 undergraduates, Lynch (2006) found that self-efficacy and extrinsic goal orientation showed the greatest motivational factors predicting academic success of college freshmen. He found that these students are less likely to realize their own academic strengths and weaknesses, and have not yet grasped the need for autonomy at the collegiate level (Lynch, 2006).

Seli, Dembo, and Crocker (2009) studied perceived self-worth in community college students, by researching the idea of *possible selves* as a motivational design intervention. Possible selves are a representation of what a person might become, aspires to become, or is

afraid to become. Seli et al. (2009) distributed a 53-item survey to 256 students enrolled in a California community college, which assessed self-handicapping behavior, fear of failure, and a student's need for achievement. Students were also asked to complete an open-ended Possible Selves Questionnaire, which asked students to describe their ideal future possible selves. The results confirmed that students with a high fear of failure but low motivation for achievement regularly used self-handicapping behaviors to formulate excuses for poor grades, such as enrolling in too many courses or working too many hours outside of school (Seli et al., 2009). It was concluded that the use of possible selves by instructors or academic advisors may moderate the connection between the motivation to achieve and self-handicapping tendencies, and can allow students to face their fears in a more productive, reflective manner (Seli et al., 2009).

The findings of these studies support the idea of self regulation found in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986). Optimistic learners are more likely than their pessimistic counterparts to be motivated, to persist at tasks, to perform well, and are better at adjusting to difficult situations (Solberg Nes et al., 2009). All are critical predictors of success for first-year college students. Universities must find a way to support motivation, performance and adjustment for first-year success (Solberg Nes et al., 2009). Instructional strategies that include coverage of basic study skills, note-taking, and test-taking tips can be extremely useful in increasing motivation and awareness of college freshmen. These can be covered in the classroom, workshop settings, or during academic advising (Lynch, 2006). Academic advising is also important in helping students select courses that have a manageable work level and degree of difficulty. Careful course selection is needed to ensure the opportunity of decent grades during the first year of college, which has been shown as a strong prediction of academic motivation (Solberg Nes et al., 2009; Lynch, 2006; Seli et al., 2009).

Perceived Academic Control. Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrun, Clifton and Chipperfield (2005) performed a three-year study to research the affect of self-reliance on the success of college students. They studied 524 students at a large Canadian university, using GPA, voluntary course withdrawals, and withdrawal from university as comprehensive, long-term indicators of success. The study measured perceived academic control and preoccupation with failure. Academic control is a student's belief of the causes for their individual success and failure, and the degree to which students feel they can influence their own success. Failure preoccupation refers to the measure of effort students put forth in monitoring the success and failures of their academic achievement (Perry et al., 2005).

It was found that academic control was positively related to GPA, but negatively related to course withdrawal rates (Perry et al., 2005). Similar to findings by Solberg Nes et al. (2009) and Lynch (2006), higher GPA's resulted in lower withdrawal and drop-out rates, and by the end of the three-year study, high control/high failure preoccupied students had maintained a higher retention rate at the university (Perry et al., 2005). The researchers contributed these results to Weiner's Attribution Theory of Motivation and Emotion. Weiner's theory has significant implications for academic motivation, and incorporates variables from cognitive theory and self-efficacy theory (Weiner, 1985). According to Weiner (1985), the attributions for which we succeed or fail affect a student's motivation because they indicate whether or not our academic achievement is controllable. Controllable attributions, such as study habits and expanded effort, can allow students to feel control over their successes and more motivation to achieve. Uncontrollable attributions, such as lack of ability, may cause students to feel less control, and less motivated to succeed (Weiner, 1985).

Perry et al. (2005) found that high control students reflected on internal attributions, while low control students frequently blamed their failure on external, uncontrollable attributes. For students with high academic control and high failure preoccupation, the sense of failure also tends to lead to greater persistence in academic settings. These high control students tend to have a greater sense of self-worth, which leads to greater motivation (Perry et al., 2005). Academic advising can provide guidance to low control students in areas of study habits and organizational skills, to allow students to feel more control over their own success.

Perry et al. (2005) saw cognitive and motivational change programs as necessary in early college careers, in order to change the high-risk, low-control beliefs of some students into high-control, highly motivated behaviors. Perry et al. (2010) agreed that in academic settings, dysfunctional attributional thinking is likely in times of transition, such as the adjustment from high school to college. This type of thinking is characterized by the unfamiliarity and unpredictability that comes from more challenging learning conditions. Differences in study strategies, note-taking, time-management, and autonomy between high school and college can be especially trying (Perry et al., 2010). However, attributions are moldable at this transition stage, so Perry et al. (2010) see a necessity in *attributional retraining* initiatives among first-year college students.

In a year-long study done with first-year college students, volunteer participants attended three attributional retraining sessions throughout the year, at which they completed questionnaires that assessed attributional and emotional measures (Perry et al., 2010). Each session lasted one hour, and included instructional strategies focused on causal search activation, attributional induction, and attributional consolidation. Causal search activation included a brainstorming activity about the possible reasons for success or failure in student's individual

achievement. Attributional induction was comprised of a short video which showed two college students discussing the various factors that could impact their college success. Attributional consolidation included a class discussion, a short aptitude test, and a summary sheet of the video. After each session, students were asked to complete a survey that assessed their emotional and motivational state. Corresponding course grades were also compared throughout the semester (Perry et al., 2010).

The students who participated in the treatment scored 12 percent higher on class tests than their non-treatment counterparts (Perry et al., 2010). Based on survey results, students also began to de-emphasize uncontrollable attributes and began to identify internal attributes of failure and success. It not only impacted the individual course, but students showed marked improvement in all courses during the year-long study (Perry et al., 2010). They concluded that attributional retraining is an effective motivational instructional strategy, especially for first-year college students. It encourages students to take control of their learning, seek helpful cognitive resources, emphasize controllability of performance, and avoid feelings of negative self-worth (Perry et al., 2010).

Social Engagement and Sense of Belonging. Among the current research on motivation of early college students, a trend has emerged around social belonging, active participation, regular peer interaction, and learner autonomy (Lynch, 2006). Studies show that a sense of belonging leads to self-efficacy and positive task-value. Belonging leads to confidence, and a sense of relevance connected to what individuals are learning (Lynch, 2006). Active participation with peers and faculty in the classroom, or in mentoring situations, can increase a student's overall motivation (Keller, 2010). Meaningful interaction and engagement between students and members of the campus community is especially critical during the first year of

college, and for the transition students commonly experience during that phase of their college career (Tinto, 2007).

Several studies have researched the correlation between a sense of belonging in one particular class and feelings of motivation related to that individual class (Freeman, Anderman, & Jensen, 2007; Kim & Keller, 2008). Freeman et al. (2007) conducted a study with three goals: 1) Measure the level at which students' sense of belonging in one class is related to feelings of motivation in that same class, 2) Determine variables that impact sense of belonging in a college environment, and 3) Examine how a sense of belonging in a single class may relate to an overall feeling of belonging at the college or university level. Data was collected from a group of 238 first-year freshmen at a mid-sized southeastern public university, using an instrument adapted in part from the Psychological Sense of School Membership (PSSM), the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), and the Student Perceptions of Learning and Teaching questionnaire (Freeman et al., 2007).

Similarly, Kim and Keller (2008) studied the impact of personalized motivational email messages on motivation, study habits, and overall academic success of undergraduate college students enrolled in a single large lecture class. They created an email campaign that sent regular messages containing study tips that addressed motivation and study skills, to 101 undergraduate students at a public Southeastern university. Kim and Keller (2008) constructed motivational and volitional email messages (MVEM) based on three theories: Keller's Motivational Model, Kuhl's Action Control Theory, and the Rubicon Model of Motivation and Volition.

Both studies found that a student's sense of belonging was positively associated with academic self-efficacy, motivation, and task value of class assignments. When students felt a

psychological sense of belonging in an individual course, they similarly possessed positive motivational beliefs about their abilities in that class (Freeman et al., 2007; Kim & Keller, 2008). Kim and Keller (2008) found that the use of motivational and volitional email messages (MVEM) is crucial in large lecture settings in which there is limited student/instructor interaction, a setting common for first-year students. Such messages can promote learning and motivation in this setting, especially during a time where first-year students are especially vulnerable and prone to high drop-out rates (Kim & Keller, 2008). Freeman et al. (2007) concluded that social engagement is directly related to academic motivation in college freshmen. In particular, a student's self-efficacy and perception of task value were strongly related to a feeling of belonging. This result may originate from the adolescent development need of peer interaction. In adolescents, a sense of belonging contributes to heightened engagement and motivation, emotional health, and lessened risk-taking actions (Freeman et al., 2007).

Instructional design must create an inclusive environment to facilitate student interaction with peers, faculty and academic advisors. This can take the form of many Social Learning Theory applications that can be incorporated into academic advising activities, such as behavior modeling, collaborate learning activities, social networking opportunities, and open forums on various academic topics (Freeman et al., 2007). Targeted email messages can also have implications for academic advisors, as a way of reaching out and making personal connections with first-year students, especially in an advising system that does not have mandatory advising, or may have a high advisor to student ratio (Kim & Keller, 2008).

Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is the extent to which an individual's academic expectations and overall emotional and physical needs are being met (Liegler, 1997). Research has shown that student satisfaction is a direct measure of college success (Astin, 1977). Student satisfaction reinforces

both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. There is a direct correlation between satisfaction in learning and academic persistence (Keller, 2010).

The satisfaction component of Keller's ARCS model was studied by Suhre et al. (2007), as they researched the affect of a student's satisfaction with their academic major on their overall motivation. Research questions for the study were: How does program satisfaction impact study habits, achievement, and retention?; and does the impact of satisfaction differ according to gender? Suhre et al. (2007) used the Theory of Effective Learning and Individual-Environmental Interaction Theory as a framework for their study. The Theory of Effective Learning states that students who study regularly, complete assignments in a timely manner, and use their time in an organized way, are more likely to succeed academically. The Interaction Theory accounts for both academic and social integration as key factors in academic achievement (Suhre et al., 2007).

Survey data were collected from 186 first-year law students on demographics, study satisfaction, study motivation, study behavior, and class attendance. Measured by survey results, total credits earned, and drop-out rate after 2 years, it was found that satisfaction of degree program, motivation, strong study skills, and attendance at tutoring all contributed positively to academic achievement. In fact, these factors accounted for 49 percent of the variance in completed credit hours, and 31 percent of the variance in drop-out rates (Suhre et al., 2007). It was found that the students most motivated were those who had a prior understanding of the law profession, those who found the course content to be clear and concise, those who did not need an immediate application of knowledge, and those who had meaningful interaction with peers (Suhre et al., 2007).

Based on their study of the correlation between major satisfaction and academic motivation, Suhre et al. (2007) suggested several implications for practice. Teachers and advisors can impact

student motivation by alternating teaching methods, setting obtainable goals, and designing instruction around student strengths and interests. Distribution of study load is also important, as classes arranged in a block structure allow students to concentrate on only one subject, which contributes to more effective study habits and regular academic progress. Finally, Suhre et al. (2007) recommended that setting clear study behavior expectations at the very beginning is important to creating student motivation. Instructors and academic advisors should also provide plenty of information about a student's chosen major and profession at the very beginning of the freshman year, to prevent discouragement from not being able to immediately apply the knowledge being learned (Suhre et al., 2007).

Academic Advising

“Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience” (Light, 2001, p. 81). Effective academic advising plays a crucial part in referring college students to resources and opportunities that “support their engagement, success, and the attainment of key learning outcomes” (Campbell & Nutt, 2008, p. 4). Academic advising is one of the only campus services that promote student interaction with caring and concerned university employees (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Advising acknowledges and supports individual student characteristics, values, and motivation (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Advising connects students to campus and helps them feel cared for, both of which have been shown as essential to student engagement (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 2005). Several studies support the idea of academic advising as a significant contributor to first-year student success (Light, 2001; Tracey, Kacin & Remsing, 2011; Elliot & Healy, 2001).

Light (2001) conducted a 10 year longitudinal study with undergraduate students at Harvard University to evaluate the overall effectiveness of university programs and to make

suggestions for improvement. In semi-structured interviews with nearly 1,600 students, and visits to almost 90 colleges and universities across the country, academic advising was consistently ranked by students as one of the most important aspects that contributed to their success. Most notable to students was the personal relationship established between themselves and their professional or faculty advisor (Light, 2001). Elliott and Healy (2001) used the Student Satisfactory Inventory by USA Group Noel-Levitz to survey over 1,800 undergraduate students at an upper Midwest university. Echoing Light's (2001) research, students rated academic advising as the most important factor of their college experience, as chosen over many other potential success factors. Students were also mostly satisfied with the academic advising they had received up to that point in their college education (Elliott & Healy, 2001).

Similar results were also found by Tracey, Kacin and Remsing (2011), who conducted a web-based survey of first-year Business majors at Wayne State University. Four, one-question surveys were emailed to students monthly during their first semester at college. Questions focused on student reaction to new student orientation, course selection, major satisfaction, and academic goals. For each question, students rated academic advising as one of their preferred resources for academic success. In fact, 84 percent of students answered that they would go to their academic advisor over any other resource for course registration issues, and 51 percent of students preferred to consult their advisor above others to discuss academic goals (Tracey et al., 2011). The results of that study have influenced my further interest in academic advising as a motivational tool for first-year college students.

The information found in these studies is important for universities to use to attract new students and to retain current students. An institutional commitment to training and proper funding must be placed in academic advising initiatives to aid in the satisfaction and retention of

undergraduate students (Elliott & Healy, 2001). Further research on advising preferences and student satisfaction is also needed to ensure continued impact of academic advising on overall student success.

Types of Academic Advising. Academic advising has evolved over the last several decades, from prescriptive advising, where advisor role is bookkeeper; to developmental advising, where advisor role is counselor; to the most recent concept of learning-centered advising, where the advisor role is teacher (Lowenstein, 2005). Prescriptive advising has often been described as a bookkeeping process. In prescriptive advising, the advisor tells a student what classes to take and explains university rules and regulations. The student is a passive participant in a prescriptive advising relationship (Lowenstein, 2005). Prescriptive advising is a hierarchical process, in which the advisor is in charge of the information, and the student is a passive recipient of information. In a sense, the advisor is the doctor who writes a prescription, and the student is the patient accepting the prescribed information (Crookston, 1972). There is no relationship building in the prescriptive approach to advising. Advising meetings are driven by what advisors think the student needs (Smith, 2002). It's important to acknowledge that all types of academic advising contain some prescriptive elements, but this type of advising never goes beyond simple telling of policies and curriculum requirements (Lowenstein, 2005).

Developmental advising is considered by some as the advising of the twenty-first century (Campbell & Nutt, 2008), and has become the dominant paradigm in the academic advising profession (Lowenstein, 2005). It is recognized as a form of teaching, as it focuses on and addresses the various ways in which college students learn. Developmental advising is regarded as advising as counseling (Lowenstein, 2005), and helps support a student's "intellectual and social development" (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Developmental advising is concerned with

“environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness and problem solving, decision making, and evaluation skills,” (Crookston, 1972). Students are active participants in the advising process, and ideally experience an enhancement in their college experience through the developmental student/advisor relationship (Lowenstein, 2005). Developmental advising focuses on the personal needs and growth of a student (Wade & Yoder, 1995) and has goals of engagement, providing personal meaning, connecting academic interests with personal goals, and assessment of academic progress (Kramer, 2003).

Learning-centered advising is an emerging philosophy on the academic advising continuum (Lowenstein, 2005). Learning-centered advising shares the values of developmental advising; however the learning-centered view is more academically centered. The goal is to enhance student learning by helping students create logic of their education and to synthesize the seemingly unconnected aspects of their general education and major related curriculum. Students can make more sound educational and professional choices if they can make the necessary connections with what they have already learned (Lowenstein, 2005).

Intrusive advising has emerged in higher education over the past decade as an effective way to increase retention and reach out to students, especially those considered at risk (Earl, 1988). Intrusive advising focuses on proactive communication with students to prevent problems before they occur (Earl, 1988). Intrusive advising typically involves a combination of required or recommended advising meetings, and a predetermined set of goals to guide each advising session. The primary goals of intrusive advising are to increase motivation and academic success among students, and to reduce early attrition from college (Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds, & Klyce, 2008). Intrusive advising often monitors student grades, attendance, and classroom behavior to identify early on a student who may be considered at risk.

Schwebel et al. (2008) conducted a case-control experiment at a large public southern university that focused on one aspect of intrusive advising: the use of frequent communication to remind students to make and keep academic advising appointments. The study targeted 501 first-year students in three academic units of the university, randomly assigned to an experiment or control group.

The outreach group received three iterations of intrusive advising (Schwebel et al., 2008). First, an email was sent during week three of the semester, encouraging students to schedule an advising appointment. The second communication was a phone call from a support staff member who would offer to schedule an appointment right then over the phone. The third round was a personal phone call from the student's assigned advisor during the fifth week of the term, again offering to help the student schedule an appointment at that time (Schwebel et al., 2008).

Schwebel et al. (2008) found that 90 percent of students in the outreach group scheduled and kept an advising appointment, compared to 78 percent of the non-outreach group. The students in the outreach group also scheduled an appointment, on average, nearly 10 days earlier in the semester than students in the non-outreach group. The researchers concluded that simple intrusive techniques such as phone calls and emails are successful in getting students in the office to see their academic advisor during their crucial first semester in college (Schwebel et al., 2008). Instead of rushing to see an advisor only during peak registration periods, students were able to spend extra time in their appointments discussing career development, college success strategies, transitional issues, and larger goal development. It allowed advisors to take on a counselor and mentor role, rather than the limiting role of course planner and scheduler (Schwebel et al., 2008). Similar to Kim and Keller's (2008) MVEM study, the intrusive

approach reached vulnerable students and motivated them to take action toward their own academic achievement (Schwebel et al., 2008).

Student Preference in Advising. Several studies have used the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) in assessing student preference in advising styles, only to find varying results based on student standing and experience level (Mottarella, Fritzche, & Cerabino, 2004; Hale, Graham, & Johnson, 2009; Winston & Sandor, 1984). The AAI is a theoretically grounded, widely used tool in assessing academic advising, including a student's preference between prescriptive or developmental advising styles (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Other researchers have found similar results using a variety of qualitative methods to assess student preference in advising approach (Smith, 2002; Museus & Ravello, 2010).

Mottarella et al., (2004) researched the advising preferences of 468 undergraduate students enrolled in a psychology course at a large southeastern university. They used the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) and also developed a series of randomly assigned advising scenarios. The researchers found that the most important dimension for undergraduate students was the depth of advising relationship (Mottarella et al., 2004). Responses indicated that an established advisor/student relationship offered the most satisfaction for students in their advising experience. The second most important factor was type of advisor, undergraduate students preferred to meet with a professional advisor rather than a peer or faculty advisor. The third most highly ranked factor was the nature of advising relationship. Students preferred a warm and supportive advisor over one who is efficient and businesslike. Surprisingly, one of the least important factors was advising approach (prescriptive versus descriptive). However students who experienced prescriptive advising in the past more often preferred this approach,

while students who were accustomed to developmental advising preferred this approach (Mottarella et al., 2004).

Mottarella et al. (2004) concluded that regardless of advising approach, an academic advisor must make a conscious effort to establish a warm and supportive relationship with each advisee. A student's satisfaction in their advising experience is directly impacted by an advisor's interpersonal skills. Advisor training is necessary to develop interpersonal, relationship-building, and counseling skills. The authors also concluded that because students prefer the type of advising they have previously experienced, first-year students are likely to be more comfortable with the prescriptive approach they experienced from their high school counselors (Mottarella et al., 2004).

Hale et al. (2009) used the AAI to survey 429 undergraduate students at a mid-South university with a 56 percent 6-year graduation rate, similar to the graduation rate at Wayne State. Students were asked about their preferred advising style and overall satisfaction with their current advisor. A strong preference for developmental advising was found, with over 95 percent of respondents indicating this as their preferred advising style. However, only 80 percent of students perceived that their current advisor practiced developmental advising. It was found that students who actually experienced their preferred advising style had significantly higher levels of overall satisfaction with their advising experience (Hale et al., 2009).

Smith (2002) narrowed the research on academic advising preference specifically to first-year students. His study was directed by two research questions: Do first year students prefer developmental advising or prescriptive advising? And do first year students tend to receive more prescriptive than developmental advising? (Smith, 2002). Hour-long focus group discussions were conducted among 34 first-year students at the University of Albany majoring in a variety of

disciplines. The constant comparative method was used to categorize and analyze student responses (Smith, 2002).

Contradictory to Hale et al. (2009), Smith (2002) found that first-year students generally preferred prescriptive advising, and indicated that their experience so far with college advising was primarily of a logistical, prescriptive nature. Students compared the academic advisor role to that of high school counselor, and expected their advisor to choose their courses for them each semester. The majority of first-year participants preferred that advisors explain the content, teaching style and grading procedures to be used in each course. They felt that the main purpose of an advisor was to provide information on major and general education course requirements, and to provide them with a class schedule each semester (Smith, 2002).

Smith (2002) concluded that a first-year student's preference for prescriptive advising relates to the fear and uncertainty felt during the freshman year. First-year students may lack maturity of reasoning, which also effects internal motivation. He recommended that advisors clearly define their role to students at the beginning of the semester, or as early as new student orientation (Smith, 2002). Advisors must strike a balance between the prescriptive advising that freshmen desire, and in using developmental advising to build confidence in student decision making and critical thinking skills. These traits are necessary in promoting independence and internal motivation of first-year college students (Smith, 2002).

Museus and Ravello (2010) conducted a qualitative study at 3 institutions of varying size, to explore the impact that advising has on the success of minority students at predominantly white institutions of higher education. This study is of importance, considering the diverse population of Wayne State students that composed the sample of my research. Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews were conducted with a total of 14 academic advisors and 31 racially

diverse students from all three institutions. Three themes emerged during the open-coding analysis process of the interviews (Museus & Ravello, 2010). First, it was found that the most successful advisors of minority students humanize the advising practice, or create a caring relationship with their students. Second, the most successful advisors tend to combine prescriptive and developmental advising practices as determined by situational need. Finally, the interviews identified the need for advisors to be proactive in reaching out to students, especially those students considered at-risk and in greater need of motivational cues (Museus & Ravello, 2010).

Summary

Literature in higher education consistently points to academic advising as one of the top ranked factors in undergraduate student motivation, satisfaction and retention, even though studies on preferred advising approach are mixed (Mottarella et al., 2004; Hale et al., 2009; Smith, 2002; Museus & Ravello, 2010). However, empirical research on the specific elements of successful advisor-student interaction is difficult to find (Museus & Ravello, 2010). Academic advising plays an even more crucial role in promoting success in first-year students (Light, 2001; Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Tinto, 1993). Research in freshman success has evolved from a psychological student view, to one of action and responsibility on the part of colleges and universities (Tinto, 2007). Literature points to several proven techniques in promoting effective academic advising for first-year college students, including intrusive advising for at-risk students, regular communication efforts, and the creation of a warm and caring advising relationship (Schwebel et al., 2008; Kim & Keller, 2008; Mottarella et al., 2004). This review of literature was used, in part, to select an effective academic advising intervention for first-year students that promoted the relevance, confidence, and satisfaction components of the Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design (Keller, 2010).

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to design, implement and evaluate an academic advising intervention to motivate and engage first-year college students in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. The study was conducted using a multiple methods, integrative approach to research design. I used a design-based research approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a richer understanding of the research problem being studied.

The design-based research study was conducted in the field, during spring/summer and fall semesters of the 2012-2013 academic school year. Research took place in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. As the researcher and a former practitioner in this research setting, I took an iterative approach to the design, implementation and evaluation of an appropriate advising intervention.

The quantitative data collected in this study was an initial likert scale instrument given to first-year students at new student orientation, to assess their preference of academic advising style. The quantitative data provided external validity to the qualitative data collected through the research study. The qualitative data was of primary importance in this study, and was collected through multiple means. First, an open-ended survey was conducted of current Business students who met with their advisor during their first semester, to collect information on attitudes and perceptions of their first year experience with academic advising. A follow-up semi-structured phone interview was conducted with students who willingly provided contact information on their previously completed surveys. The interviews were intended to clarify and expand upon a student's survey answers, and to provide a deeper, richer context to a student's

first-year advising experience. Another collection method was reflective journaling of academic advisors that worked with first-year Business students. The purpose of the advisor journals was to gain advisor perspectives of their impact on the motivation and engagement of first-year students. Finally, I kept a researcher journal to document my own reflections and reactions as I progressed through the study.

Setting

Wayne State University is the third largest university in the state of Michigan, with nearly 32,000 students enrolled. Located in the heart of the museum and cultural center in Midtown Detroit, WSU is Michigan's only research intensive urban university. At Wayne State, 89 percent of undergraduate students come from the Metropolitan Detroit area. However, WSU is the most diverse university in Michigan, with students representing 49 U.S. states and more than 60 countries. More than 41 percent of WSU's student population is minority. The university is divided into 13 distinct colleges and schools, offering more than 400 academic programs including the College of Education, School of Business Administration, College of Engineering, a Medical School and Law School. Degrees are awarded at the bachelor, master, and doctoral levels ("About WSU, Fact Book 2011", n.d.).

Wayne State University has a first-year retention rate and a six-year graduation rate well below rates of comparable urban research universities ("Retention Implementation Task Force Final Report", 2010). In fall 2010 more than 2,600 freshman students enrolled at WSU, which was 33 percent of all admitted students. Many of these students are unprepared for the rigors of the college experience and need development in the areas of time management, effective study habits, and critical thinking ("Retention Implementation Task Force Final Report", 2010).

Wayne State has an 86 percent acceptance rate among undergraduate applicants (“About WSU”, 2012).

Undergraduate student-to-advisor ratios vary greatly across WSU’s campus, with the highest ratio of 640:1 for undergraduate students in the School of Business Administration (“Retention Implementation Task Force Final Report”, 2010). In an attempt to reduce the ratio to 300:1, the university has prioritized the hiring of 45 new academic advisors to serve the undergraduate student population at Wayne State University over the next three years. The fulfillment of these new positions is well underway at the university (“Retention Implementation Task Force Final Report”, 2010).

Population and Sample

The target population for this study was traditional aged, first-year college students. The experimentally accessible population that was used in this study was first-year college students enrolled in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. General descriptors of this population included an average age of 18-20 years, and students who had not previously enrolled at any college. In the School of Business, approximately 40 percent of the student population is minority students, and more than half of students are working at least part-time while attending school (“School of Business Administration Fast Facts”, n.d.). It was assumed that the freshman Business student population was consistent with these descriptions.

My secondary target population was academic advisors who worked directly with first-year college students. My accessible population for this study was four academic advisors in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. This was an all female group, with one African American and three Caucasian advisors. Each had varying educational and professional backgrounds, but all had at least two or more years experience in higher education.

Approximately 120 freshman students begin in the Business School each academic year, and each are required to attend new student orientation the summer before their freshman year. I initially administered a paper-based survey with these 120 students at new student orientation, therefore making my sample one of convenience. Through the survey, I attempted to measure student perceptions and preferences of academic advising approaches before they began college.

There were seven orientation dates scheduled between June 2012 and August 2012. The daylong orientation included several information sessions, a campus tour, teambuilding activities, and ended with academic advising and registration. The advising and registration part of the orientation day took place in the School of Business computer lab, and lasted approximately three hours. During this time, students met their advisors for the first time, and were presented with detailed information on curriculum requirements, registration deadlines, and available student services. After the information was presented by the Business advisors, students were guided through the registration process, and given the opportunity to register themselves for their first-semester courses. Each student left orientation with a printed copy of their fall class schedule. I administered the survey at the end of the advising session, once students had completed their registration. Students took varying lengths of time to register, so I handed out the paper-based survey as individual students were done registering and waiting for others to finish. The survey took approximately 5-10 minutes to complete, and participation was voluntary. The survey did not include any identifying information, and it was explained to students that answers would remain completely anonymous. Students were asked to turn in their completed survey to one of the advisors stationed in the computer lab.

My secondary sample consisted of four academic advisors in the School of Business. I had each advisor keep a typed reflective journal of their experiences advising students during

their first semester at Wayne State. The purpose of the journals was to obtain raw advisor perceptions on their interaction with first-year students, and their feelings on the usefulness of the new academic advising initiatives designed during this study. I asked advisors to write in their journals using Google Documents at least once every two weeks, in review of the freshman appointments they had conducted during that timeframe and the use of the implemented advising interventions. I used the following reflective prompts to encourage a free flow of ideas: 1) How many first-semester students have you met with during the last two weeks?; 2) Describe the main themes discussed during the first-semester appointments and share examples if appropriate.; 3) Describe general student reaction to the advising interventions used during the appointment?; and 4) Brainstorm ways in which the current advising interventions might need modification to better suit first-semester student needs. These questions directly corresponded with the open-ended questions given to first-year students after they met with their advisor throughout the semester.

Data Sources

This study utilized a mixed methods approach to collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data provided insight and rich descriptions for student perceptions during their first year, and the quantitative data provided hard data regarding the student's preferred advising styles. There were four main data sources used in this study. The first data source was previous literature on motivation, academic advising and student engagement. The second main data source was the 117 first-year students enrolled in the School of Business at Wayne State University during the fall 2012 semester. The third data source was the four academic advisors that worked with first-year Business students. The fourth data source was the reflective researcher journal.

Data Collection Methods

As a design-based research study, there were four phases to data collection, detailed in the following paragraphs. Data collection began in June 2012 at the first available orientation session, and progressed through the end of the fall 2012 semester.

Phase 1. It is during the orientation advising session that students were asked to complete a paper-based survey adapted from Part V of the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The AAI is a theoretically grounded, widely used tool in assessing academic advising (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The instrument was developed based on Crookston's (1972) work to measure student perceptions and preferences for prescriptive or developmental advising activities. No specific permission is required to use the instrument for research or dissertation studies (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The AAI instrument was first validated by a panel of eight expert judges, and then administered to 506 undergraduate students from five geographically diverse universities across the nation. In both stages, a series of item and factor analyses were conducted and a varimax rotation netted three measurement factors: Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Courses (SC). Internal consistency reliability for the instrument was estimated using the Cronbach Alpha procedure, with an alpha coefficient of .78 (Winston & Sandor, 2002).

Part V of the AAI instrument is a 14 question, likert scale survey that asks students to rate how they perceive the ideal academic advisor (Winston & Sandor, 2002). First-year students do not have experience with academic advising, other than what they experienced with high school counselors. Therefore, this was a good opportunity to collect a fresh, unbiased perspective of what advising would be like in the perfect world for a college freshman. Students were asked to select their preference between two opposing statements that represent either prescriptive or

developmental advising activities, and then rated the importance of that statement on a scale of *Very Important to Slightly Important* (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Based on the answers collected from this survey, I designed the prototype academic advising interventions.

Phase 2. The first iteration of the design-based study took place during weeks two through six of the 15 week fall 2012 semester. During these five weeks of the semester, first-year students who voluntarily scheduled an appointment with their advisor were exposed to the interventions. At the close of the advising session, participants were asked to complete a four question, open-ended survey about their perceptions of the interventions experienced with their advisor. They were also asked to check *yes or no* to participating in a later voluntary one-on-one phone interview to discuss their perceptions on the advising interventions, and to provide basic contact information. The academic advisors were also asked to keep a journal during these weeks, reflecting on their experiences with the intervention and their perceived reaction of the students to the intervention.

Phase 3. In the second iteration of the design-based study, I used feedback from the student surveys, student interviews, and advisor journaling from the first iteration to make necessary adaptations to the advising interventions. During weeks eight through eleven of the fall 2012 semester, first-year students who voluntarily scheduled an appointment with their advisor were exposed to the newly revised interventions. At the close of the advising session, participants were asked to complete a four question, open-ended survey about the usefulness of the intervention experienced with their advisor. They were also asked to check *yes or no* to participating in a later voluntary one-on-one phone interview to discuss their perceptions on the advising interventions. The academic advisors were again asked to keep a journal during these

weeks, reflecting on their experiences with the interventions and their perceived reaction of the students to the improved interventions.

Phase 4. In the third and final iteration of the design-based study, I used feedback from the student surveys, student interviews, and advisor journaling from the second iteration to evaluate the effectiveness of the advising interventions. During weeks twelve through fifteen of the fall 2012 semester, first-year students who voluntarily scheduled an appointment with their advisor were exposed to the interventions. At the close of the advising session, participants were asked to complete a four question, open-ended survey about the usefulness of the interventions experienced with their advisor. They were again asked to check *yes or no* to participating in a later voluntary one-on-one interview with me to discuss their perceptions on the advising interventions. The academic advisors were again asked to keep a journal during these weeks, reflecting on their experiences with the interventions and their perceived reaction of the students to the improved interventions. At the close of phase 4, recommendations were made for revisions necessary to create a final product of the advising interventions, which could be adopted for use by the Office of Student Services.

Data Analysis

Design-based research is a research approach with a purpose to create new theories, practices or artifacts that may potentially impact learning in a practical setting (Barab & Squire, 2004). It attempts to create understanding of the messiness of real-world problems, and focuses on the context of the research environment. Design-based research is characterized by flexible design cycles, multiple dependent variables, and the social interaction of design participants (Barab & Squire, 2004). In this way it is similar to piloting a program or intervention. Rather

than simply testing a hypothesis, design-based research often sets out to develop a tool or theory for real-world use (Barab & Squire, 2004).

Design-based research was appropriate in this study for a number of reasons. First, research was conducted within the study environment, during the chaotic orientation season and the hectic fall semester. The social interaction of advisors and first year students, and the context of the Office of Student Services were the focal points of the study. This design-based study consisted of three flexible design iterations, with the goal of creating a valid and reliable instrument or process in advising first-year college students that could be used for future advising. As an applied field, educators must often design tools, curriculum and theories that help them to understand and predict how students learn (Barab & Squire, 2004). That was precisely the goal of this research study.

In this mixed methods research design, I began by collecting quantitative data in the form of student surveys conducted at new student orientation. The 14 item Part V of the AAI questionnaire measures student preference between two advising approaches (prescriptive and developmental) and level of satisfaction of their preferred approach. I analyzed student responses by using the coding method developed by the AAI creators, and included in the AAI Users Manual that accompanies the instrument (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The coding system allowed me to assign a point value and recode each question based on the advising subscale it measured. There are four subscales measured by the AAI instrument: Developmental-Prescriptive Advising preference (DPA), Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Courses (SC), (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The coding process allowed me to convert ordinal data into categorizations of student preferences of academic

advising activities, in order to move forward in developing the initial advising intervention in this design-based study.

Qualitative data was collected in this study through the use of advisor journals, open-ended student surveys given after advising appointments, individual student interviews, and my own researcher journal. I used the constant comparative method to code, categorize, organize and analyze the qualitative data collected throughout the study (Smith, 2002). This method allowed me to simultaneously code and analyze data and to make comparisons among categories to identify similarities and differences, and consistencies among participant responses (Smith, 2002). I utilized Microsoft Word to build tables to prepare and familiarize myself with the qualitative data, and to develop a simple coding system to categorize the data (Ruona, 2005). This information was used in the three design iterations that made up this study.

Table 1

Research Design

Research Question	Data Source	Collection Method	Data Analysis
1. What motivates and engages first-year college students?	Literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive literature review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis
2. What impact does academic advising have on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students?	Literature; First year Business students who attend new student orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive literature review AAI survey given to freshman Business students at orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis AAI coding method
3. What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of college freshmen?	First-year Business students who attend new student orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAI survey given to freshman Business students at orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AAI coding method

4. What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?	Freshman Business students who see their advisor during their first semester; Academic advisors in the School of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended survey given to freshman Business students after advising appointment • One-on-one student interviews after advising appointment • Advisor reflection journals • Designer journal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic Analysis—Constant Comparative Method
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Internal Validity. A multiple methods approach increased the internal validity of this study, through the collection and comparison of previous literature, advisor journals, survey data, student interviews, and a researcher journal. Common themes that emerged through the triangulation of these data collection methods served to establish credibility and reliability. Peer examination was also utilized, by reviewing the results of student interviews with academic advisors unrelated to the study, in order to support or dispute my initial thoughts and conclusions on the data (Ruona, 2005). In conducting a design-based research study, I continually revised my hypotheses and research design as data was collected. It was necessary to be flexible and adaptive as unexpected needs and directions arose through data collection (Rudestam & Newton, 2007).

External Validity. The qualitative data collection methods provided insight on the effectiveness or possible ineffectiveness of the interpersonal advisor/student relationship. The qualitative approach also provided a first-hand understanding of the larger cultural norms, behaviors, and needs of first-year college students. These rich descriptions may be transferrable to other studies among college freshmen in different majors or at different universities.

Summary

This design-based, mixed methods study collected both qualitative and quantitative data from first-year Business students, academic advisors that work with first-year Business students, and myself as researcher. Research and design took place within the design environment, in the Office of Student Services for the School of Business at Wayne State University. Initial survey data collection and three iterative design phases created the framework for this study, with documented recommendations of final first-year advising tools as the end result. A well developed data collection and analysis plan helped to realize the overarching goal of the study: to design, implement and evaluate an academic advising intervention to motivate and engage first-year college students.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to document the design, implementation, and evaluation of a motivational-based academic advising intervention for first-year students in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. A design-based research approach was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data in order to answer the following research questions.

1. What motivates and engages first-year college students?
2. What impact does academic advising have on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students?
3. What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of first-year college students?
4. What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings of all four phases of this design-based research study, including quantitative and qualitative data collected from students, advisors, and the researcher.

Phase 1

The first data collection tool used was a paper-based survey adapted from Part V of the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Because the data collected from this instrument shaped the direction of the study, the survey results will be presented first. The AAI is a theoretically grounded, widely used tool in assessing academic advising, which was developed based on Crookston's (1972) work to support the evaluation and improvement of institutional advising practices (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The AAI has five sections, which can

be used in its entirety or in separate parts as needed. Part I assesses the nature of a student's current advising relationship, measured along a prescriptive-developmental continuum. Part II assesses the frequency of certain advising activities, Part III measures satisfaction of advising, and Part IV collects basic demographic information (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Part V of the AAI is a 14 item questionnaire that measures student preference on four subscales of advising: Overall Development/Prescriptive advising preference (DPA), Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Courses (SC) (Winston & Sandor, 2002). This single section of the AAI was selected for use in this study, because incoming college freshmen have not yet had any experience with academic advising, and can only assess their preference in advising activities rather than the current state of their advising relationship. No specific permission is required for use of the AAI in research studies, and the instrument can be utilized in dissertation research and included in an appendix with no written authorization necessary (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The instrument is included in Appendix A.

During the summer semester of 2012, 120 students completed the AAI survey at new student orientation. Three surveys could not be scored, either because the survey was only partially completed, or because students rated both descriptive and prescriptive statements instead of choosing one or the other. This made the survey sample 117 first-year business students. The AAI has its own scoring system developed by the tool's creators, so the use of SPSS was not necessary in tallying the results of the instrument (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Students circled their answer to each question on the paper-based instrument. One-by-one, I recoded each of the 14 answers on all 117 questionnaires to get a numerical value, using the coding system detailed in the following paragraph. I added the scores on each survey for the questions that corresponded with each of the four defined subscales. Then by adding the

subscale scores, and dividing by the number of survey responses, I found the average score for each subscale, as measured by the instrument.

The developmental and prescriptive responses are randomly placed on either side of the AAI instrument to restrict the potential for a response set, therefore the need to carefully recode all survey responses based on the scale that accompanied the AAI tool (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Items 1-14, the entirety of the survey, made up the overall developmental/prescriptive preference score. For items 1, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 13, each *A* response received 8 points, each *B* response received 7 points, *C* answers received 6 points, *D* responses were given 5 points, *E* answers were assigned 4 points, *F* answers received 3 points, *G* answers scored 2 points, and *H* responses were given 1 point each. The opposite score assignments were granted for questions 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14. An overall score between 14-56 is considered a low score, and indicates a prescriptive advising preference. A score of 57-112 indicates a preference for descriptive advising activities (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The results of this AAI administration netted an overall score of 79.54, indicating a clear preference for developmental advising activities on the DPA scale. The results of the overall DPA scale are illustrated below in Figure 1. Because the prescriptive versus developmental scale is often referred to as a *continuum* of the two advising styles (Winston & Sandor, 2002), the results of the subscales in this study are presented as plots on a continuous line that passes between the two advising styles.

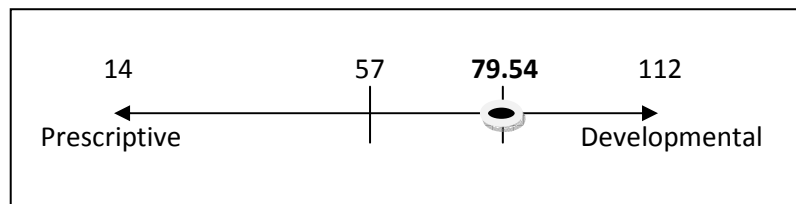


Figure 1: AAI Results: Developmental/Prescriptive Advising (DPA) Scale

Using the same coding scale as above, questions 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 13 were tallied to find the Personalizing Education (PE) sub score. This subscale describes an entire college education, including goal setting, career counseling, extracurricular activities, and identification of campus resources (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Developmental advising for personalizing education involves a warm and caring relationship that touches on the wide-range of factors that make up a student's entire college experience. Prescriptive advising in this sense is characterized as formal and distant, with little concern outside direct academic advising matters (Winston & Sandor, 2002). High scores of 33-64 on this subscale are considered developmental, while low scores of 8-32 indicate a prescriptive preference (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The (PE) sub score result in this study equaled 48.61, again indicating a developmental advising preference for this scale among the participants in the study. The results of the PE sub score is illustrated below in Figure 2.

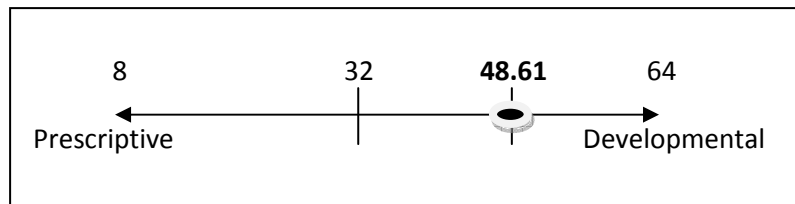


Figure 2: AAI Results: Personalizing Education (PE) Scale

By utilizing the same coding method conducted at the onset of the analysis process, items 6, 7, 11, and 14 of the AAI were tallied to find an Academic Decision Making (ADM) sub score. Academic decision-making includes the monitoring of academic progress, assessing a student's individual skills and ability, and using this information to guide a student through the course registration process (Winston & Sandor, 2002). A developmental technique would engage a student in discussion about academic progress, skills and abilities, and would guide the student in

choosing appropriate courses. A sub score of 17-32 indicates a developmental preference. In contrast, a prescriptive advising relationship is an authoritative one, where advisors make course decisions for students, with little input or decision making from the students themselves. A low sub score of 4-16 indicates a prescriptive preference on the ADM subscale (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The average sub score among participants in this study was 21.38 on the ADM scale, which falls within the developmental preference range. Figure 3 shows the results of the ADM sub scale in this study.

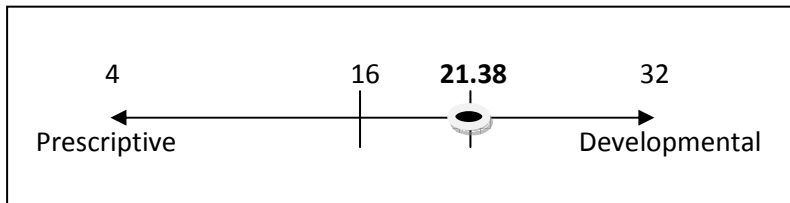


Figure 3: AAI Results: Academic Decision Making (ADM) Scale

The final subscale measured by Part V of the AAI is Selecting Courses (SC). Items 2 and 12 from the AAI instrument were tallied to find a SC score. This scale is concerned with understanding curriculum requirements and selecting appropriate courses. Developmental advising activities entrust the student to make the final decisions in course selection. In contrast, advisors telling a student what classes to enroll in, with recommendations based primarily on GPA and test scores rather than conversation with students, describe prescriptive techniques. A high score of 9-16 on this subscale indicate a developmental preference, while a score of 2-8 indicate a prescriptive preference (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The average score among participants in this study was 9.31, which falls on the low end of the developmental advising scale. The results of the SC sub scale are presented on the next page in Figure 4.

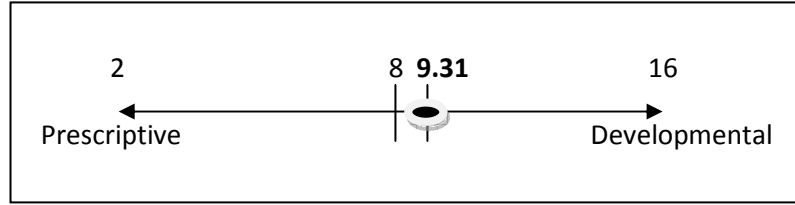


Figure 4: AAI Results: Selecting Courses (SC) Scale

The AAI Part V survey results showed an overall developmental advising preference on the DPA scale, as well as a developmental preference on all three subscales: Personalizing Education, Academic Decision Making, and Selecting Courses (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Although notable, the scores for the SC scale fell on the very low end of the developmental advising scale. The data collected and analyzed in Phase 1 of this study was used to design the initial advising interventions that were evaluated in the final three phases of the study. A final summary of all AAI results is shown below in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of AAI Results: 117 Student Responses

	Subscale Score	Prescriptive Preference	Developmental Preference
Developmental/Prescriptive Advising (DPA)	79.54	Scale: 14-56 ←————→	Scale: 57-112 ————→ 79.54
Personalizing Education (PE)	48.61	Scale: 8-32 ←————→	Scale: 33-64 ————→ 48.61
Academic Decision Making (ADM)	21.38	Scale: 4-16 ←————→	Scale: 17-32 ————→ 21.38
Selecting Courses (SC)	9.31	Scale: 2-8 ←————→	Scale: 9-16 ————→ 9.31

Instrument Design. Data collected through Part V of the AAI survey, and in thorough review of the literature, led to the design and development of two separate, yet carefully coordinated advising tools. The student survey results displayed a strong preference for developmental advising practices in overall advising experience and in personalizing education. The survey questions addressing academic decision making and selecting courses also netted developmental results, however the average scores were lower on the developmental scale.

The conclusion was drawn that first-year students prefer the warm, caring and trusting relationship that can be built through developmental advising activities. The same students seem to prefer that their advising experience be personalized through individual goal setting, career counseling, discussion of extracurricular activities, and referrals to campus resources (Winston & Sandor, 2002). However, based on lower developmental scores in the categories of academic decision making and selecting courses, it seems apparent that first-year students may lack confidence in making decisions that impact their education, such as which major or career to choose. First-year students also appear to seek a more authoritative advising style when it comes to selecting courses and creating a long-term course plan (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The data collected shows that more direct assistance is needed with first-year students in the areas of academic decision-making and course selection.

The first tool designed for use with first-year Business students was the FACT: First-Year Advising and Communication Tool. The intended users of this tool are academic advisors, to be utilized during advising appointments with first-year Business students. The tool consists of two sets of four questions each, one set that addresses matters of personalizing education, and the other set that addresses academic decision-making. Each set of questions is followed by a section reserved for advisor note-taking.

The purpose of the FACT tool is to encourage open dialogue between advisor and student, dialogue that goes beyond the usual advising conversations centered on course selection. A primary factor of developmental advising is to design advising experiences that build upon one another (Kramer, 1999). In a developmental advising relationship, both student and advisor take part in specific tasks in which learning occurs by both parties (Crookston, 1972). Encouraging advisor note-taking on the FACT instrument allows advisors to refer to notes in subsequent appointments and to establish a cohesive conversation and advising relationship with a student. For example, if a student mentions difficulty in a particular class in an initial appointment, the advisor can follow up on that specific concern in the next appointment. Academic advisors often have very large caseloads of students, making it difficult to remember details of each individual student conversation. The FACT instrument allows advisors to refresh their memory on each student dialogue, and in turn, ideally make the student feel like the advisor remembers and truly cares about their academic success.

The questions on the FACT instrument were carefully written based on academic advising, motivational design, and student development literature (Crookston, 1972; Astin, 1977; Wade & Yoder, 1995; Liegler, 1997; Kramer, 1999; Winston & Sandor, 2002; Kramer, 2003; Lowenstein, 2005; Perry et al., 2005; Lynch, 2006; Freeman et al., 2007; Tinto, 2007; Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Keller, 2010). The results of the AAI survey showed a developmental preference in the categories of Personalizing Education (PE) and Academic Decision Making (ADM), which became the categories of focus for the FACT instrument. Personalizing education includes goal setting, career counseling, out-of-class activities, and referrals to campus resources (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Developmental advising for personalizing education involves a caring relationship that supports the entirety of a student's college experience (Winston &

Sandor, 2002). Similarly, academic decision-making includes the monitoring of academic progress and assessment of a student's individual skills and ability. Developmental advising engages a student in meaningful discussion about academic progress, skills and abilities (Winston & Sandor, 2002).

The questions on the FACT instrument that correspond with personalizing education are:

- What are your long-term academic/career goals?
- What specific goals have you set for your first year?
- How do you plan to achieve those goals?
- What extra-curricular activities are you involved in or hope to become involved in that will help you achieve your goals?

The first three questions focus on goal setting. Many first-year students have not yet considered their long-term goals, let alone determined action steps toward meeting their goals. That is the precise purpose of these goal-related questions. According to Campbell and Nutt (2008), academic advising should play a role in referring students to important campus resources that support attainment of goals and key learning outcomes.

One of the major attributes of motivational design is connecting instruction, or in this case advising activities, to the goals of learners (Keller, 2010). Identifying specific academic goals can address all four components of Keller's ARCS model: Attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction (Keller, 2010). Personalizing an advising appointment can gain and keep a student's attention, not only during a short advising appointment, but may get a student thinking about their long-term collegiate career. Relevance pertains to meeting personal needs and learner goals to promote a positive attitude (Keller, 2010). Students must understand how the content of an advising experience is relevant to their individual needs. Confidence addresses a student's belief

that they will succeed, and are in control of their academic achievements (Keller, 2010). Directly related to confidence is academic control, which is a student's belief about the causes of their individual success and failure, and the degree to which students feel they can influence their own success (Perry et al., 2005). Goal setting has the potential to increase the feelings of confidence and control a student feels over their own education (Perry et al., 2005; Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Keller, 2010).

Finally, student satisfaction is the extent to which an individual's academic expectations and overall needs are being met (Liegler, 1997). There is a direct correlation between satisfaction in learning and academic persistence (Keller, 2010), and student satisfaction to overall college success (Astin, 1977). If advisors understand the individual goals of each student, they can better tailor their advising activities to meet the unique needs of each student (Astin, 1977; Liegler, 1997; Keller, 2010).

The final question under the personalizing education heading refers to involvement in extracurricular activities. Meaningful interaction and engagement between students and peers is especially critical during a student's freshman year (Tinto, 2007). Social engagement is directly associated with academic motivation in college freshmen, and has been shown to increase student self-efficacy and sense of belonging (Freeman et al., 2007). In adolescents, a sense of belonging contributes to heightened engagement, motivation and emotional well-being (Freeman et al., 2007). Research shows many valid reasons why advisors should encourage student involvement early on to increase chances of success (Tinto, 2007; Freeman et al., 2007).

As stated above, the second section of questions on the FACT instrument address academic decision-making, a category that rated somewhat low on the developmental scale as shown through the AAI survey results. This may indicate a student's desire for more direction in

making important decisions during their first year in college. The questions in this section include:

- Tell me about your first-semester experience so far?
- What is going well in your first semester?
- What challenges are you facing and how are you working through them?
- What classes are you finding most interesting so far?

The first question is intended to begin engaging, reflective conversation between student and advisor. Students are active participants in the developmental advising process, and should experience an enhancement in their college experience through a positive advising relationship (Lowenstein, 2005). A positive advising relationship includes open, nonjudgmental conversation that makes a student feel welcome, and helps an advisor to provide relevant student mentorship (Winston & Sandor, 2002).

The next two questions address the perceived successes and challenges of a student's first semester. Developmental advising focuses on a student's individual needs and personal growth (Wade & Yoder, 1995). These questions were written to assist an advisor in identifying the potential needs of a student, so they can provide meaningful direction. Beginning with the positive aspects of a semester may help to boost a student's confidence (Keller, 2010), and will hopefully make a student feel more open to share their sincere worries and concerns with their advisor. Following up with a question about a student's challenges allows an advisor to provide meaningful guidance and advice to a student in need, but also to discuss what control a student has over these perceived challenges (Perry et al., 2005).

The final question about a student's favorite class or classes helps a developmental advisor to identify a student's individual interests and abilities (Kramer, 2003). For example, if a

student shares a struggle or disinterest in their math class, but a positive experience in composition or speech class, it can provide important details to an advisor about the major a student may be best suited for. Developmental advising has goals of engagement, providing personal meaning, connecting academic interests with personal goals, and assessment of academic progress (Kramer, 2003). The questions in the academic decision making section of the FACT instrument aim to meet these developmental advising goals. Figure 5 on the following page illustrates the FACT instrument used by advisors in this study.



FACT: First-Year Advising & Communication Tool

Instructions: Advisors should feel free to take notes on this form and place in student's file for reference and relationship building in future advising appointments. Questions are meant as a starting point for a developmental advising conversation.

Developmental Advising: Focuses on a student's *ongoing needs* (one appointment builds on the next); views students as *active partners* in the advising process; and helps set and monitor progress toward *short and long-term academic goals* (Kramer, 1999).

Personalizing Education

- ✓ What are your long term academic/career goals?
- ✓ What specific goals have you set for your first year?
- ✓ How do you plan to achieve those goals?
- ✓ What extra-curricular activities are you involved in or hope to become involved in that will help you achieve your goals?

Advising Notes:

Academic Decision Making

- ✓ Tell me about your first-semester experience so far?
- ✓ What is going well in your first semester?
- ✓ What challenges are you facing and how are you working through them?
- ✓ What classes are you finding most interesting so far?

Advising Notes:

Figure 5: FACT Questionnaire

The second tool I designed based on the results of Part V of the AAI instrument was the First-Year Advising Syllabus, which advisors were to review with a student during their first advising appointment. However, the primary user of the syllabus is a first-year student, who is given a copy after their appointment to reference as needed on their own. The entire First-Year Advising Syllabus can be found in Appendix B. Many advising offices across the nation use an advising syllabus, including Georgia Tech, Baylor University, and the University Advising Center at Wayne State, the largest advising unit on campus. In fact, some of these university syllabi were looked at, in part, as broad examples in creating the instrument for this study (“Academic Advising Syllabus, Georgia Tech University”, n.d.; “Academic Advisement Syllabus, Baylor University”, n.d.). However, the School of Business at WSU had not used an advising syllabus until now. The syllabus is 2 pages, front and back, to provide relevant information but not to overwhelm a student. The syllabus includes several developmental approaches, including an outline of advisor/student responsibilities in the advising relationship; an explanation of academic goals as well as a place for student and advisor to plan goals together; a campus resource directory; and information on campus organizations. I also included motivational quotes in the margins as an attention getting technique. I selected two quotes that addressed setting and achieving goals, which is a major theme of the syllabus. I deliberately chose quotes that are well known, to appeal to a sense of familiarity with the students (Keller, 2010). I also used the quotes to maintain attention, by breaking up the white space in the margins and providing some variation to the pages of the syllabus (Keller, 2010). There are also some prescriptive approaches to the syllabus, as designed based on the lower developmental AAI scores in the subsets of academic decision making and course selection. I included a list of important dates, a first-semester timeline and checklist, and a section where student and advisor

can plan next semester courses together. The syllabus was printed on a heavy stock, WSU green paper, so that students can easily find and refer to the document at a later date as needed.

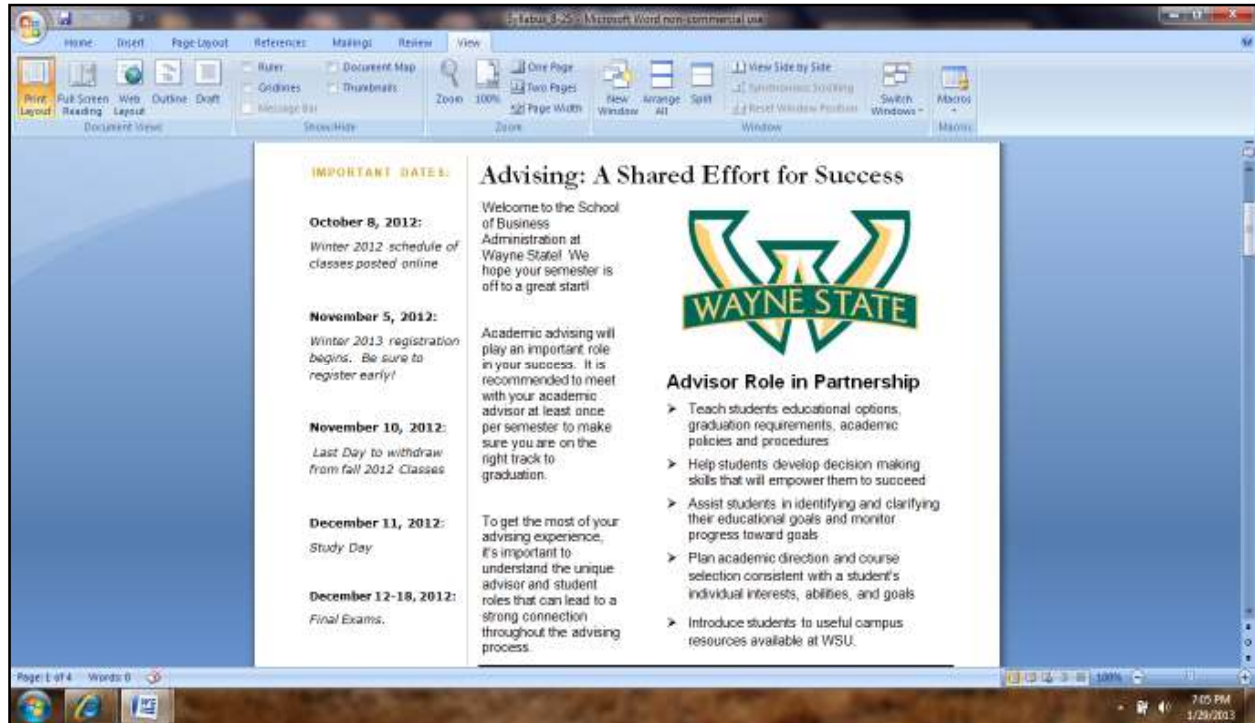


Figure 6: First-Year Advising Syllabus, advisor role article.

The First-Year Advising Syllabus was designed primarily using the seminal developmental advising work of Burns B. Crookston (1972). The first article in the syllabus is titled *Advising: A Shared Effort for Success*, which outlines the advisor role in the academic advising partnership. This section of the syllabus is illustrated above in Figure 6. There are five bulleted points presented in the article, many of them taken from the existing mission statement of the Office of Student Services. Examples of the advisor role include helping students to develop decision making skills that will empower them to succeed, and assisting students in identifying and clarifying their educational goals (“Mission Statement, Office of Student Services, School of Business Administration”, 2010). Through developmental advising, the

student and advisor mutually decide who takes initiative and responsibility in the partnership, and who supplies and acquires knowledge and skills (Crookston, 1972). Outlining roles and expectations in print, early in an advising relationship, may allow a meaningful conversation and mutual understanding to emerge.

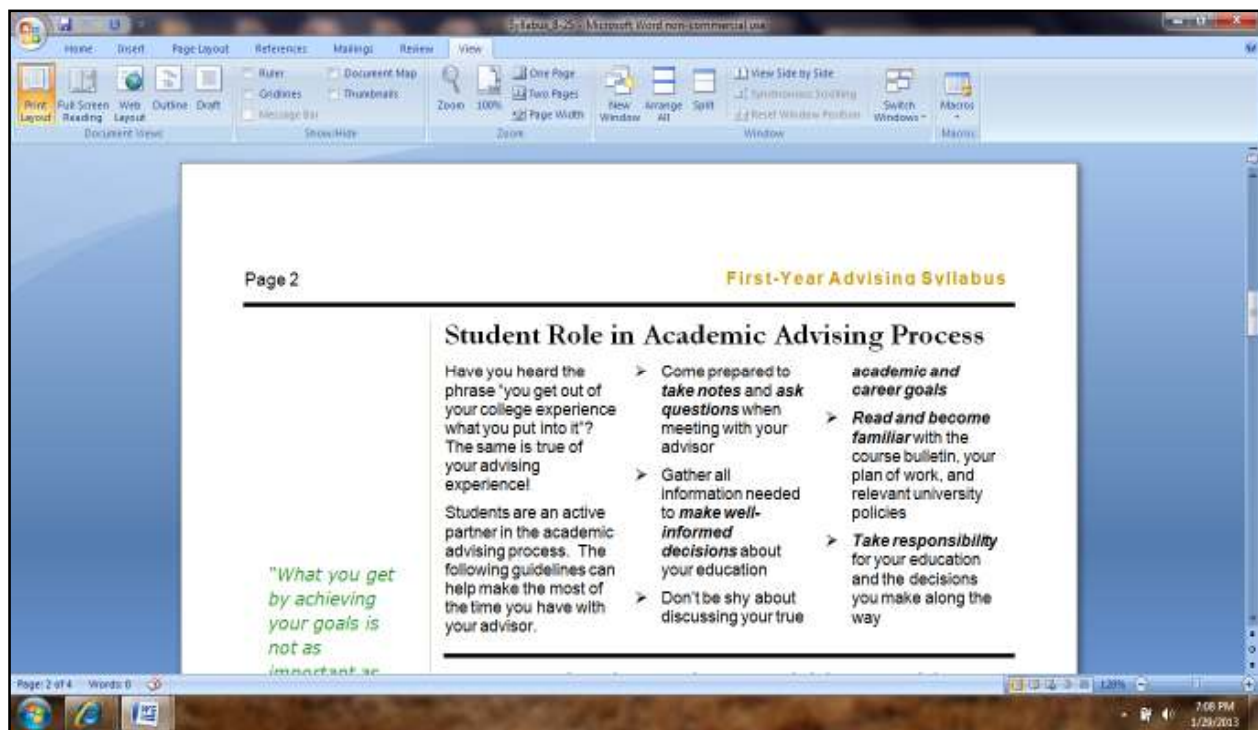


Figure 7: First-Year Advising Syllabus, student role article.

The companion article to this write-up is found on the second page of the syllabus, entitled *Student Role in Academic Advising Process*. This article is shown above in Figure 7. Again, bulleted points are presented for easy digestion of information. Examples include sharing the importance of coming prepared to take notes and ask questions, gathering information to make well-informed decisions, and taking responsibility for a student's own education. The purpose of these articles is to illustrate the developmental advising idea that a student is not merely a passive learner, but shares responsibility with their advisor for their overall quality of

learning (Crookston, 1972). There is a shared responsibility for taking the initiative in advising activities. Developmental advising and teaching is concerned with promoting a student's rational processes, problem solving and decision making skills (Crookston, 1972). Each of which are differentiated yet connected through the advisor and student role articles in the advising syllabus.

On the first page of the syllabus, there is a list of important dates in the left-hand column, including the date winter 2013 registration begins, the last day to withdraw from fall 2012 classes, the final exam study day, and final exam dates. The bottom of the first page also lists the alphabetical breakdown of academic advisors within the Business School and their email addresses, for quick student reference. These prescriptive, informative elements were placed on the first page to grab student attention, and for ease of information. The important dates and contact information are easy to find on the front page, with no need to flip through the syllabus to locate.

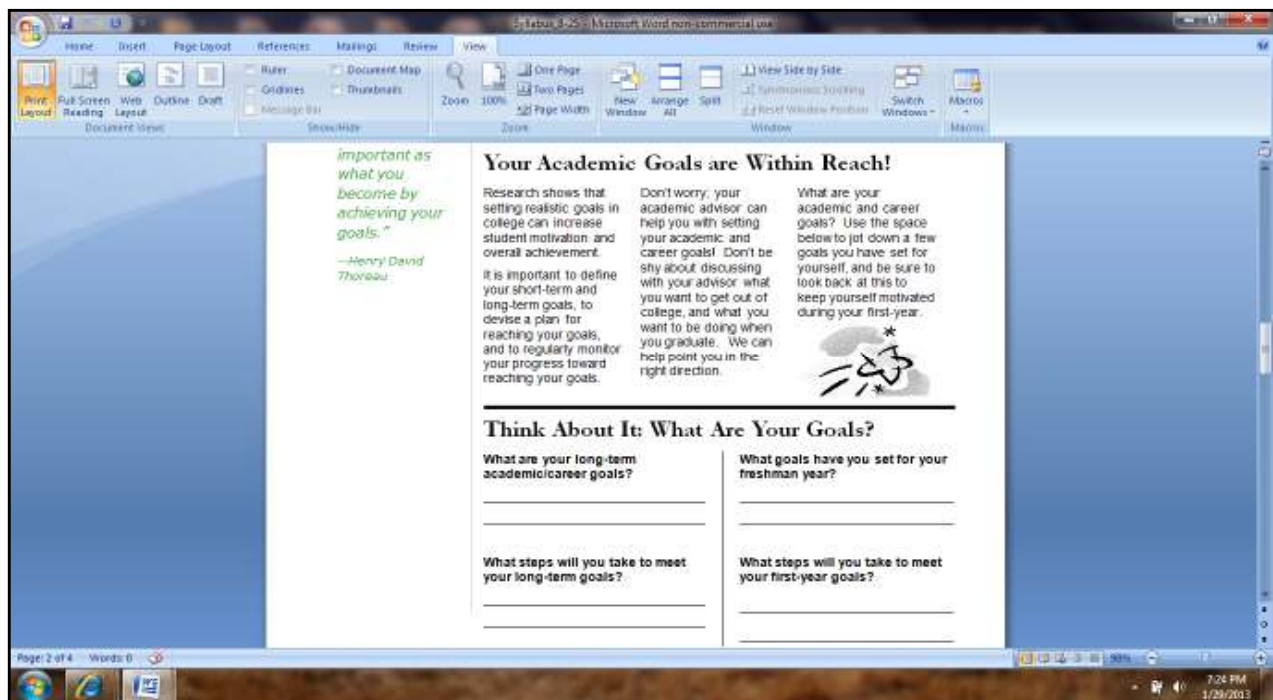


Figure 8: First-Year Advising Syllabus, academic goals articles.

The second page of the syllabus addresses the developmental advising factor of goal setting (Winston & Sandor, 2002). There is a small paragraph that explains the importance of setting and striving toward goals, followed by a fill-in section where students can write their first-year and long-term goals, as well as action steps they will take to realize those self-imposed goals. These sections of the syllabus are illustrated on the previous page in Figure 8. This is one of the areas of the syllabus that was intended to be reviewed and discussed between the first-year student and advisor during an advising appointment. As mentioned previously, effective academic advising connects students to resources that support attainment of goals and key learning outcomes (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Connecting advising activities to individual learner goals may significantly impact a student's overall motivation to learn and persist in college (Keller, 2010). Setting goals allows an advisor to look past static grades and test scores, and to better assess the true interests and potential ability of a student (Crookston, 1972). A developmental advisor believes that student satisfaction comes from a feeling of accomplishment that results from setting and reaching one's goals. However, to be most effective, these goals must be self-set rather than imposed by a teacher or advisor. Developmental advising suggests that intrinsic satisfaction comes from accomplishing self-imposed goals more so than any external pressures to succeed (Crookston, 1972).

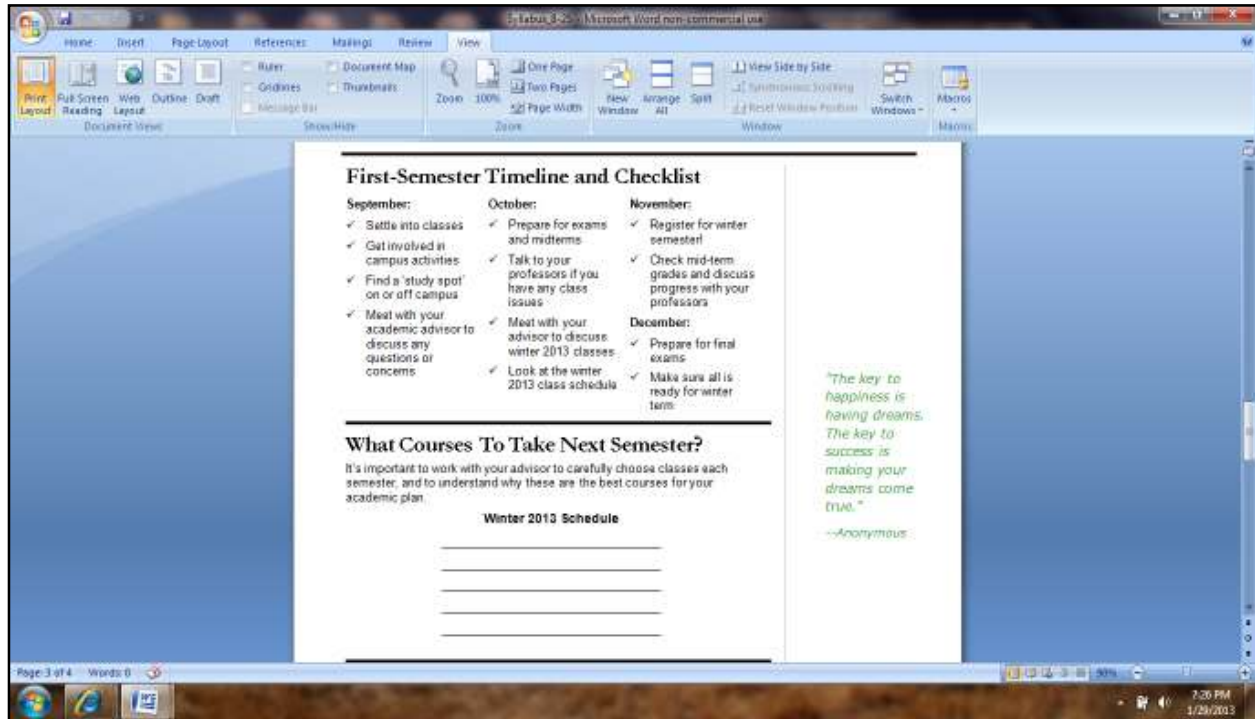


Figure 9: First-Year Advising Syllabus, first-semester timeline and course selection articles.

The third page of the syllabus combines developmental and prescriptive elements, including a *First-Semester Timeline and Checklist*, which provides tips to activities students should be completing each month during their first-semester. This section is shown above in Figure 9. This was included as an important informative and planning feature, and to address the lower developmental scores in Academic Decision Making (ADM) found through the facilitation of the AAI tool. Perhaps the most important feature on the third page of the syllabus is the fill-in section titled *What Courses to Take Next Semester*. This section was included as a direct result of the low developmental scores found in the Selecting Courses (SC) section of the AAI. This section is intended for hands-on use between student and advisor during an advising appointment, so that students have the initial guidance and support needed to select the appropriate courses for their first semester. In doing so, the advisor provides the student with the

problem-solving skills needed in selecting course, in order to eventually shift this responsibility primarily to the student for future semesters (Crookston, 1972).

The final article on the third page of the syllabus is titled *Get Involved to Get Ahead in College*. Social belonging, active participation, and regular peer interaction have been shown to greatly impact a student's motivation and achievement in college (Lynch, 2006). Meaningful interaction and engagement among students is critical during the freshman year (Tinto, 2007). This section of the syllabus gives a brief explanation of the importance of campus involvement, and lists a few student organizations in the School of Business. Also included are links to the School of Business student organizations website, and also to the Dean of Students Office website for a full listing of all campus student organizations.

The final page of the syllabus includes a *Campus Resource Directory* which includes a list of campus offices that first-year students may need referral to, such as the Office of Financial Aid, the Academic Success Center, and the Writing Center. The back page of the syllabus also includes a section called *Don't Forget! Notes – Reminders – Tasks*, which includes 15 blank lines where students can take notes during their advising appointments. Previously, there had been a recurring issue in the Office of Student Services of first-year students not bringing note-taking materials to their appointments. This section was intended to address that issue, so that students recall the important information discuss in their appointment. The final page of the syllabus also includes the official Wayne State University School of Business Administration logo, the office location, contact information, and website. This important reference information was intentionally placed on the back page so that students can easily find it as needed.

Phase 2

The second phase of data collection took place from September 10, 2012 through October 12, 2012. This five-week period was one-week longer than anticipated, due to initial low volume of first-year students being seen in the advising office. This was expected, however, since first-year students are typically using this period of time to adjust to their first-year experience. Registration for winter semester did not begin until early November, and the schedule of classes did not post online until mid-October, so many students did not feel the need to see their advisor this early in the term. During this phase, the advisors also provided feedback in their journals, facilitated through Google Documents, which gave me real-time access to that data.

During phase 2, nine first-year students met with their assigned academic advisor, and completed the open-ended First-Year Advising Survey. Of those nine, four students voluntarily provided contact information to participate in a short phone interview. Three students followed-up to email and texted requests for an interview, and were interviewed by phone. During this phase, three advisors provided feedback in their journals, and I kept my own reflective researcher journal through Google Documents.

The data collected in the first phase supports each of the major themes of the AAI questionnaire: Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Courses (SC) (Winston & Sandor, 2002). However, the most frequent theme identified by students throughout this phase was in relation to selecting courses. Based on survey and interview data, it was clear that the number one reason students had scheduled the appointment with their advisor was to discuss class selection, and after the appointment students overwhelmingly found course selection to be the primary role of their advisor.

Many students did use words like *informative*, *helpful*, and *useful* to describe their advising experience, and felt that their questions were adequately answered. These comments most closely address matters of personalizing education and academic decision-making. A student theme was found that focused on creating a relationship and feeling engaged with their advisor, but this theme was weak in comparison to matters of course selection.

Student Surveys. The First-Year Advising Survey was given to freshman students to complete in the lobby of the Office of Student Services, directly after meeting with their academic advisor. The immediacy of the feedback ensured candid, honest responses from students. In each phase of this study, I entered the short survey answers into tables using Microsoft Word, organized by question number (Ruona, 2005). This gave me the opportunity to become familiar with the data, and well prepared for further analysis using the constant comparative method once all data was inputted from advisor journals, student interviews, and my researcher journal for phase 2 (Smith, 2002).

The first question on the survey: *How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?* addressed the FACT developmental advising questions that advisors used to promote meaningful conversation with students. There were nine responses to this question, with the predominate theme revolving around helpfulness in selecting courses. The words *helpful* or *helped* surfaced six times throughout the nine responses, with five students addressing class scheduling in their responses. One response that seemed to summarize all others was “The questions my advisor asked were very helpful for me to express my thoughts and to figure out which directions I should take when it comes to scheduling (Student 1, personal communication, fall 2012).

The second question on the survey was: *How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?* This question clearly addressed the advising syllabus that was reviewed and provided to students during their advising appointment. There were nine responses to this question, each positive as to the usefulness of the instrument. Responses centered around general helpfulness, organization and preparedness. While the responses to the first question had a clear theme of selecting courses, only two students responding to the second question felt that the syllabus would help with course selection and registration. This potentially signals a student's desire to have an advisor help with course selection rather than figure it out on their own using a written guide.

The third question on the survey was: *What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?* Eight students responded to this question, one student chose not to answer this question on their survey. Most students had no suggestions for improvement to either instrument. The only suggestion that was provided addressed the advising syllabus, in which it was recommended to attach a student's curriculum plan to the syllabus.

The fourth and final question on the survey was; *Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?* Eight responses were collected for this question; one student chose not to answer. Seven of the eight student respondents preferred the FACT advising questions to the First-Year Advising Syllabus. The given reasons included the ability to talk face-to-face, the benefits of open exchange and dialogue with an advisor, and desiring an avenue to have specific and individualized questions answered. A couple of students mentioned having unique situations

that the prescribed information in the syllabus could not answer. They felt only a conversation with their advisor could adequately address their unique needs.

A summary of student survey results for Phase 2 is found below in Table 3. The four survey questions are listed on the left side of the table, while the major themes that emerged from the responses to each question are presented in rank order on the right side of the table. The number of individual responses that touched upon each theme is also presented.

Table 3 <i>Phase 2 Student Survey Results</i>	
Survey Question	Summary of Responses (Themes)
1. How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?	1. Course Selection: 5 responses 2. Personal Relationship: 3 responses 3. Future Planning/Goals: 1 response
2. How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?	1. Planning/Organization: 5 responses 2. Course Selection: 2 responses 3. Personal Relationship: 1 response
3. What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?	1. No Suggested Changes: 7 responses 2. Attach Plan of Work: 1 response (Course Selection)
4. Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?	1. Advising Questions: 7 responses 2. Advising Syllabus: 0 responses Why? 1. Personal Relationship: 7 responses 2. Course Selection: 2 responses

Advisor Journals. Three advisors met with first-year students and provided feedback in their journals during this phase. Two advisors provided feedback through Google Documents, while the other had difficulty in accessing the Google Document, and instead chose to provide her feedback to me by email. Advisor feedback throughout this and other phases was much less

than planned, which became a limitation in this study. However, the little advisor feedback that was received was useful in corroborating the student survey and interview data collected throughout each phase. Similar to the process conducted for student surveys, I organized feedback from advisor journals into tables using Microsoft Word (Ruona, 2005), in preparation for further analysis with all data collected in this phase. Advisor journal feedback is included in Appendix C.

In Phase 2, the advisor journals supported the student feedback that the FACT questionnaire was a useful tool in dialoging with first-year students. Although students provided feedback pointing to their primary desire for course selection help, advisors seemed to be more aware of an advisor/student relationship forming within the appointment. One advisor wrote that the more questions she asked, the more comfortable the student seemed, evidenced by more detailed answers given by the student in conversation.

I think the FACT tool is a great way to get first-year students to begin to consider questions they may not have thought about. On the other hand, some of the questions on the FACT sheet could be questions students have thought about but may not have had a platform to discuss or share/sort their thoughts and feelings about them (Advisor 2, Appendix C, lines 12-15).

The same advisor wrote about the openness of the conversation she had with her student, and how it enabled her to personalize her advising techniques and course selection assistance. “The FACT sheet laid a foundation to have an open conversation with the student. As she answered questions, it prompted me to inquire further and she was interested in providing me with more detail (Advisor 2, Appendix C, lines 16-18). She concluded by observing that, “Knowing more about [the student’s] work schedule and how she’s managing that with her

school work, triggered thoughts of how I could best help this student prepare a schedule for the winter 2013 semester, which was her reason for coming in today” (Advisor 2, Appendix C, lines 19-22).

Advisors provided less feedback on the First-Year Advising Syllabus than on the FACT instrument. However, much of the feedback providing by advisors on the syllabus were in-fact suggestions for improvement. Two advisor journal entries suggested shortening the length of the syllabus, and one advisor described the syllabus as *cumbersome*. The same advisor recommended that I provide a separate note pages instead of having the fill-in areas spread throughout the syllabus. “May be beneficial to have an "info" sheet and a "notes" or worksheet page. This would separate the information that may be useful in the future versus what needs to be covered at the appointment” (Advisor 3, Appendix C, lines 23-25).

Some of these comments aligned with my own researcher journal, where I expressed concern regarding the length of the syllabus. I was concerned that the syllabus may be too long to cover during an advising appointment, and that the length may deter students from referring to the syllabus in the future. Luckily, student interviews contradicted the latter concern, where all interviewed students said they kept the syllabus and planned to refer to it later during their first semester and in future semesters.

Student Interviews. Perhaps the most telling data collected during the study was through student phone interviews. Each student seemed candid and honest in answering the interview questions and providing feedback. Phone interviews were recorded, with verbal student permission, and maintained for future transcription. My interview data analysis began by transcribing the interviews into tables using Microsoft Word. This allowed me to easily read the text, identify themes, and organize data by underlining, highlighting, and taking notes as needed

(Ruona, 2005). I used the constant comparative method as a detailed technique for analyzing interview data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I began with one statement, for example, the first statement given in the initial interview during this phase was regarding class selection. So I scoured each line of the three interviews in this phase to look for similar mentions of class selection concerns (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I repeated this process for each significant statement that was found in the transcription, until themes began to emerge.

I was recursive in my analysis, beginning as soon as my first interview occurred, and adding to the analysis as more data were collected (Ruona, 2005). Much of my analysis was done by hand with paper and pen. As themes emerged, I would write them down, and simply tally the number of times that theme was seen in the data. This was also a repeated process to ensure consistency in my analysis (Ruona, 2005). Those themes with the most tallies were concluded as the major themes of the interviews, and compared with the major themes found in the other forms of data for each phase. Due to the difficulty in reaching students, member checking was not possible. Rather, I employed peer examination by having academic advisors unrelated to this study review and comment on the interview data. This was useful in eliminating any bias in my conclusions (Ruona, 2005).

In phase 2, four students provided contact information on their student surveys indicating voluntary permission to be interviewed. Three students responded to the request for an interview. Multiple, unsuccessful attempts were made to contact the fourth student. The most successful way to contact students proved to be through text message. It was very beneficial to arrange interview times in advance, as many students made a point of having the syllabus in front of them during our interview. Interviews lasted anywhere from 5-10 minutes in length. As

an incentive, participants were emailed a \$10 gift certificate to the restaurant or store of their choice, after their interview.

The first student interviewed was a male first-year Business student, and found the FACT instrument and the First-Year Advising Syllabus to be most helpful with selecting courses. He also responded positively to the First-Semester Timeline and Checklist section of the advising syllabus. He admitted that he is motivated by the thought of completing his degree as quickly as possible. “I’m just trying to get done as fast as I can” (Student 1, Appendix D, lines 85-86). He found both instruments to be motivational in helping him select the right classes to keep on track and to achieve his goal of degree completion in the shortest amount of time possible.

Student 1 also felt that the syllabus increased his engagement with the university, primarily when his advisor was able to refer him to other campus career-related resources. “I’m not sure what I want to major in yet. So she told me to go to [the] career building and take a test and it should help me out” (Student 1, Appendix D, lines 95-97). He said that he had kept the syllabus, which was sitting on his desk at home. He anticipates referring to it in the future primarily for the campus contacts and phone numbers. He thought that the syllabus was effective, and had no suggestion for improvement.

The second student interviewed was a female first-year student. She felt that the advising syllabus and FACT questions were a good guide in showing her “exactly what it is [she] can expect from college life” (Student 2, Appendix D, lines 133-134). She commented that many of her friends in other majors did not receive an advising syllabus, and she felt the tools will help her earn her degree and excel in her career. She had mixed feedback on the motivational influence of the advising instruments, as she described herself as a self-motivator.

It was a little bit more of a push for me, to help me with what to expect, and to help me look out for things I'm supposed to be expecting out of college. So it was like a win-win (Student 2, Appendix D, lines 107-110).

Student 2 felt that the advising instruments did increase her feeling of engagement with the university community, as she was originally planning to attend a different college and made a last minute decision to attend WSU. She kept the advising syllabus with all of her other course information, and felt that she would look back at it "during hard times, like when I need somebody responsible, or like information on a program, and can just look and see if it's actually on the paper" (Student 2 Appendix D, lines 127-128). Her ideal appointment with her advisor is to "sit down and have a mutual agreement" (Student 2, Appendix D, lines 133-134), which she felt happened during her first-semester advising experience. She had no suggestion for improvement on either advising instrument.

The final first-year student interviewed was a male business major, and found the FACT questions and First-Year Advising Syllabus to be complimentary. He felt that the advising syllabus would help most in selecting courses, and keeping organized throughout the semester.

My advisor was asking me questions right along with the syllabus, so it helped when you had both resources there, because if I had questions about the syllabus, I was able to ask, and she was asking questions as well, so it was very useful in my opinion (Student 3, Appendix D, lines 162-165).

Student 3 was also motivated by the syllabus because of its potential for organization, which he felt was of particular importance for first-year students.

My biggest issue with getting motivated is finding some sort of organization among all the madness. There really is a lot of information being thrown at you at any given time,

so it's nice to have something organized for you because that's one less thing on your shoulders that you have to do. So it helps with my motivation personally (Student 3, Appendix D, lines 177-181).

He also found the personal contact with his advisor to be comforting and helped him to feel better connected to the university. After his advising appointment, he stated that he read the syllabus in greater detail, filled in the classes he needed to take, and expanded on the notes and goals written during his appointment. As he described, he sat down with the syllabus and “planned for the future” (Student 3, Appendix D, line 202). And speaking of future, he felt his future use of the syllabus would primarily be in organizing and selecting courses for future semesters.

Student 3 had no suggestions for improvement for the advising instruments, other than possibly putting the syllabus on the advising website for all students to access. He described his ideal advising appointment as creating a relationship between him and his advisor, and having an informal conversation where questions are asked and answered of both advisor and student. He described his ideal advising appointment as “just really good back and forth conversation” (Student 3, Appendix D, line 220).

The following table shows a summary of qualitative data collected in Phase 2 through advisor journals and student interviews. Three advisors and three students provided data through journals and interviews in this phase. Data are displayed in relation to the three main themes found in this phase: course selection, future planning/goals, and personal advising relationship; as well as suggestions regarding improvement of the syllabus instrument.

Table 4

Phase 2 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary

	Course Selection	Future Planning/ Goals	Personal Advising Relationship	Syllabus Length/ Layout
Advisors				
Advisor 1				X
Advisor 2	X	X	X	
Advisor 3				X
Students				
Student 1	X	X		
Student 2	X	X	X	
Student 3	X	X	X	

Researcher Journal. This was the first phase in which my newly designed instruments were being used, so naturally I was quite anxious about the feedback I would receive. I was also very concerned in the first couple of weeks of the phase about the low number of students who were seeing their academic advisors. “Very worried about the number of student surveys collected so far. I’m not sure I have a plan B to collect more data if needed (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012). I was relieved as the phase progressed that first-year advising appointments were picking up, and that feedback was mostly positive from both students and advisors.

Based on previous research and the results of the AAI, I anticipated that students might be most concerned with matters of course selection. The results of Phase 2 supported my

prediction. However, similar to the data collected from advisors in this phase, I hoped that the instruments would show students that advising can move beyond course selection.

My sincere hope in designing these instruments is that students will see advising for much more than course selection. I feel that the discussion of goals and the explanation of advisor and student roles may help open up the possibilities that come from a positive relationship with your advisor. It's important for students, especially first-year students, to know they can come to someone that cares, to address any worries they have about college (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

I was also a bit concerned with the length of the advising syllabus, which was echoed by advisor feedback in this phase. "Perhaps the syllabus is just too LONG! Is it information overload? I guess only feedback will tell" (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

Conclusions for Phase 2. Based on the survey data collected from students, it was concluded that students feel most comfortable choosing classes with the guidance of an advisor, rather than selecting courses on their own. Participating students found this to be the primary role of their advisor, however developing a personal relationship with their advisor was also important to students in this phase. In support of this, one advisor journal pointed toward the feeling of an open and participatory relationship between herself and her students. It is possible that first-year students are accustomed to a more authoritative, prescriptive counseling style in the high school environment (Smith, 2002), but wish to have a closer relationship with their college advisor. Overall, feedback was mostly positive on both advising instruments during Phase 2.

Based on the analysis of qualitative data collected in Phase 2 of the study, very minimal changes were made to the First-Year Advising Syllabus, and no changes were made to the FACT questionnaire. The FACT instrument was unchanged in Phase 2 because data collected showed that first-year student participants overwhelmingly preferred the questions to the syllabus. In addition, no advisor feedback showed that any changes to the questions were necessary. However, advisor feedback did drive changes to the advising syllabus.

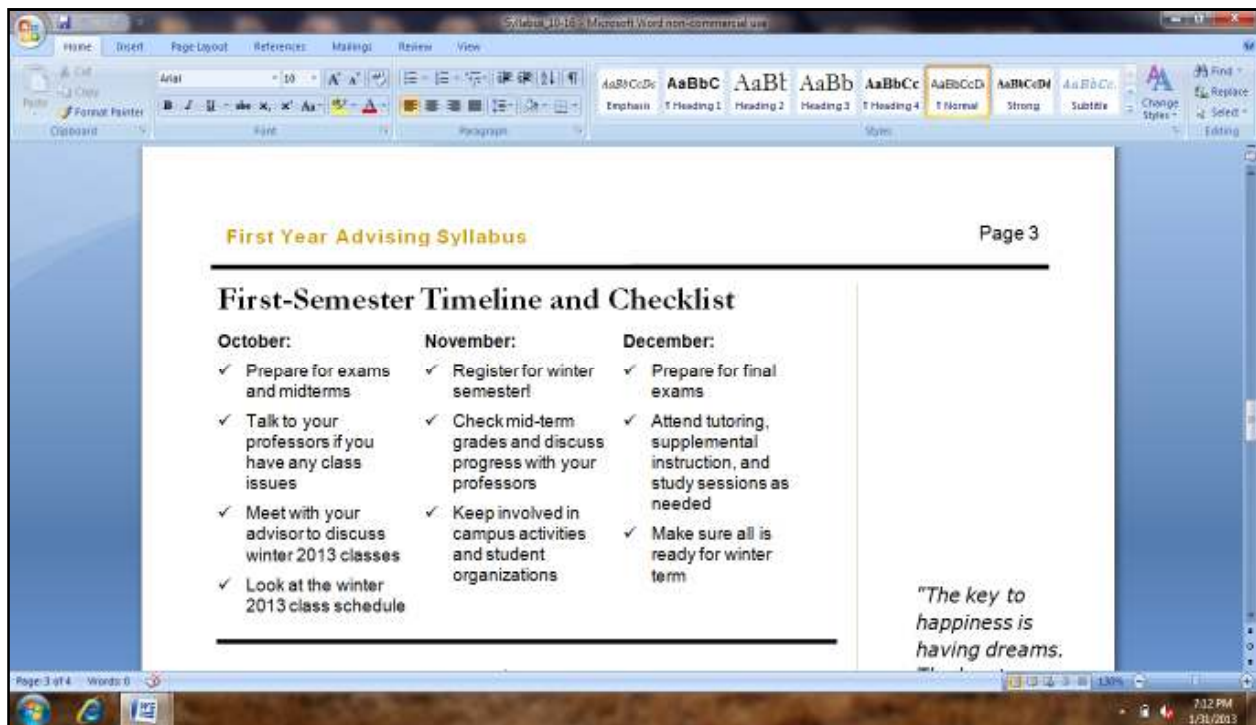


Figure 10: First-Year Advising Syllabus, updated Timeline and Checklist

The first change that was made to the syllabus was to the dates in the margin on the first page. The first date on the list had already passed, so it was removed from the syllabus to keep the information current. In addition, the university had changed the start of winter registration, so that date was also updated on the new version of the syllabus. The September activities were also removed from the *First-Semester Timeline and Checklist*, since that month had passed. Some continuing September activities were moved to other months on the timeline. The updated

First-Semester Timeline and Checklist is shown on the previous page in Figure 10. Minor cosmetic changes were also made, such as new clip art added or replaced on a couple of pages, to improve the overall look of those pages. On page 4, a clearer font and updated logo were added to the margin to also improve the cosmetic look of the page.

The most significant changes made to the syllabus were the rearranging of some articles. To address the advisor comments regarding the syllabus length and cumbersome layout, the fill-in sections of the document were all moved to the back page of the syllabus. On page two, the *Think About It: What are your Goals* section was moved to the last page, and the *Get Involved to Get Ahead in College* article took its place on page two. The *What Courses to Take Next Semester* section was also moved to the back page, and replaced by the *Campus Resource Directory*.

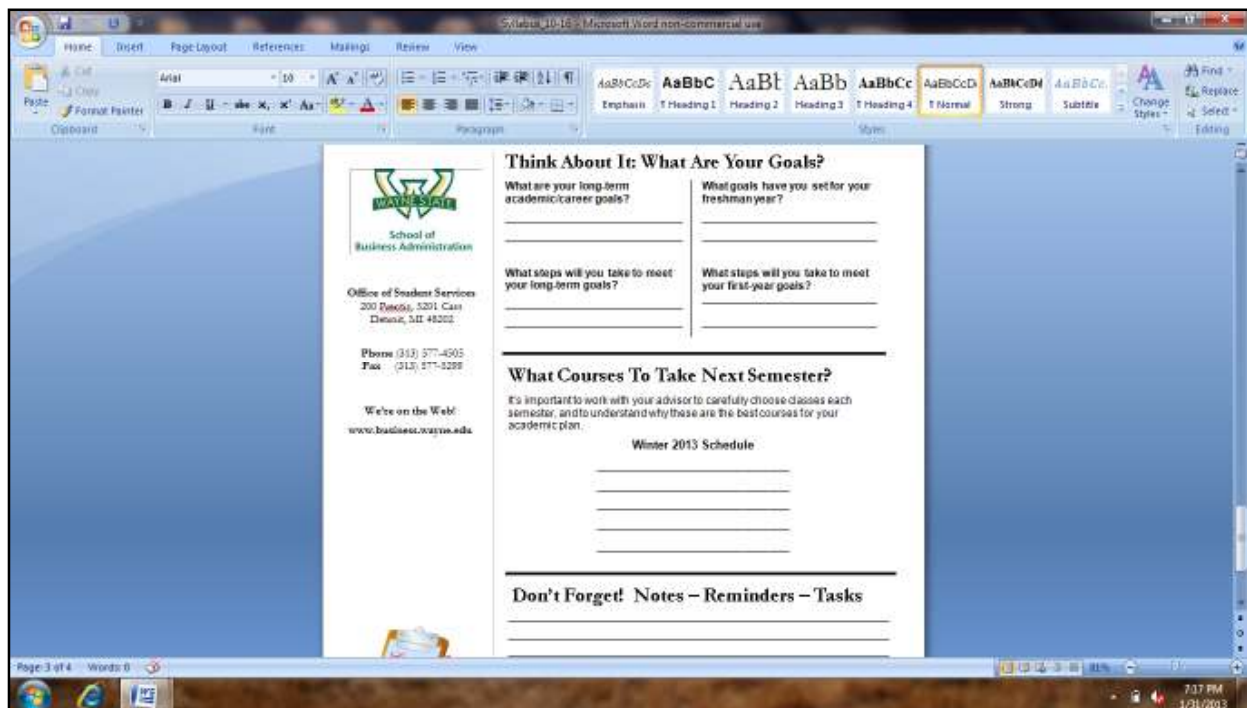


Figure 11: First-Year Advising Syllabus, updated final page

The revised syllabus now has these two fill-in sections and the notes section all on the back page. The final page of the revised syllabus is shown on the previous page in Figure 11. This should address the cumbersome layout issue, now that students need only flip to the final page to write notes. If an advisor is running short on time, it should be easier to just refer to that page rather than flip to and discuss in detail all pages of the syllabus. The parts of the syllabus that were primarily written for future student reference are now imbedded throughout the syllabus. The important sections to be addressed with an advisor are now on one easy-to-find page. The revised syllabus will be used and evaluated in Phase 3 of this study. Table 5 on the next page provides a summary and rationale for changes made to the syllabus in this phase.

Table 5

Summary of Design Changes Based on Feedback in Phase 2

Theme	Evidence	Redesign
Course Selection	<p>“Knowing more about her work schedule and how she’s managing that with her school work, triggered thoughts of how I could best help this student prepare a schedule for the Winter 2013 semester, which was her reason for coming in today” (Advisor 2, lines 19-22).</p> <p>“I wrote my classes for next semester that she recommended, I would have forgotten them if I didn’t write them down somewhere” (Student 1, lines 30-31)</p> <p>“if I was presented this when I was first choosing classes” (Student 3, line 170)</p> <p>“where is says what classes to take next semester (Student 3, lines 197-198).</p> <p>“I will choose those classes, then be on my way for the next semester” (Student 3, line 207).</p>	<p>With course selection as the biggest theme in this phase, the <i>What Courses to Take Next Semester</i> section of the syllabus was better highlighted by moving it to the back page of the syllabus, for easier access.</p>
Personal Advising Relationship (Engagement)	<p>“when I need somebody responsible” (Student 2, line 127).</p> <p>“as long as we can sit down and have a mutual agreement” (Student 2, lines 133-134).</p> <p>“I feel like the personal contact with my advisor is helpful in becoming comfortable with the university” (Student 3, lines 188-199).</p> <p>“we have some sort of relationship” (Student 3, line 218).</p>	<p>I felt that the advising instruments were effective in developing a personal advising relationship, so no changes were made in this respect.</p>

Length and Layout of Syllabus	<p>“Syllabus is kind of long for me to go over in an appointment maybe modify to be one page with notes page” (Advisor 1, lines 4-5).</p> <p>“Student syllabus is cumbersome in usage. May be beneficial to have an "info" sheet and a "notes" or worksheet page. This would separate the information that may be useful in the future versus what needs to be covered at the appointment” (Advisor 3, lines 23-25).</p>	The fill-in sections of the syllabus were moved to the back page so students can easily flip to the interactive sections of the syllabus during their advising appointments.
Personal Student Reflection	<p>“The student was very participatory” (Advisor 2, line 9).</p> <p>“the student became more comfortable because he got more in depth with his answers and even provided examples” (Advisor 2, lines 10-11).</p> <p>“The FACT sheet laid a foundation to have an open conversation with the student” (Advisor 2, line 16).</p> <p>“it allowed the student to open up more and I learned more about her life” (Advisor 2, lines 18-19).</p>	Based on positive feedback about the conversations prompted by the FACT instrument, no changes were made to this tool.
Future Planning/Goals	<p>“the timeline/checklist is also good” (Student 1, line 33).</p> <p>“telling me exactly what it is I can expect from college life” (Student 2, lines 94-95).</p> <p>“planned for the future” (Student 3, line 202).</p>	With student emphasis on planning, I updated the timeline/checklist section to eliminate any past dates. I also updated an incorrect date that was listed on the front page of the syllabus.
Motivation	<p>“I’m a self-motivator. So, it’s like, it was a little bit more of a push for me” (Student 2, lines 107-108).</p> <p>“my biggest issue with getting motivated is finding some sort of organization among all the madness (Student 3, lines 177-178).</p> <p>“So, it helps with my motivation personally” (Student 3, line 181).</p>	Based on student feedback, I felt that both instruments were positively impacting student motivation, so no changes were made in regards to motivation.

Phase 3

The third phase of data collection took place from October 22 through November 16. This four-week phase occurred during the peak registration period for winter semester, including the days leading up to registration and the first two weeks of winter registration. This is typically a busy and stressful time during the semester for students studying for mid-term exams, and also for advisors who are working with a high volume of students preparing for registration. During this phase, eight first-year students met with their assigned advisor and completed the First-Year Advising Survey. Of those eight students, four voluntarily provided contact information to participate in a phone interview, and three were successfully contacted for an interview. During this phase, one advisor provided feedback in her journal, facilitated through Google Documents, and I kept a researcher journal also using Google Documents.

Phase 3 saw an interesting and unexpected shift from a focus on Selecting Courses (SC) to a preference for Personalizing Education (PE) in a student's advising experience. Based on my experience as an advisor, it was anticipated that the mid-semester time period would be the point in which students are most concerned with course selection. However, unlike the previous phase of data collection, students surveyed and interviewed in Phase 3 seemed more concerned with long-term goals and future planning rather than simply choosing classes. The advisor journal collected in this phase also mentioned goals, with the advisor explaining "I feel he really enjoyed talking about his goals" (Advisor 1, Appendix C, lines 29-30). Five student surveys touched on academic goals, and two students interviewed mentioned goals as a primary concern. One student remarked, "It showed me, you know, my goals, not only as a freshman, but all throughout college. So it kind of revitalized me a little bit" (Student 5, Appendix D, lines 357-358). It is probable that as students had settled into the semester, and learned more about the

business profession in their classes, they had become more excited about planning for their future in the field. The following qualitative data will show the progression in this study of student perception over the advising role in their first-year success.

Student Surveys. Once again, the First-Year Advising Survey was given to freshman students to complete in the lobby of the Office of Student Services, directly after meeting with their academic advisor. The first question on the survey: *How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?* addressed the FACT developmental advising questions that advisors used to promote meaningful conversation with students. There were eight responses to this question, with the predominate theme focused on personalization of education. Phrases like *for my benefit, relevant to me personally, and tailored to my needs* were found five times throughout the eight responses. A secondary theme surrounding future goals and success was found in responses to the first survey question. A response that seemed to summarize all others was “I feel as though [the questions] were very relevant to me personally. [My advisor] asked questions about my preferences in order to tailor my schedule to me” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

The second question on the survey was: *How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?* This question addressed the advising syllabus that was used during a student’s advising appointment. There were eight responses to this question, which were mostly positive about the usefulness of the tool. Students responded that the syllabus was most useful for planning purposes, or as a place to find important dates and contact information. Similar to question one, students seemed more concerned with future planning rather than course selection. As one student remarked, “There is an abundance of information out there to help with advising, but it is nice to see it on one sheet” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

The third question on the survey was: *What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?* Eight students responded to this question. The student respondents provided no suggestions for change to either the advising questions or First-Year Advising Syllabus.

The final question on the survey was: *Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?* Eight responses were received for this question. Four of the eight student participants felt that both instruments were equally useful and had no preference to one over another. Three students preferred the advising questions over the syllabus. As one student explained, “the advising questions can lead to more questions, and you can ask your own to get a better understanding” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Only one student responded that the advising syllabus was his or her preferred advising tool.

Table 6 on the following page provides a summary of student survey results. The four survey questions are listed on the left side of the table, while the major themes that emerged from the responses to each question are presented in rank order on the right side of the table. The number of individual responses that touched upon each theme is also presented.

Table 6 <i>Phase 3 Student Survey Results</i>	
Survey Question	Summary of Responses (Themes)
1. How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?	1. Personal Benefit: 5 responses 2. Future Planning/Goals 2 responses 3. Course Selection: 1 response
2. How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?	1. Future Planning/Goals: 3 responses 3. General Information: 2 responses 3. Course Selection 1 response
3. What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?	1. No changes: 8 responses
4. Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?	1. No Preference: 4 responses 2. Advising Questions: 3 responses 3. Advising Syllabus: 1 response Why? Personal Relationship: 3 responses Course Selection: 1 response

Advisor Journals. Advisor feedback was very limited during this phase, partially a result of an unexpected staffing reassignment that temporarily decreased the number of advisors participating in the study. This was also a very busy period in the semester, where advisors were seeing several students each day, allowing less time to compose lengthy journal entries. Only one advisor provided feedback in her journal during this phase, and her feedback was only a couple of lines long.

However, echoing the student surveys collected in phase 3, the advisor journal also signaled a shift in student focus to one of goal orientation. The advisor commented, “They seemed receptive to going over the syllabus. Focused on goals and winter 2013 courses” (Advisor 1, Appendix C, lines 27-28). In a different entry, the same advisor wrote “Met with a student just now and he took notes all over the syllabus. I feel he really enjoyed talking about his

goals” (Advisor 1, Appendix C, lines 29-30). The advisor offered no suggestions for change of the advising instruments used in phase 3.

Student Interviews. Once again, the most detailed data collected during phase 3 was through phone interviews with first-year students. Each student seemed willing and comfortable to express honest opinions on the First-Year Advising Syllabus and the FACT Advising Questions. Phone interviews were recorded, with verbal student permission, and maintained for future transcription. In phase 3, four students provided contact information on their student surveys indicating voluntary permission to be interviewed. Three students responded to the request for an interview. Multiple, unsuccessful attempts were made to contact the fourth student. The most successful way to contact students again proved to be through text message. Pre-scheduled interviews were approximately 5-10 minutes in length. Participants were emailed a \$10 gift certificate to the restaurant or store of their choice, after their interview. One student declined the gift certificate, as he was happy to provide his feedback without an incentive. A transcription of all interviews is included in Appendix D.

The first student interviewed in phase 3 was a male first-year student, who felt that the First-Year Advising Syllabus and FACT questionnaire were most useful in providing general direction and information on important campus resources.

I thought that they were helpful because for a while I’ve been trying to locate a whole bunch of locations and phone numbers, and for a while people were giving me wrong locations. She gave me an actual list of the things I needed and that helped a bunch (Student 4, Appendix D, lines 247-250).

Student 4 was confident that the advising tools would positively contribute to his success as a freshman student, because he came in feeling lost in his first semester. However, he did not

see the motivational potential in either instrument. Instead, he found guest speakers in his classes to give him the push he needed to choose the right major and plan for his future career. He did admit to feeling more engaged and connected with the university after meeting with his advisor. He even jokingly bragged that he put the syllabus “in a safe place at home” (Student 4, Appendix D, line 284), with his other School of Business documents. However, he was also very candid in his uncertainty if he would refer to the syllabus again at a future date.

Overall, Student 4 was positive about his advising appointment, and wished he could start taking Business classes earlier in his curriculum. He did not have any suggestions for improvement to either the advising syllabus or advising questions. But he did offer the idea of providing the syllabus to students at orientation before they begin classes, “like try to hit them when they first come in” (Student 4, Appendix D, line 305).

The second student interviewed in phase 3 was a male, first-year student majoring in Business. He also felt the advising tools were most helpful in providing important resources and opportunities for future planning, especially for new students. “They helped me with paths I didn’t know before, and opened me up to a lot of resources I didn’t know were available yet” (Student 5, Appendix D, lines 246-247). He felt the advising instruments would contribute to his first year success, as they can “open up pathways I didn’t know where available to my future success” (Student 5, Appendix D, line 351).

He felt that the goal orientation of the advising instruments were most motivational. “It showed me, you know, my goals, not only as a freshman, but all throughout college. So it kind of revitalized me a little bit” (Student 5, Appendix D, lines 357-358). He also felt a greater sense of connection with the university after meeting with his advisor. “It was a very warm and inviting environment” (Student 5, Appendix D, line 364). He had kept the advising syllabus

with his other school documents for easy future access. When asked how he would use the syllabus in the future, he once again referred to his goals, by making sure his future academic and career goals are being reached.

Student 5 was pleased with the length of his 30 minute advising appointment and the opportunity to ask questions about a wide-range of topics.

I think the half an hour appointment I had was a good amount of time. You know, 'cause it feels like a good chunk, it's not too long, but you definitely have time to get all your concerns met. And you can talk about any questions you have. I asked about the parking pass too, so it's not just limited to one subject. So, you know, I left feeling good about school and employment, and I'll definitely be back next semester to meet again (Student 5, Appendix D, lines 388-393).

His only suggestion for improvement for the advising instruments was in delivery method. Like other students, he suggested adding the First-Year Advising Syllabus to the School of Business website for easier and more comprehensive student access. He was, however, the only student to express an interest in my research topic, and to ask why I chose to study academic advising.

The final student interviewed in phase 3 was a female, who felt that the advising tools were most effective in assisting with course selection and goal setting. "I had no clue on what classes to take, and they helped me to decide on the classes I needed to take for the next semester" (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 421-422). But like the other interview participants, she also placed great importance on goal setting. "Well, on the green sheet, on the back of it, it tells you to set your goals and what you want to achieve. And that helped me think about my goals and what I want to achieve for my first year (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 429-431).

To her, goal setting was also the most motivational aspect of the advising tools, and something her advisor really helped with. “I want to eventually go to graduate school, so I set my goal for 3.5 [GPA] or higher, and my advisor told me that’s a pretty good goal and I’m going to do my best to achieve it” (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 435-436). She also commented that the direction her advisor provided helped to foster a greater feeling of confidence and connectedness to her chosen major.

I had no idea what I wanted to do, whether it was Business or what I wanted to do, because I was unsure about everything. After meeting with my advisor, and she gave me like the syllabus and one-year layout form, I knew what I was passionate about and what I liked. I realized I was in the right field and I was doing the right thing, and I knew what to do in the future to take me that way (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 442-447).

She had no suggestions for improvement in the content or layout of the First-Year Advising Syllabus and FACT instrument, but she did feel that students would benefit if the syllabus was posted to the WSU website. “That way it can be seen by all students, not just first-year students” (Student 6, Appendix D, line 471). She looked forward to using the tools in the future to figure out her career goals and required classes. She even proudly admitted to having looked at the syllabus again since her advising appointment. She has kept the syllabus in her home office, with her other school papers. She summed up her advising experience by saying “[My advisor] made me feel like she cared, and that’s all that mattered to me” (Student 6, Appendix D, line 477).

Table 7 below illustrates a summary of feedback collected through advisor journals and student interviews in phase 3. One advisor and three students provided data through journals and

interviews in this phase. Data is displayed in relation to the three main themes found in this phase: course selection, future planning/goals, and personal advising relationship.

Table 7

Phase 3 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary

	Course Selection	Future Planning/ Goals	Personal Advising Relationship
Advisors			
Advisor 1		X	
Students			
Student 4	X	X	
Student 5		X	X
Student 6	X	X	X

Researcher Journal. I was very pleased with the changes made to the syllabus for use in phase 3, and I was confident that the revisions would make the syllabus easier to use for both advisors and students. My favorite part of the data collection in these phases was by far the student interviews. The experience even made me reevaluate how I do things in my own advising practices.

The students are so forthcoming with their feedback. They don't seem to be holding back, and I'm learning a lot about what is important to them. Maybe we [administrators] spend too much time making decisions that impact students, and not enough time asking the students what they really want. This honest feedback is eye-opening, and all I really had to do was ask (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

I was also pleasantly surprised to see that students in this phase were excited about their futures and were most interested in long-term planning and setting goals. I must admit, I was expecting more course selection issues during a time during the semester when registration was drawing near. “Students seem so optimistic and excited about their futures. I think discussing goals during their first semester could really be helping them think ahead” (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

Conclusions for Phase 3. Each of the students interviewed in phase 3 agreed that goal setting was a major attribute of the advising tools used during their appointments. Unlike data collected in phase 2, survey data from this phase showed that students were primarily concerned with Personalizing Education (PE) and long-term future planning rather than merely Selecting Courses (SC). Advisor feedback during phase 3 supported the survey and interview data that first-year students were beginning to see their advisor in more than a course selection role. Data showed that midway through their first semester, students seemed to be realizing that their academic advisor can play a greater role in planning for future success, not just planning for future semester’s classes. Perhaps now that the initial adjustment of a student’s first semester had passed, they were feeling more comfortable in their new environments. It is possible that this increase in self-efficacy allowed first-year students to begin to plan, organize and create specific goals toward their future success (Bandura, 1986).

During phase 3, the advisor and student participants provided no suggestions for improvement to the content or layout of the FACT questionnaire or the First-Year Advising Syllabus. Therefore, I was confident that the tools were serving their purpose, and I made no changes heading into the final phase of the study. Although the month of October had passed, I felt that the items in the *First-Semester Timeline and Checklist* were still relevant to students at

that point in the semester. So I did not feel that date-related revisions were necessary in this phase, as they were in phase 2. The instruments revised for phase 3 remained unchanged, and were used for the fourth and final phase of this design-based study.

Phase 4

The fourth and final phase of data collection took place from November 26 through December 21. Four first-year students met with their advisor during this phase and completed the First-Year Advising Survey. Although this entire phase fell within the winter registration period, it was late in the registration process. Many first-year students had already registered by the end of November, and did not have a need to meet with their advisor during this time period. This phase also fell right after the Thanksgiving break, during final exams, and ended right before the long holiday recess. For these reasons, the number of first-year students seen was lower than in previous phases. During the final phase of data collection, two advisors provided feedback in their journals using Google Documents.

The participant data collected in phase 4 showed an interesting combination between the focus on Selecting Courses (SC) found in phase 2, and the emphasis on Personalizing Education (PE) found in phase 3. This phase even touched upon Academic Decision Making (ADM), which was not seen as prominently in the other phases. Academic decision-making includes assessing a student's individual skills and abilities, and using that information as a guide for course selection (Winston & Sandor, 2002). With phase 4 occurring at the end of the semester, students who had not yet registered may have felt the pressure to do so, and had course selection at the forefront of their minds. On the other hand, students who were feeling settled at the end of their first semester were likely comfortable with their success so far. These students may have

been eager to take courses of greater interest to them in the next semester, and those courses more relevant to the specific business field they were pursuing.

Student Surveys. In the final phase of data collection, the First-Year Advising Survey was once again given to freshman students directly after meeting with their academic advisor. Students were asked to complete the survey in the lobby before departing the Office of Student Services. The first question on the survey: *How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?* addressed the FACT developmental advising questions that were used with first-year students. There were four responses to this question, with the predominate theme focused on general helpfulness. The words *helped* or *helping* were written in three of the four answers. Only one student mentioned course selection in answering this question on the open-ended survey.

The second question on the survey: *How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?*, once again addressed the syllabus that was used during a student's advising appointment. Four students answered this question, and all responded positively toward the usefulness of the First-Year Advising Syllabus. One student referred to the usefulness of the syllabus as a guide to the first-year experience. "I feel having a 'cheat sheet' to advising is key for freshmen who don't know how things work in college yet" (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Another student commented on the security of having someone there to help. "The advising syllabus explains a lot about how your advisors will always be there to help you" (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

The third question on the survey was: *What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?* Four students responded to this question. Three of the four students provided no suggestions for improvement, and responded

positively toward the tools. One participant seemed to desire a long-term roadmap for course selection. That student wrote, “Show more specifically what classes lead to others down the road” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). The advising office has a four-year sample sequence of classes which is provided to students online and at new student orientation. An abbreviated version of this document could possibly be incorporated into the First-Year Advising Syllabus.

The final question on the survey was: *Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?* Four participants responded to this question, and the responses were split. Two students found the syllabus to be more helpful in their advising appointment. One student remarked on the usefulness of the syllabus for future course selection. “The syllabus was very helpful and gives a detailed guide to what classes I need to complete my major” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). However, two students preferred the advising questions over the advising syllabus. One student summed up his preference for the FACT advising questions in six simple words, “Face-to-face conversation is key” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

A summary of student survey results for phase 4 is found on the next page in Table 8. The four survey questions are listed on the left side of the table, while the major themes that emerged from the responses to each question are presented in rank order on the right side of the table. The number of individual responses that touched upon each theme is also presented.

Table 8 <i>Phase 4 Student Survey Results</i>	
Survey Question	Summary of Responses (Themes)
1. How do you feel about the questions your advisor asked you during the appointment?	1. Helpful: 3 responses 2. Class Selection: 1 response
2. How useful do you feel the advising syllabus will be for your first year?	1. General Information: 3 responses 2. Course Selection: 1 response
3. What changes would you suggest to the advising questions and advising syllabus for future appointments?	1. No changes: 3 responses 2. Clearer Course Selection: 1 response
4. Did you find one tool more helpful than the other (advising questions or advising syllabus)? If so, which one did you prefer and why?	1. Advising Syllabus: 2 responses 2. Advising Questions: 2 responses Why? Personal Relationship: 2 responses Course Selection: 1 response

Advisor Journals. Two advisors provided feedback through their journals during phase 4. As in previous phases, advisor journal entries were only a few lines in length, but did provide evidence to support student feedback in phase 4. The advisor feedback collected in this phase showed that the advisors also noticed the wide-ranging student needs at the end of their first semester. Some advisor journal entries commented on class selection needs, while other advising sessions seemed to be focused on long-term goals and planning. Students seemed to either be committed to setting and meeting long-term goals, or narrowly focused on selecting courses. Advisors seemed to observe very little middle ground during this final phase of the study.

One advisor felt that the reflective questions of the FACT instrument and the fill-in sections of the syllabus were too advanced for students in their first semester. “Students I met

with were still adjusting to the college experience and everything is still too new for them to be reflective” (Advisor 3, Appendix C, lines 32-33). In contrast, another advisor noticed much more advancement in the thought processes of her first-year students.

One student I met with discussed how she wanted to incorporate women’s studies either as a co-major or a minor into her academic plan. She was very interested in figuring out how this combination of fields would fit into her long term plans (Advisor 4, Appendix C, lines 34-36).

And as a clear illustration of the difference in student mindset during phase 4, the same advisor who wrote about the difficulty in getting her students to reflect, wrote a very different journal entry later during this phase. “Discussed with another student information regarding Senior Rule since she was on scholarship” (Advisor 3, Appendix C, lines 37-38). Senior rule is a program in which undergraduate students can begin graduate-level coursework during their senior year. The program requires high academic achievement and detailed, advanced planning by both student and advisor.

Student Interviews. In the final phase of the study, three students provided contact information on their survey, volunteering to participate in an optional phone interview. After multiple attempts, two students responded to calls, emails and text messages asking for an interview. Both students seemed comfortable and open in providing honest feedback on the First-Year Advising Syllabus and the FACT Advising Questions. The phone interviews were again recorded, with verbal student permission, and maintained for future transcription. As with all previous phases, the most successful way to contact students was through text message. Interviews times were scheduled in advance, and lasted approximately 5-10 minutes. As an

incentive and token of gratitude, participants were emailed a \$10 gift certificate to the restaurant or store of their choice after their interview.

The first student interviewed in Phase 4 was a male first-year Business student interested in entertainment management. He felt that the First-Year Advising Syllabus and FACT questions were too generic, and should be more tailored to his individual interests.

Like part of it seemed like a very blanket[statement], like I need to know where you want to head with your degree and stuff like that, this is what you need to take, this is what you should take. But it seemed too general, rather than like specific to me” (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 502-505).

He found the advising tools to be most useful in the course selection process, and in future course planning in his specific field of study.

It shows me absolutely what I need to take as far as prerequisites before I can take classes that more pertain to my major and that I want to take, so it makes it easy to see what I need to get out of the way now (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 509-511).

He did not find the advising instruments to be particularly motivational, but admitted to requiring little motivation to succeed.

They kind of just pushed me along at whatever pace I was going at. It didn’t really push me any harder, though. I’m also not sure if that was just me, because I was doing rather well at the time in my classes, I didn’t really need any more motivation (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 522-524).

He also did not experience any impact on his feeling of engagement to the university as a result of the First-Year Advising Syllabus or FACT instrument. “It just felt like something I need, or something I had to do for my next semester to start out and go over smoothly (Student 7,

Appendix D, lines 532-533). When asked for suggestions for improvement, he offered feedback on the content of the advising syllabus and the focus of the advising questions.

I think you can make it a little more specific to what the student wants to do with their degree once they graduate. And also kind of have like the advisors know, maybe like suggest some elective classes to go down the same road as what career path the student wants to go. Like if someone wants to be more of an entertainment management person, then like these are some classes that will really help you with that, and these are ones that really won't (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 540-544).

He also suggested uploading the syllabus to the School of Business website for students to see before meeting with their advisor. "I had no clue what I had to take in terms of [prerequisites] until I went into the advising office. It made it very difficult and scary for me" (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 558-559). He had kept the advising syllabus after his appointment, but admitted to not immediately knowing where it was. He anticipated using the syllabus in the future primarily for course selection purposes. "I'm pretty sure I will [use it], just to see what other [prerequisites] I need to get out of the way, like just to show me what I need to do to get to more classes in the future" (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 551-552). In describing his ideal appointment, he again pointed to course selection.

When I walk in, kind of ask how I'm doing, ask how my classes are going, then based on that kind of point me to what level of classes I need to choose to get farther down my major. Like what [prerequisites] are coming, what needs to be done now, what can be pushed off a little later, that kind of stuff (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 563-566).

The second student interviewed in phase 4 was also a male, who acknowledged the usefulness of the advising tools, but also felt that the instruments could have been more specific to his individual needs as a first-year college student.

I think the advising syllabus was a little more useful than the questions. I feel like the syllabus, especially for a freshman like me, it kind of helps in like easing you into how college advising works. I think the questions were a little, what's the word, kind of like past setting. Like if you didn't go to your advisor for something that was included in those questions, you might just kind of feel like a little off topic (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 593-597).

When asked about how the advising tools may contribute to this first-year success, the student referred to the syllabus as *Advising 101*. "I felt more informed as to how I can utilize advising to my advantage" (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 605-606). However, he did not find the advising instruments to impact his overall motivation. Instead, he sees motivation as intrinsic and unrelated to the role of academic advising.

I feel like motivation is more on a personal scale. As far as advising, I feel like advising is more, like you know, it pertains to like your classes and your grades. Motivation comes from yourself, you can be motivated, but you can limit that motivation just as quick. It doesn't really have to do with advising (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 610-613).

He felt the same way about student engagement as he felt about motivation. "Like I said, advising is strictly, in my mind, school work. I mean, not like school work, but like classes and grades. I feel like a belonging kind of feeling comes more from involvement in outside of class activities" (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 617-619). He did not have any suggestions for content

improvement on either the First-Year Advising Syllabus or the FACT instrument. But, like many of the students interviewed, he had ideas for getting the information to more students.

I can see how the syllabus can be helpful not just for first-year students but for all students. But other than that, I feel like if they made the syllabus available somewhere on the advising page, like on Pipeline or something like that, or like just the Wayne State advising website. Just like a tool to access online, almost like an FAQ page (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 632-636).

When asked to describe his ideal advising appointment, he reiterated his belief that the primary purpose of academic advising is course selection.

I mean, obviously coming to college, there are a lot of questions you have, and it can be intimidating and confusing. So if I came in, and I had a question regarding how I wanted to take my classes in a way that would put me, like set me up over the next couple of years, you know, how [prerequisites] work and everything. I would kind of expect my advisor to guide me as to this class is hard, don't take it with this class because it's a lot to deal with. Like, you need this class to take this class in the future. So just like being informative and guiding me (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 639-645).

The student concluded his interview by echoing the concerns of so many first-year college students, and in-turn reiterated the importance of this study.

I actually didn't know who my advisor was for probably like two months. 'Cause like being in the B-School, you have a different set of people you talk to, then just the normal school. So it can be a little confusing about who to talk to and where to go, if you don't take time out to look at where you're going or who you need to talk to. It can get confusing (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 653-656).

Table 9 on the next page illustrates a summary of feedback collected through advisor journals and student interviews in phase 3. Two advisors and three students provided data through journals and interviews in this phase. Data is displayed in relation to the three main themes found in this phase: course selection, future planning/goals, and personal advising relationship.

Table 9

Phase 4 Advisor Journal and Student Interview Summary

	Course Selection	Future Planning/ Goals	Personal Advising Relationship
Advisors			
Advisor 3	X		
Advisor 4		X	
Students			
Student 7	X		
Student 8	X		

Researcher Journal. In this phase, I took careful notice of the interviewed student who felt strongly that advising was only related to classes. He did not see his advisor's role as anything more than class selection and explanation of prerequisites. "This seems to be an all too common misconception, one that can hopefully be dispelled through greater advisor visibility and student education of advising possibilities outside class selection" (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

I enjoyed that each student interviewed in phase 4, and throughout the other phases, had a well thought out answer when asked to describe their ideal advising appointment. This illustrated that students had clear expectations of their advising experiences, but are those “expectations being heard and addressed by universities?” (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012). This is an important question that must be asked and answered.

The final thoughts in my researcher journal related to delivery of the advising instruments. Consistently in this and previous phases, students had suggested providing this information online or through email. I wished this could have been changed during the study, or considered while planning the study.

This generation of students is so web-based and technology driven. Part of my purpose with this study was to get students in the office to get to know their advisor, but did I miss an opportunity reach them using their preferred medium?, (Researcher journal, personal communication, fall 2012).

The issue of technological distribution of the advising instruments is a possibility for future use of the tools. This and other suggestions for future research and instrument redesign are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Conclusions for Phase 4. Although fewer students provided feedback in phase 4, the data collected was just as revealing as in other phases. In this phase, students seemed to be most concerned with Selecting Courses (SC); often mentioning prerequisites, course load questions, and class sequencing in their feedback. However, the course selection concerns in this phase seemed to be more related to future academic planning and to personalizing a student’s courses to match their individual abilities and interests. Students interviewed seemed interested in planning ahead to get the most out of their college experience.

It is probable that as students rounded out their first semester, they were becoming more familiar with the business field based on topics covered in their classes and interaction with professors and classmates. Students were beginning to envision their own futures and formulating their own distinct interests in the profession. And although students interviewed in this phase did not recognize the motivational role of academic advising, they did feel strongly that the advisors role was to help choose relevant courses to meet their interests. A significant factor in motivational design is meeting personal needs and goals in order to affect a positive attitude toward learning (Keller, 2010). To increase motivation, students must understand how their required courses will meet their individual needs (Keller, 2010). Therefore, the student surveys and interviews in this phase confirmed that academic advising can in fact play a large role in student motivation.

Participants in this phase provided no suggestions for content improvement in either the First-Year Advising Syllabus or the FACT questions. However, like in previous phases, students did suggest improved ways of delivering these tools to students, such as posting them to the student self-service portal Pipeline, or uploading the instruments to the School of Business advising website. These recommendations will be discussed in further detail in the following Chapter 5.

Comparison Among Phases

After all data was collected throughout the four phases, I conducted a final comparative analysis of common themes that emerged among all phases. In phase 1, Part V of the AAI survey showed a developmental advising preference on all scales: Overall Development/Prescriptive advising preference (DPA), Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Courses (SC) (Winston & Sandor, 2002). Important to

note, the developmental preference was not as strong for the ADM and SC subscales, indicating that students may desire more direct assistance in these areas. These themes seemed to be consistent throughout all phases of the study, and the First-Year Advising Syllabus and FACT instrument were designed to address these weaker developmental areas.

Selecting Courses. Selecting Courses (SC) was the strongest theme found throughout the entirety of this study, beginning with the need in this area shown through the AAI results. In each phase, students seemed insecure about choosing their courses, and felt this was the primary role of their academic advisor. Common student comments about course selection included “I’m just trying to get done as fast as I can” (Student 1, Appendix D, lines 46-47), and “The syllabus was very helpful and gives a detailed guide to what classes I need to complete my major” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Although selecting courses may seem like a narrow definition of the academic advising role, it is clearly of great importance to students in this study. This may be the most significant and easiest way in which advising can motivate students; by illustrating the quickest path to their degree, and in showing the relevance of their required classes to the student’s major of interest (Keller, 2010). The data collected in this study shows that students need greater instruction and support in class selection, which may be provided through carefully designed advising methods and activities.

Personal Relationship. A secondary theme found throughout the four phases of data collection was developing a personal relationship with one’s advisor. This most closely relates to the Personalizing Education (PE) section of the AAI survey. Common student comments regarding the importance of their advising relationship include, “It was a very warm and inviting environment” (Student 5, Appendix D, line 364), “just a really good back and forth

conversation” (Student 3, Appendix D, line 220), and “Face-to-face conversation is key” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

This underscores the impact of open communication and consistent contact on a student’s feelings of engagement with an academic department or university. Meaningful interaction between students and faculty or staff is especially critical for a successful transition during the freshman year (Tinto, 2007). The results of this study show that academic advising can provide the interaction needed for a successful college transition.

Goal Setting. The final, but closely ranked theme found in the data was future planning, and the setting and obtainment of long-term goals. This also addresses the Personalizing Education (PE) subscale of the AAI. In one journal entry, an advisor commented about a student “I feel he really enjoyed talking about his goals” (Advisor 1, Appendix C, lines 29-30). Common student comments surrounding this theme included “It showed me my goals, not only as a freshman, but all throughout college. So it kind of revitalized me a little bit” (Student 5, Appendix D, lines 357-358). Another student explained “I want to eventually go to graduate school, so I set my goals for a 3.5 [GPA] or higher, and my advisor told me that’s a pretty good goal, and I’m going to do my best to achieve it” (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 435-436).

Academic advising has the potential to motivate students by connecting advising activities to their individual goals (Keller, 2010). Identifying specific academic goals addresses all four components of Keller’s ARCS model: Attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction (Keller, 2010). Advisors who are aware of the importance of goal-setting can personalize an advising appointment to gain and keep a student’s attention, and to show the relevance of courses to their long term goals (Keller, 2010).

Summary

The quantitative and qualitative data collected throughout this design-based study show that course selection, personal contact with an academic advisor, and setting obtainable academic goals may be the three most impactful factors toward first-year student success. This information can prove critical to the field of academic advising, specifically in the design of motivational and engaging advising activities aimed at first-year students. These major themes will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5, as well as the implications of these findings to the fields of instructional technology and academic advising. Table 10 provides a summary and rationale for recommended changes to future versions of the First-Year Advising Syllabus and FACT instrument, based on data collected throughout the three qualitative phases of this study. Suggestions for improvement to the instruments used in this study, steps for designing future advising activities, and recommendations for future research will also be outlined in the following discussion chapter.

Table 10

Summary of Recommended Design Changes Based on Feedback in Phase 2 through Phase 4

Theme	Evidence	Recommended Redesign
Course Selection	<p>Phase 2</p> <p>“Knowing more about her work schedule and how she’s managing that with her school work, triggered thoughts of how I could best help this student prepare a schedule for the Winter 2013 semester, which was her reason for coming in today” (Advisor 2, lines 19-22)</p> <p>“I wrote my classes for next semester that she recommended, I would have forgotten them if I didn’t write them down somewhere” (Student 1, lines 30-31)</p> <p>“if I was presented this when I was first choosing classes” (Student 3, line 170)</p> <p>“where it says what classes to take next semester (Student 3, lines 197-198)</p> <p>“I will choose those classes, then be on my way for the next semester” (Student 3, line 207)</p>	<p>With course selection as the biggest theme found throughout this study, I recommend an entire page of the syllabus or a separate instrument devoted to class selection, which could include information on prerequisites, and a method for students to plan several semesters in advance.</p>

	<p>Phase 3 “Focused on goals and winter 2013 courses (Advisor 1, line 27-28) “I would talk to my advisor about the classes I would potentially take” (Student 4, lines 314-315) “they can provide more insight on actual Business classes I can take” (Student 4, line 317) “Most of my questions were about my change of major, and she helped me a lot with the actually different Business majors” (Student 4, lines 275-276) “I had no clue on what classes to take, and they helped me decide on the classes I needed to take for next semester (Student 6, lines 421-423) “the classes I have to take” (Student 6, line 464) “telling me what courses I needed to take” (Student 6, line 467)</p> <p>Phase 4 “it shows me absolutely what I need to take as far as prerequisites before I can take classes that more pertain to my major” (Student 7, lines 509-510) “suggest some elective classes to go down the same road as what career path a student wants to go” (Student 7, lines 540-541) “show me what I need to do to get more classes in the future (Student 7, line 552) “point me to the level of classes I need” (Student 7, line 564) “advising is more, like you know, it pertains to like your classes” (Student 8, line 611) “advising is strictly in my mind, school work. I mean, not school work, but like classes and grades (Student 8, line 617-618) “how I wanted to take classes” (Student 8, lines 640-641) “expect my advisor to guide me as to this class is hard” (Student 8, lines 642-643) “Like you need this class to take this class in the future” (Student 8, line 644)</p>	
Personal Advising Relationship (Engagement)	<p>Phase 2 “when I need somebody responsible” (Student 2, line 127) “as long as we can sit down and have a mutual agreement” (Student 2, lines 133-134) “I feel like the personal contact with my advisor is helpful in becoming comfortable with the university” (Student 3, lines 188-199) “we have some sort of relationship” (Student 3, line 218) “The student was very participatory” (Advisor 2, line 9) “the student became more comfortable because he got more in depth with his answers and even provided examples” (Advisor 2, lines 10-11)</p>	I felt that the <i>Personal Student Reflection</i> theme found in phase 2 was closely aligned with a greater theme of <i>Personal Advising Relationship (Engagement)</i> . As a major theme in this study, I feel the FACT questions are effective in

	<p>“The FACT sheet laid a foundation to have an open conversation with the student” (Advisor 2, line 16) “it allowed the student to open up more and I learned more about her life” (Advisor 2, lines 18-19)</p> <p>Phase 3 “It was a very warm and inviting environment” (Student 5, line 364) “I left feeling good about school and employment, and I’ll definitely be back next semester to meet again” (Student 5, lines 391-392) “She made me feel like she cared, and that’s all that mattered to me” (Student 6, line 477)</p> <p>Phase 4 “Both students were very engaged and came with questions and took notes” (Advisor 4, line 38)</p>	<p>establishing a positive advisor/student relationship.</p>
<p>Future Planning/Goals</p>	<p>Phase 2 “the timeline/checklist is also good” (Student 1, line 33) “telling me exactly what it is I can expect from college life” (Student 2, lines 94-95) “planned for the future” (Student 3, line 202)</p> <p>Phase 3 “Focused on goals” (Advisor 1, lines 27-28) “I feel he really enjoyed talking about his goals” (Advisor 1, lines 29-30) “They helped me with paths I didn’t know before” (Student 5, line 346) “It opens up pathways I didn’t know were available to further my success” (Student 5, line 351) “It showed me, you know, my goals, not only as a freshman, but all throughout college” (Student 5, lines 357-358) “to make sure my goals are still being reached” (Student 5, line 380) “It tells you to set your goals and what you want to achieve” (Student 6, lines 429-430) “I want to eventually go to graduate school, so I set my goal for 3.5 or higher, my advisor told me that’s a pretty good goal and I’m going to do my best to achieve it” (Student 6, lines 435-436) “I knew what to do in the future to take me that way” (Student 6, lines 446-447) “To figure out my future career goals (Student 6, line 464)</p> <p>Phase 4 “fit into her long term plans” (Advisor 4, line 36) “make it a little more specific to what the student wants</p>	<p>With such an emphasis on future planning/goals found in this study, I recommend incorporating information from the School of Business Career Planning and Placement Office into the syllabus. I recommend adding a section that discusses career services provided, placement rates, and internship opportunities.</p>

	to do with their degree once they graduate (Student 7, lines 537-538)	
Delivery Method/ Technology	<p>Phase 2 “maybe if it was offered online” (Student 3, line 211)</p> <p>Phase 3 “include that in the orientation” (Student 4, line 303) “like try to hit them when they first come in” (Student 4, line 305) “you could put it online I guess, like the School of Business website” (Student 5, line 384) “post it on the main Wayne State website” (Student 6, line 470)</p> <p>Phase 4 “throw it up on the Business student website” (Student 7, line 556) “if they made the syllabus available somewhere on the advising page, like on Pipeline” (Student 8, lines 633-634)</p>	Several students suggested making the syllabus available online. I recommend putting the syllabus on the School of Business Advising website, and available in Blackboard. I also recommend providing the syllabus to students at new student orientation, before they begin classes.

Chapter 5 Discussion

The purpose of this design-based research study was to document the design, implementation, and evaluation of a motivational-based academic advising intervention for first-year students in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University. This study examined the four following research questions:

1. What motivates and engages first-year college students?
2. What impact does academic advising have on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students?
3. What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of first-year college students?
4. What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?

The first chapter of this dissertation introduced the unique motivational and social needs of first-year college students, and the important role universities have in supporting first-year success, in light of the demand for increased accountability and new higher education performance funding models (Jesse, 2012). The second chapter provided a thorough review of existing literature related to motivational design, motivation of college students, student satisfaction, and academic advising. Chapter three provided a detailed explanation of the design-based research design utilized in this study, as well as the data collection and analysis methods followed throughout the four distinct study phases. The constant comparative method was used in chapter four to present the major themes and findings of the study. The purpose of this final chapter is to discuss the significance of the findings of this design-based study in relation to the identified research questions. This chapter will 1) provide an overview of findings, 2) explore

implications of the findings to the field of instructional technology, 3) discuss limitations of the current study, and 4) provide recommendations for future research and instrument redesign.

Three primary themes emerged through data collection and analysis in this study, demonstrating the areas in which students felt academic advising was most impactful: 1) selecting courses, 2) personal relationships and 3) future planning and goal setting. The following paragraphs will demonstrate how data collection for each research question led to the emergence and further support of the main themes found throughout this study.

Research Question 1: What motivates and engages first-year college students?

The first research question was answered through a comprehensive review of literature related to motivational design, motivation of college students, and academic advising. The literature reviewed in answering this research question was a crucial piece in the design of the advising instruments utilized throughout the final three phases of this study. The thorough research of the factors that impact first-year college success provided direction to the design and development of the advising interventions described in chapter four. It was important to establish a base knowledge of the subject to provide a foundation for the study.

Theme 1: Selecting Courses. Literature shows that course selection is a decision that can greatly shape a student's academic experience, especially in first-year college students (Light, 2001). Lynch (2006) found in his study on the correlation between motivational factors and course grades, that college freshmen often lack confidence in their academic abilities and are motivated extrinsically by grades. To increase confidence of first-year students, universities must find ways to support motivation, performance and adjustment for first-year success (Solberg Nes et al., 2009). Academic advising plays an important role in helping students select courses that have a manageable work level and degree of difficulty. Careful course selection is

needed to ensure the opportunity of decent grades during the first year of college, which has been shown as a strong predictor of academic motivation (Lynch, 2006; Solberg Nes et al., 2009; Seli et al., 2009).

Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship. Among the current research on motivation of early college students, a trend has emerged around social belonging and engagement (Lynch, 2006). Active participation with peers, faculty, and mentors has shown to increase a student's overall motivation (Keller, 2010). Student interaction with members of the campus community is especially critical during a student's freshman year (Tinto, 2007). The second strongest theme found in this study supports the existing literature on the importance of engagement on first-year college success, the idea that students want to feel like someone genuinely cares (Light, 2001; Lynch, 2006; Tinto 2007; Keller, 2010).

Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals. Research shows that effective academic advising can play a crucial role in connecting students to resources and opportunities that support attainment of key learning outcomes (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). The findings of this study support existing literature that conclude that extrinsic goal orientation is one of the greatest motivational factors predicting academic success of college freshmen. Previous studies agree that advisors can influence student motivation by helping students set obtainable educational goals in their first semester (Lynch, 2006; Suhre et al., 2007).

The findings of this study also directly support Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design, specifically the relevance factor of connecting instruction to individual learner goals (Keller, 2010). Motivational design can be utilized in any instructional setting (Keller, 2010), but the results of this study highlight the importance of incorporating motivational design into the academic advising process. By setting specific goals in a student's first college semester, the

learner can better understand how class material is relevant to their future plans. A student will be more motivated to learn if he or she can recognize the personal meaningfulness of the material, and can understand how new knowledge will help them reach their goals (Keller, 2010).

Research Question 2: What impact does academic advising have on the motivation and engagement of first-year college students?

Research Question 2 was addressed through a comprehensive review of literature and Part V of the AAI survey. Literature in higher education consistently points to academic advising as one of the most impactful elements in undergraduate student motivation, engagement and retention (Smith, 2002; Mottarella et al., 2004; Hale et al., 2009; Museus & Ravello, 2010). Interaction with student affairs professionals is positively associated with an increase in student attitude toward learning and overall academic motivation (Martin & Seifert, 2011). For these reasons, research shows that academic advising can play an especially critical role in the success of college freshmen (Tinto, 1993; Light, 2001; Campbell & Nutt, 2008). Related literature established a sound justification for the use of academic advising as the medium to reach first-year students in this study.

Theme 1: Selecting Courses. Consistently throughout this study, students remarked that course selection was their area of greatest need, and the factor in which they felt an academic advisor could be most helpful in their college success. The results of the AAI administered at the onset of this study found that on a developmental subscale of 9-16 points, the Selecting Courses (SC) score for participating students was 9.31. Although within the developmental range, the low score indicates that students desired more direct assistance in selecting courses than any other area measured by the AAI (Winston & Sandor, 2002).

These findings support existing studies of first-year students that also used the AAI for data collection. In one study using the AAI, Mottarella et al. (2004) concluded that because students prefer the type of advising they have previously experienced, first-year students are often more comfortable with the prescriptive approach they experienced from their high school counselors. Similarly, Smith (2002) found that first-year students generally preferred prescriptive advising, and like Mottarella et al. (2004), compared the academic advisor role to that of high school counselor. In that study, it was concluded that students perceived the main purpose of an advisor was to provide information on course requirements and to provide them with a class schedule each semester (Smith, 2002).

Academic advisors can have a profound impact on a student's first-semester classroom experience. Typical first-year classes have large enrollments, are general subjects, and offer little faculty interaction. This can have significantly negative impact on a student's feeling of engagement in their first year. Therefore, it is crucial for academic advisors to suggest a schedule that combines general requirements, but also includes courses that may cause a student to be *turned on* by their chosen major, such as an introductory major seminar. A combination of large and small sized courses is also important to effectively engage first-year students in their learning experience (Light, 2001). Advisors must be aware of class sizes, and help students carefully choose a schedule that includes small, major-related classes.

Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship. The AAI survey results in this study found a participant preference for developmental advising activities on all four subscales of the instrument. Developmental advising moves beyond course selection, and is concerned with “environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness and problem solving, decision making, and evaluation skills,” (Crookston, 1972). Developmental advising is regarded

as advising as counseling (Lowenstein, 2005) and helps to support a student's social and intellectual development (Campbell & Nutt, 2008). The preference for developmental advising was consistent throughout the remaining phases of this study, as demonstrated in the participant's desire to develop a personal relationship with their advisor. These findings support Light's (2001) 10-year longitudinal study of over 1,600 college students, which found the most important impact of academic advising to students was the personal relationship established between themselves and their advisor.

Mottarella et al., (2004) researched the advising preferences of 468 undergraduate students enrolled in a psychology course, and similar to the findings of this study, found that the most important dimension for undergraduate students was the depth of advising relationship, and the third most important dimension was the nature of the student/advisor relationship. Students preferred a warm and supportive advisor over one who is efficient and businesslike. It was concluded that a student's satisfaction in their advising experience is directly impacted by an advisor's interpersonal skills (Mottarella et al., 2004).

Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals. The final theme that emerged in the data collected through this design-based study revolved around setting and obtaining goals. Students felt that one of the most important roles of their academic advisor was to help set and reach their academic and career goals. This is supported by the literature discussed above in Research Question 1, as well as the results of the AAI administered in phase 1 of this study.

The Personalizing Education (PE) subscale of the AAI reflects a student's entire college education, and best represents the factor of goal setting (Winston & Sandor, 2002). The (PE) sub score result in this study equaled 48.61 on a developmental scale of 33-64, again indicating a developmental advising preference for this scale among the participants in the study.

Developmental advising for personalizing education involves a warm and caring relationship that touches on the wide-range of factors that make up a student's entire college experience, including setting obtainable academic goals (Winston & Sandor, 2002).

Research Question 3: What type of academic advising intervention may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of first-year college students?

The third research question in this study was addressed primarily through the results of the AAI tool, given to first-year Business students at new student orientation. The AAI found that overall students desired a warm and welcoming developmental advising style, but still desired additional help in course selection and making important career related decisions. The advising tools described in chapter four were designed as a direct result of these findings related to first-year student needs in these areas.

Theme 1: Selecting Courses. As stated above, the lowest developmental score found through Part V of the AAI was in course selection, indicating that students preferred more direct help in this area than in any other. It was concluded that an advising intervention that addressed course selection may have a greater impact on motivation and engagement of first-year students. The course selection fill-in section on the First-Year Advising Syllabus was designed to address this need, but I feel a greater emphasis in this area may be effective in future instruments.

Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship. As stated in the previous research question, the AAI survey results found a participant preference for developmental advising activities on all four subscales of the instrument, which indicated a strong preference for a warm and caring advising style (Crookston, 1972). These findings support Light's (2001) research which found the most important impact of academic advising to students was the personal relationship established between themselves and their advisor. Therefore, it was important to

design an instrument that not only allowed, but encouraged an open dialogue between advisor and first-year student. The FACT questionnaire was designed to address this need, which allowed an advisor to get to know a student beyond static test scores and GPA. It also provided students a forum to discuss specific areas of concern, perhaps prompted by some of the FACT questions.

Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals. As discussed above, the (PE) sub score on part V of the AAI in this study indicated a strong developmental advising preference for this scale among first-year students in this study. This illustrated a clear preference for a warm, collaborative advising style in areas of goal-setting, career counseling, discussion of extracurricular involvements, and referrals to campus resources (Winston & Sandor, 2002). In response to these results, I designed the fill-in and discussion areas related to academic goals included in the First-Year Advising Syllabus. Additionally, goal-related questions were added to the FACT questionnaire. It was intended that advisors could use these instruments in tandem to encourage open student discussion and the writing of specific academic goals and relevant action steps.

Research Question 4: What is required to facilitate the implementation of a motivation-focused advising intervention in the Office of Student Services in the School of Business Administration at Wayne State University?

The final research question was addressed using several data collection methods: including open-ended surveys given to first-year Business students after their advising appointment, one-on-one student interviews, advisor reflection journals, and the researcher journal. The qualitative data collected in support of this question was plentiful, and provided valuable input toward the effectiveness of the advising tools, and how they may be improved

upon for future use. I provide several data-driven recommendations for future implementation of advising interventions later in this chapter.

Theme 1: Selecting Courses. Student surveys and student interviews throughout this study further supported the AAI results focused on course selection, and provided a more detailed explanation directly from study participants. In phase 2, course selection was the predominant theme in student feedback. Survey answers most commonly mentioned course selection, with comments such as “The questions were very helpful and informative. I was able to understand how I should do my schedule” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012), and “The advising syllabus will be very helpful for my first year by helping me with course decisions for the future” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Course selection was also the major theme of student interviews, with statements like “On the syllabus I wrote my classes for next semester that she recommended, I would have forgotten them if I didn’t write them down somewhere (Student 1, Appendix D, lines 30-31).

Data collected in phase 4 was also heavy in student course selection concerns. Student surveys included responses like “I feel that the questions she asked helped guide me with which classes I need to take for the upcoming semester” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Interviews in this phase also illustrated the importance of course selection to first-year students. One student explained “It shows me absolutely what I need to take as far as prerequisites before I can take classes that more pertain to my major and that I want to take (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 509-510). Another student remarked “Like I said, advising is strictly, in my mind, school work. I mean, not like school work, but like classes and grades” (Student 8, Appendix D, line 617-618).

Students in this study expressed several ways in which they feel academic advising can help them choose the right courses for their first semester. Students expressed an interest in having an academic advisor help choose courses that complement each other, to prevent too heavy of a course load, and therefore ensure a greater opportunity for academic success. As one student explained:

I mean, obviously coming to college, there are a lot of questions you have, and it can be intimidating and confusing. So if I came in, and I had a question regarding how I wanted to take my classes in a way that would set me up over the next couple of years, you know, how [prerequisites] work and everything. I would expect my advisor to guide me as to this class is hard, don't take it with this class because it's a lot to deal with. Like, you need this class to take this class in the future (Student 8, Appendix D, lines 639-644).

Another student in Phase 4 was concerned with taking classes that interested him, rather than all general courses in his first semester.

I think you can make it a little more specific to what the student wants to do with their degree once they graduate. And also have the advisors suggest some elective classes to go down the same road as what career path the student wants to go (Student 7, Appendix D, lines 540-541).

As illustrated by feedback in this study, course selection is more complicated to first-year students than just *what classes are needed to graduate*. They are concerned with taking classes that interest them and relate to their major, meeting prerequisites that lead to future courses, and balancing difficulty level of their course schedule. Academic advisors are the primary influence on student course selection, especially for first-year students, and can help choose classes that will provide a strong academic foundation and meet the perceived needs of these students (Light,

2001). This again points to a need for enhanced advising in the area of course selection, one of my recommendations for future implementation.

Theme 2: Personal Advising Relationship. The qualitative data collected in my study support previous research on the importance of quality of advising relationship in first-year success. Twelve of the 21 students surveyed preferred the FACT questions over the First-Year Advising Syllabus, each describing their preference for personal advisor contact. One student responded “Talking one-on-one with a knowledgeable advisor really cleared up any questions or concerns I had that the syllabus might not have been capable of doing” (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012). Similarly, two students responded with the importance of “face-to-face contact” in their advising experience (First-year student, personal communication, fall 2012).

Student interviews in this study also supported the student need for positive personal advisor contact. In fact, five of the eight students interviewed in this study described their ideal advising experience as one with a friendly advisor relationship. One student described his ideal advisor interaction as “just a really good back and forth conversation” (Student 3, Appendix D, line 220). Another student offered a very personal testament to the importance of a caring relationship with her advisor. “My advisor made me feel like she cared, and that’s all that mattered to me” (Student 6, Appendix D, line 477). Advisors also seemed to notice a student need for personal advisor contact. One advisor observed “The FACT sheet laid a foundation to have an open conversation with the student. As she asked questions, it prompted me to inquire further and she was interested in providing me with more detail (Advisor 2, Appendix C, lines 16-18).

Overall, student and advisor feedback in this study strongly supported the extensive research that exists on the correlation between a positive advisor/student relationship and first-year college success (Crookston, 1972; Light, 2001; Mottarella et al., 2004; Lynch, 2006; Tinto, 2007; Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Keller, 2010; Martin & Seifert, 2011). The FACT instrument was designed to support a caring, meaningful advisor/student relationship, and seemed effective in doing so in this study. I recommend further use of this tool in future implementations of advising activities.

Theme 3: Future Planning/Goals. Student surveys, interviews, and advisor journals in this study showed the importance of goal-setting on academic motivation, and supported the idea that academic advising can address this need. One advisor wrote in phase 3 “Met with a student just now and he took notes all over the syllabus. I feel he really enjoyed talking about his goals” (Advisor 1, Appendix C, lines 29-30). In the same phase, a student interview revealed “On the green sheet, it tells you to set your goals and what you want to achieve. And that helped me think about my goals and what I want to achieve for my first year (Student 6, Appendix D, lines 429-431). Although not seen as frequently as the other themes in this study, feedback supports the importance of using goal setting in advising to increase first-year success (Lynch, 2006; Suhre et al., 2007; Campbell & Nutt, 2008).

I feel that the FACT advising questions and the goal related sections of the First-Year Advising Syllabus were effective in motivating the first-year students in this study. However, I believe more can be done in future implementation to connect these areas to the services offered by the Career Planning and Placement Office in the School of Business. These recommendations will be discussed later in this chapter.

Limitations

A major limitation to this study is the inability to determine the impact of the advising instruments on student achievement and overall first-year retention. Due to limitations of time and scope, this study was not able to access the grades of students who were exposed to the intervention, or track if these same students returned to WSU after their first semester in college. Retention is vital for universities to maintain prestige, quality, and financial stability (Gupta, 1991). Research shows that academic advising can have a significant impact on retention (Tinto, 2007), yet it is difficult to measure the success of advising on these efforts. There is a significant opportunity for future research in this area.

Another limitation to this study was the size of the student participant group. Only 21 of the 117 first-year students surveyed at the beginning of the study were exposed to the designed advising interventions. This is a small percentage of the incoming freshman class in the School of Business. The study was conducted at one academic unit, at one university, which may make it difficult to generalize the results to a wider population. The students who met with their advisors did so voluntarily, as academic advising is not mandatory for Business students at the university studied. These students may be more motivated to make a connection with their advisor, rather than just communicate through email or phone. This student characteristic could have impacted the results of this study.

An unexpected limitation experienced during this research was my own minimal involvement in the study. I left my position at WSU and began working at a different university the same week that phase 2 of the study began. I was no longer a participant in the study as originally planned, which decreased the number of participating advisors in the study. By remotely administering the study, it also made it difficult to keep advisors motivated to keep

their journals. Many email reminders were sent to make sure data was being collected properly and that the study remained on course. Even with the frequent reminders, I received much less advisor feedback than anticipated.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be seen amidst the current demand for increased accountability placed on colleges and universities for improved retention and graduation rates (Tinto, 2007; Jesse, 2012). This study provided information to college administrators and academic advisors for enhancing the quality of advising services provided to first-year students by 1) identifying the unique motivational needs and preferences of first-year college students, 2) providing suggestions for effective first-year advising tools and activities to meet these needs, and 3) determining what is required to implement an appropriate advising intervention that addresses the needs of first-year college students. The first year is when most students will make the decision to stay enrolled or to leave college (Tinto, 2007). Academic advising may be the first and only interaction a first-year student has with a caring adult (Wade & Yoder, 1995), which emphasizes the importance of well-planned and designed advising activities focused on first-year needs.

Implications for Instructional Technology

The results of this study point to several implications for the field of instructional technology and academic advising. In my opinion, the most significant implications from this study involve 1) the importance of incorporating motivational design into the academic advising process, and 2) providing effective training to advisors that work with first-year students. Literature exists on what motivates college students, but far less literature exists regarding the motivational potential of academic advising. This study may help to better illustrate how

motivational design can be applied in an academic advising setting. I suspect that most academic advisors have very little knowledge of motivational design, which this study shows may be a crucial overlap between the fields of Instructional Technology and Academic Advising.

Motivational Design. The ARCS Motivational Design process is a 10-step systematic sequence to instructional design. The first five steps help to *define* the learner, the learning conditions, objectives and assessment methods (Keller, 2010). Before designing advising activities and materials, one must consider the information to be shared, the delivery method, and student entry skills and attitudes (Keller, 2010). Is the student coming in for routine advising, or to address a serious academic situation? Does the student have a positive or negative attitude toward the university? Reynolds and Weigand (2010) found that self-efficacy, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is all significantly related to attitudes toward the university. College students with a positive attitude toward their university tend to have higher self-efficacy in their academic abilities and are more motivated to achieve (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010). This must be carefully considered in the design process and can drastically change how an advising activity is designed.

The fourth step is also an analysis, but of existing materials. An advising office should carefully evaluate their current advising materials to determine what motivational tactics are being used, if any, and what tactics can be applied to new instruments (Keller, 2010). The final step in the define stage is to determine the objectives of the advising activities, and how success will be measured (Keller, 2010). If the objective of an advising activity is to increase a student's feeling of engagement to the university, how will that be assessed?

The next three steps in the ARCS Model of Motivational Design fall under the *define* phase. Step six in the systematic process is to *list potential tactics* (Keller, 2010). Academic

advisors must determine all the possible ways in which advising material and activities can be delivered. There are face-to-face meetings, group advising, distribution of print material, providing self-paced advising materials via the internet, among many other options. However, more important in the design process is step seven, *select and/or design tactics* (Keller, 2010). The results of this study found that next to course selection, students prioritized a warm and personal relationship with their academic advisor. These findings support several studies in developmental advising that cite personal relationships with college personnel as a strong indicator of first-year success (Crookston, 1972; Light, 2001; Mottarella et al., 2004; Lowenstein, 2005; Lynch, 2006; Tinto, 2007; Campbell & Nutt, 2008; Keller, 2010). The implications of these findings to Motivational Design are the importance of face-to-face contact. If materials are provided online, they should be supplemented with in-person advising activities.

The final step in the *design* phase is *integration with instruction* (Keller, 2010). How can motivational components be integrated into the overall advising process? First-year students are seen at orientation, communicated by advising email updates throughout the year, and ideally see their advisor at least once per semester. With the findings of my research revealing the top three motivational factors for the first-year students in this study, these factors can be continually addressed and consistently integrated into each contact during a student's advising process.

To address the ninth step in the systemic process of Motivational Design, an advising unit must carefully *select and develop materials* based on the information gathered in previous steps (Keller, 2010). This can be done in-house, or with the assistance of an instructional designer or web designer depending on budget and difficulty of design. In this study, the final step of the process, *evaluate and revise* (Keller, 2010), was conducted in three phases as feedback was gathered from advisor and student participants. A design-based study allows for continual

iterations of evaluation and revision of instructional materials and activities (Barab & Squire, 2004). However, there are several other evaluative tools that can be used by advising offices to assess the success of advising activities. Often used in higher education are web-based or paper surveys (both qualitative and quantitative data collection), experimental student cohorts and small focus groups.

Advisor Training. The findings of this study and future related studies have significant implications for development of advisor training opportunities. Academic advisors are very visible on campus to first-year students, which give them the opportunity to greatly contribute to the success and acclimation of these students (Tinto, 1993). Much of the current training that is afforded to new and seasoned academic advisors is limited to graduation requirements, curriculum guides, and campus resources. As the results of this study show, course selection is extremely important to first-year students, so this type of training is absolutely necessary. However, further training is necessary in unique first-year course selection needs, such as course load, a combination of small and large courses, and those courses directly related to major interest (Light, 2001). Advisor knowledge must move beyond simply knowing graduation requirements.

However, as also discovered in this study, students want to understand the relevance of their courses to their long-term goals and wish to form a meaningful relationship with their advisor. Minimal training is provided to advisors regarding the overall impact they have on a student's motivation to succeed. Advisors must be trained to understand the desires and preferences of first-year students, many uncovered in this study. Advisors must also fully understand the potential influence they have on student curiosity and overall academic motivation (Martin & Seifert, 2011).

According to Margaret King, former president of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), advisor training should include three distinct areas: conceptual, informational, and relational training (King, 2000). Conceptual training aims to provide an understanding of the different approaches to advising, such as developmental and prescriptive, and the appropriate situations for using each approach (King, 2000). The results of this study and previous research show that a combination of developmental and prescriptive approaches may be appropriate for individual student (Museus & Ravello, 2010; Smith, 2002). Therefore training is a necessity in this area.

Informational training relates to course requirements, departmental procedures and university policies. This is the extent of most current advisor training programs (King, 2000). The importance of this type of training should not be dismissed, as it addresses the important course selection priority of first-year students. However, advisor training must not stop here. Advisors must be trained in providing first-year students with advice that meets their unique course selection needs as described in previous paragraphs (Light, 2001). The final point, relational training, addresses the second highest student priority found in this study: personal relationships. How can advisors most effectively relate to their students and make them feel welcomed and comfortable? This is a significant opportunity, yet commonly overlooked aspect, of advisor training (King, 2000).

As outlined above, King's (2000) threefold approach to advisor training closely aligns with the three themes found in this study: course selection, personal relationships, and academic goals. The following paragraphs about instrument redesign will touch upon the opportunities to improve the instruments and materials that are often incorporated into the advising process.

Suggestions for Future Research and Instrument Redesign

There are many ways in which the findings of this study can be expanded upon and can contribute to future research efforts in both academic advising and instructional technology. Perhaps the most important is in better connecting the use of the advising tools to first-year success and retention. As state funding is increasingly becoming tied to graduation rates (Jesse, 2012), universities are turning to existing resources to battle against attrition. Academic advising is one of those key resources.

A longitudinal study could be conducted to track the academic success and retention rates of the students who participated in this or future studies. For those students who stayed enrolled at the university after their first year, a follow-up survey could be conducted to see how often these students met with their academic advisor, and how important they perceived academic advising was to their success. For those students who did not return for their sophomore year, an exit survey or interview could be conducted to determine the reasons for attrition, and how often these students met with their academic advisor. A simple statistical comparison could be made to see if a correlation exists between GPA and retention with the amount of contact a student had with their academic advisor. It would be interesting, and fairly easy to continue the research with the 21 first-year students who were exposed to the interventions in this study.

Instrument Redesign, FACT. I'll begin with suggestions for the FACT instrument, as the results of the study show that this tool served its purpose well, and very little redesign is necessary. The positive feedback received by both student and advisor participants regarding this instrument further support the need for little change. However, to address the suggestions for providing materials online, I believe it would be effective to post these questions in Pipeline, on the Blackboard advising site, or on the School of Business advising website. Another option

would be to email these questions, or a link to these questions, to students a few days in advance of their advising appointment. This would give the student an opportunity for considerable self reflection before and even after their appointment. This may enhance the meaningfulness of the advising conversation if a student has had time for advanced note taking and self reflection.

Instrument Redesign, First-Year Advising Syllabus. With course selection found as the primary theme in this study, I believe that more of the syllabus could be devoted to this area. Perhaps an entire page, or separate instrument could be designed to include prerequisite information and a way for students to plan out their courses several semesters in advance. Providing this additional information and the ability for advance planning may increase a student's confidence and their feeling of control over the registration process. Teaching a student independence in class selection during their freshman year, may allow for more time spent with an advisor in future semesters discussing goals and developing a personal relationship rather than tedious class selection.

With such an emphasis on future planning and goals found in this study, I recommend incorporating information from the School of Business Career Planning and Placement Office into the syllabus. It may be useful to add a section to the syllabus that discusses the career services provided, career assessment tools, placement rates, and internship opportunities. This information is missing from the current syllabus, but it is clear from the data collected in this study that first-year students are already thinking about their long-term career aspirations.

The most significant change requested throughout this study, and the one I feel is most important, is to make the First-Year Advising Syllabus available online. There are several options to making the syllabus more accessible, the simplest being to post it as a pdf on the School of Business advising website, along with the curriculum guides, course sequences, and

other relevant advising material that is already posted on the site. The online document could provide live links to important online resources and the ability for students to type in their answers to the fill-in sections of the syllabus. Another very feasible option is to post the syllabus in the new Blackboard advising site for first-year Business students. This site is set-up much like a Blackboard site for courses, with means of posting course material, making announcements, and allowing for regular communication between students and advisors.

If posted online, the syllabus would be available to all first-year students, regardless of whether or not they met with their advisor during their first semester. Virtually, the syllabus could also be available to all Business students, not just freshmen. As mentioned previously, HIC approval was not sought in this study for electronic distribution of the instructional materials. However, the future significance of this tool could be far-reaching if made available online.

Summary

The results of this design-based study demonstrate the importance of motivational design in academic advising, and the potential impact advising has on first-year student success. Research on the connection between academic persistence and motivation is inconsistent and hard to find, and further research is needed regarding the impact of motivation on first-year college success (Reynolds & Weigand, 2010). However, it was found that participants in this study have three main priorities in their academic advising experience: 1) course selection, 2) a personal relationship with their advisor, and 3) setting specific academic goals. This information may be useful in designing future advising materials and interventions, and even in training new and experienced academic advisors.

Student success and persistence are crucial issues right now in higher education, and in some colleges and universities entire offices are devoted to this cause. This and numerous other studies have shown the potential impact that academic advisors have on student success. It is time for this potential to be realized, and for advising to be carefully targeted toward the motivational needs of specific populations, perhaps the greatest need being found in first-year students.

APPENDIX A

Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), Part V

This part of the inventory concerns how you view the **IDEAL** academic advisor. You are to choose the one statement from each pair that best describes, in your opinion, the *ideal* academic advisor (that is, what you would want an advisor to be like). Then determine how important that statement is to you for an ideal advisor. This is *not* an evaluation of your present or past advisors.

Please choose **ONLY ONE** statement for each question.

<p>1. My advisor is interested in helping me learn how to find out about courses and programs for myself.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My academic advisor tells me what I need to know about academic courses and programs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>3. My advisor tells me what would be the best schedule for me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor suggests important considerations in planning a schedule and then gives me responsibility for the final decision.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>3. My advisor and I talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor and I do <i>not</i> talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>4. My advisor shows an interest in my outside-of-class activities and sometimes suggests activities.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor does <i>not</i> know what I do outside of class.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>5. My advisor assists me in identifying realistic academic goals based on what I know about myself, as well as about my test scores and grades.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor identifies realistic academic goals for me based on my test scores and grades.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>

<p>6. My academic advisor registers me for my classes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor teaches me how to register myself for classes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>7. When I'm faced with difficult decisions my advisor tells me my alternatives and which one is the best choice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>When I'm faced with difficult decisions, my advisor assists me in identifying alternatives and in considering the consequences of choosing each alternative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>8. My advisor does <i>not</i> know who to contact about other-than-academic problems.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor knows who to contact about other-than-academic problems.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>9. My advisor gives me tips on managing my time better or on studying more effectively when I seem to need them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor does not spend time giving me tips on managing my time better or on studying more effectively.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>10. My advisor tells me what I must do in order to be advised.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor and I discuss our expectations of advising and of each other.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>11. My advisor suggests what I should major in.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor suggests steps I can take to help me decided on a major.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>

<p>12. My advisor uses test scores and grades to let her know what courses are most appropriate for me to take.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor and I use information, such as test scores, grades, interests, and abilities to determine what courses are most appropriate for me to take.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>13. My advisor talks with me about my other-than-academic interests and plans.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor does <i>not</i> talk with me about interests and plans other than academic ones.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>
<p>14. My advisor keeps me informed of my academic progress by examining my files and grades <i>only</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A-----B-----C-----D</p> <p>Very Important Slightly Important</p>	OR	<p>My advisor keeps informed of my academic progress by examining my files and grades and by talking to me about classes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">E-----F-----G-----H</p> <p>Slightly Important Very Important</p>

APPENDIX B

School of Business Administration

Fall Semester 2012

First-Year Advising Syllabus

IMPORTANT DATES:

October 8, 2012:

Winter 2012 schedule of classes posted online

November 5, 2012:

Winter 2013 registration begins. Be sure to register early!

November 10, 2012:

Last Day to withdraw from fall 2012 Classes

December 11, 2012:

Study Day

December 12-18, 2012:

Final Exams.

Advising: A Shared Effort for Success

Welcome to the School of Business Administration at Wayne State! We hope your semester is off to a great start!

Academic advising will play an important role in your success. It is recommended to meet with your academic advisor at least once per semester to make sure you are on the right track to graduation.

To get the most of your advising experience, it's important to understand the unique advisor and student roles that can lead to a strong connection throughout the advising process.



Advisor Role in Partnership

- Teach students educational options, graduation requirements, academic policies and procedures
- Help students develop decision making skills that will empower them to succeed
- Assist students in identifying and clarifying their educational goals and monitor progress toward goals
- Plan academic direction and course selection consistent with a student's individual interests, abilities, and goals
- Introduce students to useful campus resources available at WSU.

Your Advisor is Only a Call or Email Away!

Office of Undergraduate Student Services: (313) 577-4505 or (313) 577-4510

Last Name A-C:	Mary Zinser	dz2123@wayne.edu
Last Name D-J:	Veronica Seatts	dy4813@wayne.edu
Last Name K-Q:	Janet Mick	ae5244@wayne.edu
Last Name R-Z:	Kristin Hrynczuk	ey1409@wayne.edu
	Carly Wilson	fe6886@wayne.edu

Student Role in Academic Advising Process

Have you heard the phrase “you get out of your college experience what you put into it”? The same is true of your advising experience!

Students are an active partner in the academic advising process. The following guidelines can help make the most of the time you have with your advisor.

- Come prepared to **take notes** and **ask questions** when meeting with your advisor
- Gather all information needed to **make well-informed decisions** about your education
- **academic and career goals**
- **Read and become familiar** with the course bulletin, your plan of work, and relevant university policies
- **Take responsibility** for your education and the decisions you make along the way

Don't be shy about discussing your true

"What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals."

--Henry David Thoreau

Your Academic Goals are Within Reach!

Research shows that setting realistic goals in college can increase student motivation and overall achievement.

It is important to define your short-term and long-term goals, to devise a plan for reaching your goals, and to regularly monitor your progress toward reaching your goals.

Don't worry; your academic advisor can help you with setting your academic and career goals! Don't be shy about discussing with your advisor what you want to get out of college, and what you want to be doing when you graduate. We can help point you in the right direction.

What are your academic and career goals? Use the space below to jot down a few goals you have set for yourself, and be sure to look back at this to keep yourself motivated during



Think About It: What Are Your Goals?

What are your long-term academic/career goals?

What steps will you take to meet your long-term goals?

What goals have you set for your freshman year?

What steps will you take to meet your first-year goals?

First-Semester Timeline and Checklist

September:

- ✓ Settle into classes
- ✓ Get involved in campus activities
- ✓ Find a 'study spot' on or off campus
- ✓ Meet with your academic advisor to discuss any questions or concerns

October:

- ✓ Prepare for exams and midterms
- ✓ Talk to your professors if you have any class issues
- ✓ Meet with your advisor to discuss winter 2013 classes
- ✓ Look at the winter 2013 class schedule

November:

- ✓ Register for winter semester!
- ✓ Check mid-term grades and discuss progress with your professors

December:

- ✓ Prepare for final exams
- ✓ Make sure all is ready for winter term

What Courses To Take Next Semester?

It's important to work with your advisor to carefully choose classes each semester, and to understand why these are the best courses for your academic plan.

Winter 2013 Schedule

Get Involved to Get Ahead in College!

Did you know that students who get involved in college are more likely to earn high grades and to graduate? It's all about networking and being connected to the campus community!

Wayne State University and the School of Business Administration have hundreds of student organizations to join. Here are just a few examples:

- ✓ Business Student Senate
- ✓ International Business Association
- ✓ Dozens of fraternities and sororities
- ✓ Several club sports

Check out: www.business.wayne.edu/organizations or www.doso.wayne.edu

"The key to happiness is having dreams. The key to success is making your dreams come true."

--Anonymous

APPENDIX C

Advisor Journal Feedback

Phase 2

Advisor 1: Syllabus is kind of long for me to go over in an appointment maybe modify to be one page with notes page.

Advisor 2: Today I spoke with a first-year student and had my first opportunity to use the FACT sheet and Advising Syllabus. I first gave the student the Advising Syllabus and explained the purpose and how he could use it as a resource. I then asked a few questions off of the FACT sheet. The student was very participatory and responded to every question I asked. I could tell as I asked more questions on the FACT sheet the student became more comfortable because he got more in depth with his answers and even provided examples with some of his answers. After this meeting, I think the FACT tool is a great way to get first year students to begin to consider questions they may not have thought about. On the other hand, some of the questions on the FACT sheet could be questions students have thought about but may not have had a platform to discuss or share/sort their thoughts and feelings about them.

Advisor 2: The FACT sheet laid a foundation to have an open conversation with the student. As she answered questions, it prompted me to inquire further and she was interested in providing me with more detail. In this advising session, I found the FACT sheet more helpful because it allowed the student to open up more and I learned more about her life. Knowing more about her work schedule and how she's managing that with her school work, triggered thoughts of how I could best help this student prepare a schedule for the Winter 2013 semester, which was her reason for coming in today.

Advisor 3: Student syllabus is cumbersome in usage. May be beneficial to have an "info" sheet and a "notes" or worksheet page. This would separate the information that may be useful in the future versus what needs to be covered at the appointment.

Phase 3

Advisor 1: Met with two students. They seemed receptive to going over the syllabus. Focused on goals and winter 2013 courses.

Advisor 1: Met with a student just now and he took notes all over the syllabus. I feel he really enjoyed talking about his goals.

Phase 4

Advisor 3: Students I met with were still adjusting to the college experience and everything is still too new for them to be reflective

34 **Advisor 4:** One student I met with discussed how she wanted to incorporate women's studies
35 either as a co-major or a minor into her academic plan. She was very interested in figuring out
36 how this combination of fields would fit into her long term plans

37 **Advisor 3:** Discussed with another student information regarding Senior Rule since she was on
38 scholarship. Both students were very engaged and came with questions to ask and took notes.
39 Discussed possible change of major with both students.

APPENDIX D

Student Interviews

Phase 2

A: Me

B: Student

Student 1

B. Hello

A. Hi, is this ____?

B. This is

A. Hi this is Lisa, how are you?

B. Good, how are you?

A. Good, sorry to keep bothering you, I promise this will be the last time

B. No that's ok, I'm sorry I left my phone at home yesterday

A. That's ok. Do you have about 5 minutes of your time right now?

B. Yes, yes I do.

A. Perfect, did you have time to look at that syllabus again?

B. Yep

A. Oh, very good, ok. Well, when you met with your advisor, I think it was last week or two weeks ago, they gave you both that syllabus and asked you probably a few questions to get discussion started. Who was your advisor? Do you remember?

B. I think it was ____.

A. ____?

B. Oh, no, um, ____.

A. _____, ok, that makes sense, good. Did you feel that the syllabus and the questions she asked you were useful?

B. Yeah, oh yea.

A. And how so, what was particularly useful about them?

B. Well, on the syllabus uh, where I wrote my classes for next semester that she recommended, I would have forgotten them if I didn't write them down somewhere.

A. Ok good

B. Yeah, and the timeline/checklist is also good

A. Ok, good. I'm just taking a few notes here, so please bear with me. Do you think that, I guess particularly the syllabus since that is what you took home with you, do you think that's going to contribute to your success as a first year college student?

B. Yeah, yeah I guess it could help me.

A. Ok, how so? You kinda answered that questions already, but do you see yourself pulling it out and referring to it again later on?

B. The checklist was very handy.

- 41 A. Ok, good, good. One of the things I'm studying in my dissertation is motivation. Did
 42 the syllabus or the questions that _____ asked you, did those have any impact on your
 43 motivation? Did they help make you want to work harder or anything like that?
- 44 B. Um, Yea, a little bit.
- 45 A. A little bit? How so, can you elaborate?
- 46 B. Um, quite honestly I don't know how to explain it but. I'm just trying to get done as
 47 fast as I can, so.
- 48 A. Ok, so your motivation is just kinda keeping on track and making sure you're taking
 49 all the right classes?
- 50 B. Oh yea.
- 51 A. And you feel this syllabus can help with that?
- 52 B. For sure
- 53 A. Ok, good. Um, did the questions that _____ asked you, or the syllabus, make you
 54 feel any more connected to the university? Did you feel more engaged in your
 55 appointment, or feel more comfortable with your advisor?
- 56 B. Yea, I did, because she offered me to, she told me to go to the career building, cause
 57 I'm not sure what I want to major in yet. So she told me to go to career building and
 58 take a test and it should help me out. So yeah, it helped.
- 59 A. Perfect, so in looking at it that day, going over it with _____, and in having a chance
 60 to review it again, do you feel that the syllabus can be improved upon at all.
- 61 B. Honestly, I think it's good how it is
- 62 A. Ok, and what did you do with the syllabus after you left the office. Obviously you
 63 found it, so you must have set it somewhere.
- 64 B. It's actually sitting on my desk at home
- 65 A. Ok, good. Good. And how do you think you'll use the syllabus in the future?
- 66 B. Um, this particular one?
- 67 A. Yes.
- 68 B. Well, the phone numbers on the back of it.
- 69 A. Oh ok, ok. And, I guess finally, describe your ideal appointment with your academic
 70 advisor. If you could do or say or discuss anything with your advisor, what would it
 71 be?
- 72 B. Everything was good, so you know.
- 73 A. So, no suggestions for improvement?
- 74 B. No, everything was good to me.
- 75 A. Anything you want to add, or any questions?
- 76 B. No, I don't think so.
- 77 A. Ok, thanks for your time (gift card discussion).
- 78
- 79
- 80

81 **Student 2**

82 **A.** Now, you recently met with your academic advisor, right?

83 **B.** Yes

84 **A.** Who is your advisor? Who did you meet with?

85 **B.** Um, her name I cannot remember, but she is the last office on the right

86 **A.** Ok, probably _____. She should have given you an advising syllabus, it was a
87 stapled green document, and also asked you some questions just to get a discussion
88 going. Do you remember those things?

89 **B.** Yes

90 **A.** Ok, cool. Did you feel that the questions and syllabus were useful to you?

91 **B.** Yes they were

92 **A.** Ok, and how so? What was useful about them?

93 **B.** They were useful for me, seeing that this is my first year of college, it's actually
94 helping me and guiding me along the way, and telling me exactly what it is I can
95 expect from college life.

96 **A.** Ok, good. Do you feel that the questions and syllabus will contribute to your success
97 as a first year student?

98 **B.** Yes

99 **A.** Ok, and again, how so?

100 **B.** Well, it is my first year and I feel they will be very helpful. A lot of college students
101 don't have a syllabus, and the academic advisors actually help you and give you
102 paperwork to help you accelerate in your career and also help you try to get your
103 degree. So that's where it's real helpful to me.

104 **A.** Ok good, now part of what I'm studying in my dissertation is motivation. Did the
105 syllabus of the discussion you had with _____, did either of those seem to have an
106 impact on your overall motivation?

107 **B.** Um, they did, but they also did not, because I'm a self-motivator. So, it's like, it was a
108 little bit more of a push for me, to help me with what to expect, and to help me look
109 out for things I'm supposed to be expecting out of college life. So it was like a win-
110 win.

111 **A.** Ok, good. Another thing that I'm studying is like students feeling connected to the
112 university, or feeling engaged in their studies. Do you feel that the syllabus or your
113 appointment help you feel more connected to Wayne State or the School of Business?

114 **B.** It did, because I'm new to the Wayne State. I was supposed to go to college up north,
115 at Northwood University. But I decided to pursue my degree at Wayne State.

116 **A.** Ok, let's see. Do you feel that the syllabus that _____ gave you could be improved
117 upon at all?

118 **B.** It could be, but right now it really doesn't need improvement. Unless someone says it
119 should be improved, I really don't think it should be.

120 **A.** Ok, and what did you do with the syllabus after you left the office?

- 121 **B.** I still have it, I put it with my courses and everything. Like all the classes that I have
122 to take.
- 123 **A.** Ok, so it's with all your other stuff, and it's easy to refer to if you need it?
- 124 **B.** Yes
- 125 **A.** Perfect. And how do you think you will use the advising tool? When do you think you
126 might pull it out and look at it again?
- 127 **B.** Um, during hard times. Like, when I need somebody responsible, or like information
128 on a program, and can just look at see if it's actually on the paper. If not, I can contact
129 my academic advisor
- 130 **A.** Ok, good. And how would you describe your ideal appointment with your academic
131 advisor? If you could talk about anything, structure it in any way, what would be like
132 your ideal appointment?
- 133 **B.** My ideal appointment would be, I really don't have one, because as long as we can sit
134 down and have a mutual agreement, that's fine by me.
- 135 **A.** Ok, do you have any final questions or comments you would like to add?
- 136 **B.** Um, no
- 137 **A.** Ok, I'm very appreciative that you called me back and I really appreciate the
138 information that you gave me. (Gift card conversation)

139 **Student 3**

- 140 **A.** Hi, is this _____?
- 141 **B.** Yes it is.
- 142 **A.** Hi _____, this is Lisa, we've been communicating by text. Is this a good time to talk?
- 143 **B.** It is
- 144 **A.** Ok, very good
- 145 **A.** Well, just a little background on me. I'm working on my Ph.D. at Wayne State, and I'm
146 studying academic advising. So, when you came in to meet with your advisor, it may
147 have been last week or a couple of weeks ago, they used a couple of tools that I had
148 created as part of my study. The first was the advising syllabus, do you remember that
149 one?
- 150 **B.** Yeah, I do.
- 151 **A.** Ok, and the second was just a series of questions that they may have asked you, just to
152 kinda started conversation and discussion among the two of you. Do you recall those as
153 well?
- 154 **B.** Yes I do
- 155 **A.** Ok, good. So what I'm going to do is just ask you a few follow up questions to get your
156 feedback on both of those things. And it should only take about 5 minutes of your time.
157 Is that good?
- 158 **B.** Sounds perfect

- 159 A. Ok, very good. The first question, did you feel that syllabus and questions were useful?
160 Why or why not?
- 161 B. I feel like they were, you know, when I was looking through the syllabus during the
162 advising, I had questions, and as I was going through the syllabus, my advisor was asking
163 me questions right along with the syllabus, so, it helped when you had both resources
164 there, because if I had questions about the syllabus, I was able to ask, and she was asking
165 questions as well, so it was very useful in my opinion.
- 166 A. Ok, good, so you think they kinda work well together?
- 167 B. Yeah
- 168 A. Ok, good. Do you think those tools will contribute to your success as a first year college
169 student? If yes, how so?
- 170 B. I believe it would, I mean, if I was presented this when I was first choosing classes, you
171 know for this semester, I think it would have been helpful because I would have had my
172 advisor to help lead me in the right direction. Plus it's an additional resource that helps
173 me organize all my stuff. I feel that for first year students it would help a lot.
- 174 A. Ok. Now part of what I'm studying is motivation. Did you feel that the advising
175 syllabus or the discussion with your advisor impacted your overall motivation at all, to
176 work harder and succeed?
- 177 B. Um, yes, I believe so. Because, I mean, my biggest issue with getting motivated is
178 finding some sort of organization among all the madness. There really is a lot of
179 information being thrown at you at any given time, so it's nice to have something
180 organized for you because that's one less thing on your shoulders that you have to do.
181 So, it helps with my motivation personally.
- 182 A. Ok, good, so motivation and organization go right together for you?
- 183 B. Yeah, big time.
- 184 A. Ok good, good. Something else I'm studying is feeling engaged and connected to the
185 university. Do you feel that your discussion with your advisor and the syllabus helped
186 you feel more comfortable or connected with the process?
- 187 B. I feel like it did. It's always comforting to have someone talk to you and go through the
188 steps. So yeah, I feel like the personal contact with my advisor is helpful in becoming
189 comfortable with the university. Yea, I believe so.
- 190 A. Ok, I will likely be making revisions to the syllabus and or questions at some point. Do
191 you have any suggestions on how those tools can be improved?
- 192 B. Um, I think the questions were very, very well aimed and oriented. I'm looking through
193 the syllabus right now, and um, you know, personally, I think it's very well written and
194 very well organized. I personally wouldn't make any changes to it if I had to revise it.
- 195 A. I'm glad to hear you have it with you right now. What did you do with the syllabus after
196 you left the office?
- 197 B. You know, I read over it in more detail, and I put in my information, like where is says
198 what classes to take next semester. I put in the classes that we talked about in my

- 199 advising meeting. And then in the notes, I wrote some notes on the back where it says
 200 additional notes. I took it back to my dorm and expanded upon all the different things, all
 201 the little things, like where it says think about it and your goals. You know, I filled that
 202 in, and I guess, planned for the future.
- 203 **A.** Ok, good. That's actually my next question. How do you think you'll use the syllabus in
 204 the future?
- 205 **B.** I mean, it's a good guide, and like I said, organization is a big thing for me, so. You
 206 know, I have all my information for the next semester, so it's just a matter of when the
 207 classes come out. I will choose those classes, then be on my way for the next semester.
- 208 **A.** And do you think that, other than just giving you the syllabus during an advising
 209 appointment, do you think there's another way the advising office can use the syllabus?
 210 Like another way to get it out to more students?
- 211 **B.** Maybe if it was offered online.
- 212 **A.** Like on the advising website?
- 213 **B.** Yeah
- 214 **A.** Ok, that's a good idea. And then finally, how would you describe your ideal appointment
 215 with an academic advisor? Like, if you could discuss anything, structure it any way you
 216 like, what would be your ideal appointment?
- 217 **B.** Um, I would want to walk in, introduce each other, get to know each other a little bit, so
 218 we have some sort of relationship. Then I'd like to ask my questions, concerns and
 219 comments, and then have them respond. Then once I have all my questions answered,
 220 she asks some questions of me, you know, just really good back and forth conversation.
 221 Get all the questions answered, I guess.
- 222 **A.** So you like an informal conversation type setting?
- 223 **B.** Yeah
- 224 **A.** And finally, do you have any last questions or comments you would like to make?
- 225 **B.** Um, I do not actually.
- 226 **A.** Ok, this is really good information, so I thank you very much for taking the time to speak
 227 with me. (Gift card conversation).
- 228

Phase 3

Student 4

- 231 **B.** Hello?
- 232 **A.** Hi, is this _____?
- 233 **B.** Yes
- 234 **A.** Hi _____, this is Lisa, the PhD student you have been texting. I apologize that I'm a few
 235 minutes late on my call. Is this is good time to talk?
- 236 **B.** Yea, this is a good time.

- 237 A. Ok, cool. As I mentioned in my text, I'm studying academic advising as part of my PhD,
238 and I designed two tools, the green advising syllabus that you received, and the list of
239 questions that your advisor asked you when you met with her. Do you remember those
240 things?
- 241 B. Yep.
- 242 A. Ok, cool. I'm going to ask you just a few questions, some follow-up questions, and at the
243 end I'll send you a gift card for your time. Does that sound ok?
- 244 B. Yep, that sounds good.
- 245 A. Ok, first of all, do you feel that the advising syllabus and the advising questions that you
246 advisor asked you were helpful? Why or why not?
- 247 B. Um, I thought that they were helpful because for a while I've been like trying to locate a
248 whole bunch of locations and phone numbers, and for a while people were giving me
249 wrong locations. She gave me an actual list of the things that I needed and that helped a
250 bunch.
- 251 A. Ok, good. Now, you kinda already answered this question, but how do you think the
252 advising syllabus and advising questions will contribute to your success as a first-year
253 college student?
- 254 B. I think they will contribute a lot. Um, because first of all, I came in really lost, and she
255 helped a bunch.
- 256 A. Ok, so it will help to provide a little bit of direction for your first year?
- 257 B. Yeah
- 258 A. Ok. Now one of the things I'm studying along with academic advising is motivation of
259 first-year students. Do you feel that the syllabus and questions have any impact on your
260 overall motivation to work harder and succeed in your first year?
- 261 B. (Long pause). Honestly, not necessarily, because, like, I'm trying to double major right
262 now. And in my classes we have had guest speakers, and they're like trying to persuade
263 me to go one way, and maybe the other one will make me lean to another major.
- 264 A. So you're finding those guest speakers to be a little more helpful in your motivation than
265 your advisor?
- 266 B. Yeah
- 267 A. Ok, that makes sense. Another thing I'm studying is like, feeling connected and engaged
268 with the university. Did your advising appointment in any way make you feel more
269 connected to Wayne State or the School of Business?
- 270 B. Can you repeat that question?
- 271 A. You want me to repeat that? Did your advising appointment in any way make you feel
272 more connected to Wayne State or the School of Business?
- 273 B. Absolutely
- 274 A. Good, how so?
- 275 B. Um, like, most of my questions were about my change of major, and she helped me a lot
276 about the actually different business majors that were available to me. And she told me
277 about a new one, Information Management, or something like that, so I started looking
278 into that.
- 279 A. Oh, ok, that's new to me too. So thank you. I'll be making changes to the syllabus and
280 the advising questions. Do you have any suggestions on how they can be improved?
- 281 B. Um, currently no. I think it's ok the way it is.

- 282 A. Ok, and what did you do with the advising syllabus after you left the office? Do you still
283 have it, and if so, where did you put it?
- 284 B. Yeah, it's in a safe place at home.
- 285 A. In a safe place at home?
- 286 B. Yeah (laughs).
- 287 A. Ok, is it with like all your other school stuff?
- 288 B. Yea, it's with all my other Business stuff, in my folder.
- 289 A. Ok, cool. So you can easily refer to it if you need it?
- 290 B. Yeah
- 291 A. Perfect. And speaking of referring to it at a later time, how do you think you'll use the
292 advising syllabus in the future? Like, do you see yourself picking it up and referring to it
293 again?
- 294 B. (Long pause). Um, that depends on exactly what I'm trying to refer to, I guess. You
295 understand that?
- 296 A. Yeah (laughs), I understand that. I just want to make sure the tool is useful and that
297 people might, you know, use it again in the future. So I appreciate your honesty.
- 298 B. Laughs
- 299 A. Now, how do you think the advising office can use the syllabus and questions in the
300 future? Is there a better way they can get that information out to students, or do you think
301 it's ok the way they're doing it.
- 302 B. (Long pause). Umm, well, I think that since they are focusing on undergraduates, they
303 may want to include that in the orientation or something like that.
- 304 A. That's a good idea.
- 305 B. Like, try to hit them when they first come in.
- 306 A. That's a great idea. I hadn't considered that before.
- 307 A. And finally, if you could describe like your ideal appointment with your academic
308 advisor, if you could talk about anything or structure it in any way, what would that look
309 like?
- 310 B. I'm sorry, there was a car going by. What was the question?
- 311 A. The question was, if you could describe like your ideal appointment with your academic
312 advisor, if you could talk about anything or structure it in any way, what would that look
313 like?
- 314 B. Um, as of right now, it would probably be, um, I would talk to my advisor about the
315 classes I would potentially take, because, as of now I'm a Marketing major, and like I
316 know that I have to take like my Math class and my English class, but beside that I have
317 questions. They can provide more insight on actual Business classes I can take.
- 318 A. Ok. So you kinda wish you could take those classes a little bit earlier?
- 319 B. Yea.
- 320 A. Ok, and um, and finally, do you have any final questions or comments you'd like to add?
- 321 B. Um, as far as the actual syllabus?
- 322 A. Yeah.
- 323 B. Um, no, actually no.
- 324 A. Ok, thank you (gift-card conversation)
- 325
- 326
- 327

328 **Student 5**

329

330 **B.** Hello?331 **A.** Hi, is this _____?332 **B.** Yes333 **A.** This is Lisa calling, the PhD student that has been communicating by text with you. How
334 are you?335 **B.** Good, how are you?336 **A.** Good. Is this a good time to talk?337 **B.** Yeah, sure.338 **A.** Ok, good. It's only going to take about 5 minutes. I am studying academic advising for
339 my dissertation, and when you recently met with your advisor, they should have given
340 you an advising syllabus which I designed and created, and also asked you a number of
341 questions to get discussion going. Do you remember things?342 **B.** Yeah, I remember the sheet I filled out.343 **A.** Ok, cool. So, I'm going to ask just a couple of follow-up questions about those things.
344 First of all, do you feel that the syllabus and the discussion you had with your advisor
345 were useful? Why or why not?346 **B.** Yeah, I think they were useful. They helped me with paths I didn't know before, and
347 opened me up to a lot of resources I didn't know where available yet. So in meeting and
348 discussing those things I didn't previously know about.349 **A.** Ok. How do you feel that the syllabus and meeting with your advisor will contribute to
350 your success as a first-year college student?351 **B.** Um, it opens up pathways I didn't know were available to further my success.352 **A.** Ok, so it just gives you some more options you didn't know were out there?353 **B.** Yeah354 **A.** Ok, good. Now one of the things I'm studying is academic advising, and how that
355 contributes to a student's motivation. So do you feel that the syllabus had any impact on
356 your motivation to work harder as a first-year student?357 **B.** Yeah, it showed me, you know, my goals, not only as a freshman, but all throughout
358 college. So it kinda revitalized me a little bit, maybe.359 **A.** Ok, good. So it helped to set those goals ahead of time?360 **B.** Yeah361 **A.** Ok. And do you feel that your appointment helped you feel any more connected to
362 Wayne State or the School of Business? Do you have a feeling of, like, involvement
363 now?364 **B.** You know what, yeah, it was a very warm and inviting environment, so yea, I'd say it
365 helped with that.366 **A.** Ok. And, um, I'm going to have to make some changes and improvements to the
367 syllabus. Do you have suggestions of changes I can make?368 **B.** You know, I do not.369 **A.** Ok, so everything was ok the way it was?370 **B.** Yeah, I thought it was fine.371 **A.** Ok. And what did you do with the syllabus when you left the office? Do you still have
372 it?373 **B.** Uh, yea.

- 374 A. Ok, and where did you put it?
 375 B. With my other school stuff.
 376 A. Ok, so it's easy to access if needed?
 377 B. Yeah
 378 A. Ok, and do you see yourself using the syllabus in the future? Like later on in the
 379 semester?
 380 B. Yeah, to make sure my goals are still being reached.
 381 A. Ok, and, right now the advising office is just giving the syllabus to first-year students
 382 when they come in to meet their advisor. Do you feel that there is any other way they can
 383 get that information out to students?
 384 B. Um, I mean, you could put it online I guess, like the School of Business website.
 385 A. Ok, on the website. And finally, if you could describe your ideal appointment with your
 386 advisor, like if you could talk about anything, if you could structure it in any way, what
 387 would that look like?
 388 B. Well, I think the half an hour appointment I had was a good amount of time. You know,
 389 cause it feels like a good chunk, it's not too long, but you definitely have time to get all
 390 your concerns met. And, uh, you can talk about any questions you have. I asked about
 391 the parking pass too, so it's not just limited to one subject. So, you know, I left feeling
 392 good about school and employment, and I'll definitely be back next semester to meet
 393 again.
 394 A. Very good! You make a good point that advising can connect you to other resources on
 395 campus that aren't even class related.
 396 B. Right.
 397 A. And do you have any final comments you'd like to share, or questions I didn't ask of you
 398 today?
 399 B. Um, yeah, how did you decided on advising for your Ph.D.?
 400 A. Well, actually, I worked in the advising office up until about 2 months ago. And I left
 401 Wayne State. So that's where I got interested, I have over 7 years experience as an
 402 academic advisor. I'm really interested in student motivation, and with my experience as
 403 an advisor, I tried to put the two together to do my study. Well, I want to thank you for
 404 your time. (Gift-card conversation)
 405

406 Student 6

- 407
 408 A. Ok, can you hear me?
 409 B. Yes
 410 A. Ok, let me get out of my questions. Ok, so you recently met with your advisor in the
 411 School of Business, right?
 412 B. Yes
 413 A. Ok, and she should have given you a green colored advising syllabus, and asked you a
 414 series of questions just to get discussion going in your meeting. Do you remember those
 415 things?
 416 B. Yeah
 417 A. Ok, well I'm studying academic advising, and I designed both of those tools and I'm just
 418 evaluating them, trying to get some student input on the usefulness of them. So I'm

- 419 going to ask you a few questions on those. First, do you think the syllabus and the
 420 conversation you had with your advisor were useful? And why or why not?
- 421 **B.** Yes, they were useful because going into my advisors office I had no clue on what
 422 classes to take, and they helped me to decide on the classes I needed to take for the next
 423 semester.
- 424 **A.** Ok, good. And how do you think the syllabus and the discussion with your advisor will
 425 contribute to your success as a first-year student?
- 426 **B.** I'm sorry, can you repeat that?
- 427 **A.** Yeah, how do you think the syllabus and your meeting with your advisor will help you be
 428 successful in your first semester?
- 429 **B.** Well, on the green sheet, on the back of it, it tells you to set your goals and what you
 430 want to achieve. And that helped me think about my goals and what I want to achieve for
 431 my first year.
- 432 **A.** Ok, good. Now part of what I'm studying also in motivation, and I'm wondering if the
 433 syllabus and advising questions had any impact on your overall motivation to work
 434 harder?
- 435 **B.** Well, I want to eventually go to graduate school, so I set my goal for 3.5 or higher, and
 436 my advisor told me that's a pretty good goal and I'm going to do my best to achieve it.
- 437 **A.** That's great. So you actually helped to set that goal and others with your advisor, you
 438 worked with your advisor to do that?
- 439 **B.** Yeah
- 440 **A.** Awesome, ok. And did the syllabus and meeting with your advisor have any impact on
 441 your feelings of being connected and involved with the Business school?
- 442 **B.** You know, in a way it kind of did, because like I said I had no idea what I wanted to do,
 443 whether it was Business or what I wanted to do, because I was unsure about everything.
 444 After meeting with my advisor, and she gave me like the syllabus and the one-year lay
 445 out form, I knew what I was passionate about and what I liked, I realized I was in the
 446 right field and I was doing the right thing, and I knew what to do in the future to take me
 447 that way.
- 448 **A.** Ok, that's good. So she just kind of reaffirmed that you were in the right place?
- 449 **B.** Yeah
- 450 **A.** Perfect. Ok, um, I will be making changes to the syllabus and the advising questions. Do
 451 you have any suggestions on how the tools might be changed?
- 452 **B.** When I did it, it like helped me perfectly, so I wouldn't have any ideas for changes or in
 453 what ways. Honestly, I would look forward to using it in the future. So thank you for
 454 making them.
- 455 **A.** Sure, thank you for using it (laughs)! And what did you do with the advising syllabus
 456 after you left the office? Do you still have it?
- 457 **B.** It's in my office.
- 458 **A.** Ok, so it's with all your other school stuff?

- 459 **B.** Yeah.
- 460 **A.** Ok, and have you looked at it again since you met with your advisor?
- 461 **B.** I actually looked at it last week again, so yeah.
- 462 **A.** Ok cool. And, well I think you've already kinda answered this, but how do you see
- 463 yourself using it in the future?
- 464 **B.** To figure out my future career goals and the classes I have to take.
- 465 **A.** Ok, so do you see yourself looking back at it to see what your goals are?
- 466 **B.** Oh yeah, definitely, definitely I'll look back at it.
- 467 **A.** And, um, right now the advising office gives the syllabus to first-year students when they
- 468 come in to see their advisor. Is there a better way in your opinion that they can get that
- 469 information out to students?
- 470 **B.** Um, I think if they post it on the main Wayne State website where everyone can see it
- 471 would help. That way it can be seen by all students, not just first-year students.
- 472 **A.** Ok, and um, if you could describe your ideal appointment with your advisor, like if you
- 473 could talk about anything, structure it in any way, like what would your ideal
- 474 appointment look like?
- 475 **B.** Um, I think it would be just like my last one, cause my advisor did a great job of breaking
- 476 everything down for me, telling me what courses I needed to take, and she was like, she
- 477 was honest with me. She made me feel like I cared, and that's all that mattered to me.
- 478 **A.** Ok, very good. Do you have any comments, or anything you want to share that maybe I
- 479 didn't ask tonight?
- 480 **B.** No, I think we covered it all.
- 481 **A.** Ok, then I want to take the time to thank you for not only filling out that survey, but also
- 482 speaking to me tonight (gift-card conversation).

483 **Phase 4**

484 **Student 7**

- 485 **A.** Hello?
- 486 **B.** Hello, you just called me?
- 487 **A.** Yes, is this ____?
- 488 **B.** Yup
- 489 **A.** Hi ____, this is Lisa, the Ph.D student that texted you about doing a quick phone
- 490 interview. Is this a good time to talk?
- 491 **B.** Uh, yes
- 492 **A.** Ok, it's going to take only about 5 minutes, I just have a couple of follow-up questions
- 493 for you on the appointment you had with your advisor, it might have been 2 or 3 weeks
- 494 ago. When you met with your advisor, they should have given you a green First-Year
- 495 Advising Syllabus and then also asked you a series of questions to start conversation with
- 496 you. Do you remember those things?
- 497 **B.** I remember it happening, I don't remember the details of it though.
- 498 **A.** That's ok, as long as you know what I'm talking about

- 499 **B.** Yep
- 500 **A.** Ok, first of all, do you think the advising syllabus and the questions your advisor asked
- 501 you useful? Why or why not?
- 502 **B.** Um, I thought (long pause), I thought part of it was useful and part of it wasn't. Like part
- 503 of it seemed like a very blanket, like I need to know where you want to head with your
- 504 degree and stuff like that, this is what you need to take, this is what you should take. But
- 505 is seemed too general, rather than like specific to me.
- 506 **A.** Ok. Now do you think that, especially the advising syllabus that you took home with
- 507 you, do you think that will contribute to your success as a first-year college student? And
- 508 if yes, how so?
- 509 **B.** I feel like it will, because it shows me absolutely what I need to take as far as
- 510 prerequisites before I can take classes that more pertain to my major and that I want to
- 511 take, so it make is easy to see what I need to get out of the way now.
- 512 **A.** Ok. So it's useful in course planning?
- 513 **B.** Pardon?
- 514 **A.** So it's useful in like course planning?
- 515 **B.** Yeah
- 516 **A.** Ok, good. Now something that I'm studying, I'm studying overall academic advising of
- 517 first-year students, but one of the more specific things I'm studying is motivation. Do
- 518 you think the advising tools will have any impact on your overall motivation to work
- 519 harder and succeed?
- 520 **B.** Not really.
- 521 **A.** Not really?
- 522 **B.** They kinda just pushed me along at whatever pace I was going at. It didn't really push
- 523 me any harder, though. I also not sure if that was just me, because I was doing rather
- 524 well at the time in my classes, I didn't really need any more motivation, or if that's just
- 525 how they are.
- 526 **A.** Ok. And did the advising syllabus and your appointment with your advisor have any
- 527 impact on your feeling of connectedness, or being more connected to the School of
- 528 Business or to Wayne State in general?
- 529 **B.** Um, did it...I'm sorry, can you repeat that one more time?
- 530 **A.** Sure. Did they make you feel like any more connected or engaged with the university or
- 531 with the School of Business?
- 532 **B.** A little bit, but not like any huge impact. It just felt like something I need, or something I
- 533 had to do for my next semester to start out and go over smoothly.
- 534 **A.** Ok. And I have to make changes and improvements to the advising syllabus and the
- 535 conversation you had with your advisor. Do you have any suggestions on how they can
- 536 be improved?
- 537 **B.** I think you can make it a little more specific to what the student wants to do with their
- 538 degree once they graduate.
- 539 **A.** So maybe have a different syllabus for each major?
- 540 **B.** Um yeah. And also kinda have like have the advisors know, maybe like suggest some
- 541 elective classes to go down the same road as what career path the student wants to go.
- 542 Like if someone wants to be more of an entertainment management person, then like
- 543 these are some classes that will really help you what that, and there are ones that really
- 544 won't.

- 545 A. Ok, alright, that's a good suggestion. And what did you do with the advising syllabus
546 after you left the office? Do you still have it?
- 547 B. Um, I know I have it somewhere, but I couldn't tell you where. Like I know I have it
548 somewhere, and I know I put it with other important stuff, but off the top of my head I
549 don't remember where I put it.
- 550 A. Ok. And how do you think you'll use the syllabus in the future. Do you think you will?
- 551 B. I'm pretty sure I will, just to see what other prereqs I need to get out of the way, like just
552 show me what I need to do to get to more classes in the future.
- 553 A. Ok. And right now the advising office is giving the syllabus to students as they come in
554 to see their advisor. Do you think there's a better way they can get that information out
555 to students?
- 556 B. Um, throw it up on the Business student website. Cause I know the Engineering school
557 has a laid out course book of what students need to take year by year for each major. But
558 I had no clue what I had to take in terms of prereqs until I went into the advising office.
559 It made it very difficult and scary for me (laughs).
- 560 A. Ok, alright. Um, and finally, if you could describe your ideal appointment with your
561 academic advisor, like if you could talk about anything or structure it in any way, like
562 what would your ideal appointment look like?
- 563 B. Um, I guess when I walk in kinda ask how I'm doing, ask how my classes are going, then
564 based on that kinda point me to what level of classes I need to choose to get farther down
565 my major. Like what prereqs are coming, what needs to be done now, what can be
566 pushed off a little later, that kind of stuff.
- 567 A. Ok. Is there anything I haven't asked tonight that you would like to add about the
568 advising syllabus or the discussion you had with your advisor?
- 569 B. Not really (laughs).
- 570 A. Ok. Well I want to thank you for seeing your advisor, filling out the survey, and most
571 importantly volunteering to be interviewed. (Gift card conversation)

572

573 **Student 8**

- 574 A. Hi, is this ____?
- 575 B. Yes
- 576 A. Hi, this is Lisa. How are you?
- 577 B. I'm good, how are you?
- 578 A. Good, thanks for taking the time to talk to me tonight.
- 579 B. Yeah, no problem.
- 580 A. As I mentioned briefly, I'm studying academic advising as my dissertation topic, and I
581 know you met recently with your advisor, right? Sometime before the holidays?
- 582 B. Yes
- 583 A. Ok, I have just a couple of follow up questions. It will take 5 minutes or so, and then at
584 the end to thank you, I'm going to email you a \$10 gift card to whatever restaurant or
585 store you prefer. So is this a good time to talk?
- 586 B. Yea
- 587 A. Ok, awesome. Well, first of all, the two tools that I designed were the green advising
588 syllabus that they should have given to you when you met with your advisor, and then
589 also a list of questions that they advisor used just to start a conversation with you. Do
590 you remember those things?

- 591 **B.** Yea I do
- 592 **A.** Ok, do you think those tools were useful, and why or why not?
- 593 **B.** I think the advising syllabus was a little more useful than the questions. Um, I feel like
- 594 they syllabus, especially for a freshman like me, it kinda helps in like easing you into
- 595 how college advising works. Um, I think the questions were a little, um what's the word,
- 596 kinda like past setting. Like if you didn't go to your advisor for something that was
- 597 included in those questions, you might just kinda feel like a little off topic.
- 598 **A.** Ok, so if you came in with a specific thing that you wanted to talk about, those questions
- 599 were kinda irrelevant to that?
- 600 **B.** Yea
- 601 **A.** Ok, that makes sense. Now how do you think, especially with the syllabus, how do you
- 602 think that tool will contribute to your success as a first-year college student?
- 603 **B.** Um, I feel like it contributes because, although I don't remember the details of the
- 604 syllabus, I do remember when I looked at it, it basically outlined like what I needed to
- 605 know. Like the basic information like, basically like an advising 101 thing. And so I felt
- 606 more informed as to how I can utilize advising to my advantage.
- 607 **A.** Ok, good. And um, on a smaller scale, I'm also studying motivation of first year college
- 608 students. Did you feel that either the syllabus or your conversation with your advisor had
- 609 any impact on your overall motivation to work harder or to achieve more?
- 610 **B.** Um, not really. I feel like motivation is more on a personal scale. Um, as far as advising,
- 611 I feel like advising is more , like you know, it pertains to like your classes and your
- 612 grades. Motivation comes from yourself, you can be motivated , but you can limit that
- 613 motivation just as quick. It doesn't really have to do with advising.
- 614 **A.** Ok, that makes sense. Another thing that I'm studying is feeling like engaged and
- 615 connected to the university. Did the tools have any impact on your overall feeling of
- 616 belonging to the Wayne State or feeling more connected to the school?
- 617 **B.** Um, not really. Like I said, advising is strictly, in my mind, school work. I mean, not
- 618 like school work, but like classes and grades. I feel like belonging kind of feeling comes
- 619 more from involvement in outside of class activities.
- 620 **A.** Ok, that makes sense. Now in each phase of my study I have to make changes and
- 621 improvements to the advising tools. Do you have any suggestions for that?
- 622 **B.** Um (long pause), not that I can think of , no.
- 623 **A.** Ok, and what did you do with the syllabus after you left the office? Do you still have it?
- 624 **B.** Yeah, I just kinda put it in a folder, like with all my, you know, with my plan of action
- 625 and like my course selection materials. And that's where it's at, somewhere in my
- 626 drawer.
- 627 **A.** And do you see yourself using it again in the future? Like looking back at it again?
- 628 **B.** Um, if I had a question pertaining to advising, I would definitely consult it.
- 629 **A.** And right now the advising office is just giving the syllabus to first-year students as they
- 630 come into the office to see their advisor. Do you think there is a better way that they can
- 631 distribute that information to students?
- 632 **B.** Um (long pause). I mean, I can see how the syllabus can be helpful for first-year students
- 633 but for all students. But other than that, I feel like if they made the syllabus available
- 634 somewhere on the advising page, like on Pipeline or something like that, or like just the
- 635 Wayne State advising website. Um, just like a tool to access online, almost like an FAQ
- 636 page.

- 637 **A.** Ok, that's a good idea. And, if you could describe your ideal advising appointment, like
 638 if you could talk about anything or structure it in any way, what would that look like?
- 639 **B.** I mean, obviously coming to college, there are a lot of questions you have, and it can be
 640 intimidating and confusing. So if I came in, and I had a question regarding how I wanted
 641 to take my classes in a way that would put me, like set me up over the next couple of
 642 years, you know, how prereqs work and everything. I would kinda expect my advisor to
 643 guide me as to this class is hard, don't take it with this class because it's a lot to deal
 644 with. Like, you need this class to take this class in the future. So just like being
 645 informative and guiding me.
- 646 **A.** Ok. And helping you to be proactive in making sure you're taking the right things at the
 647 right time?
- 648 **B.** Right.
- 649 **A.** Ok. And do you have anything you would like to add about your advising experience?
 650 Anything that I haven't asked tonight?
- 651 **B.** Um (long pause). I feel like finding the time to like make an advising appointment, and
 652 also just like the, I actually didn't know who my advisor was for probably like two
 653 months. Cause, like being in the B-School, you have a different set of people you talk to,
 654 then just the normal school. So it can be a little confusing about who to talk to and where
 655 to go, if you don't take time out to look at where you're going or who you need to talk to.
 656 I can get confusing.
- 657 **A.** Ok, so it's important to get out there and find that stuff out early?
- 658 **B.** Yes
- 659 **A.** Ok. Well, finally, like I said I want to send you a little gift as a thank you for helping me
 660 along. (Gift card conversation)

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ABSTRACT**USING ACADEMIC ADVISING TO INCREASE MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT
IN FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS**

by

LISA REMSING**May 2013****Advisor:** Dr. Monica W. Tracey**Major:** Instructional Technology**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

According to ACT Educational Services (2010), more than one-third of college freshmen will not progress to their sophomore year. Several states, including Michigan, have proposed higher education performance funding models, which directly correlate state funds to student retention and graduation rates (Jesse, 2012). As higher education suffers from diminishing resources, there is a heightened focus to increase retention and graduation rates (Tinto, 2007).

The transition from high school to college can be a traumatic time for adolescents. This age group has unique motivational needs as they adjust to an unfamiliar academic environment (Perry et al., 2005). The first year of college is a critical time when students make the decision to stay enrolled or withdraw (Tinto, 2007). Research shows that student motivation and engagement are key factors in academic persistence among college freshman, both of which can be impacted through effective academic advising (Mottarella et al., 2004; Hale et al., 2009; Smith, 2002; Museus & Ravello, 2010).

The purpose of this design-based research study was to document the design, implementation, and evaluation of a motivational-based academic advising intervention for first-year students in the School of Business at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. Using Part V of

the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), student preference of developmental versus prescriptive advising styles was measured. It was found that first-year students prefer developmental advising, but seem to lack confidence in areas of course selection and academic decision making. To address these areas of need, two advising instruments were designed for use with first-year students: the First-Year Advising and Communication Tool (FACT), and the First-Year Advising Syllabus.

Twenty-one first-year business students were exposed to the instruments during the fall 2012 semester. The instruments were evaluated and revised through three phases of iterative data collection and analysis. Qualitative data were collected in these phases through open-ended student surveys, student interviews, advisor journals, and a researcher journal. First-year students in this study feel that academic advising is most impactful to their motivation and engagement in three key areas: selecting courses, establishing a personal advising relationship, and in future planning and goal setting.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Lisa Remsing was born and raised in northern Michigan, and came to metropolitan Detroit in 1997 to study communication and journalism at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. It was as an undergraduate student that she began working in the Admissions Office as an assistant/intern, and was fortunate to find her passion for working in a college environment. Today, Lisa has been a professional in higher education for more than 12 years, working in undergraduate admissions and academic advising at three public universities in Michigan. She has worked in academic advising for more than seven years, currently as the Director of Academic Services for the College of Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She is responsible for managing the staff and daily operations of the Undergraduate Student Records and Advising Office, which serves approximately 1,200 students. She is passionate about issues of college retention, specifically those related to first-year student success.

Lisa earned a Master's degree in Training and Development from Oakland University in 2004, and an Education Specialist Certificate from Wayne State University in 2010. She is a member of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), the Michigan College Personnel Association (MCPA), and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). She was co-founder of MIAECT, the Michigan Chapter of AECT, which was the first established statewide chapter of the organization. Lisa looks forward to using her education and research in instructional technology, combined with her professional experience, to continue her career in higher education and in supporting student success.