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First-First Year Academically Underprepared Students' Judgments of Their Perceived Academic Advising Needs and Preferences and Their Level of Satisfaction and Intention to Persist at The University of Southern Mississippi

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The University of Southern Mississippi

FIRST-YEAR ACADEMICALLY UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS' JUDGMENTS OF THEIR PERCEIVED ACADEMIC ADVISING NEEDS AND PREFERENCES AND THEIR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION AND INTENTION TO PERSIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

by

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Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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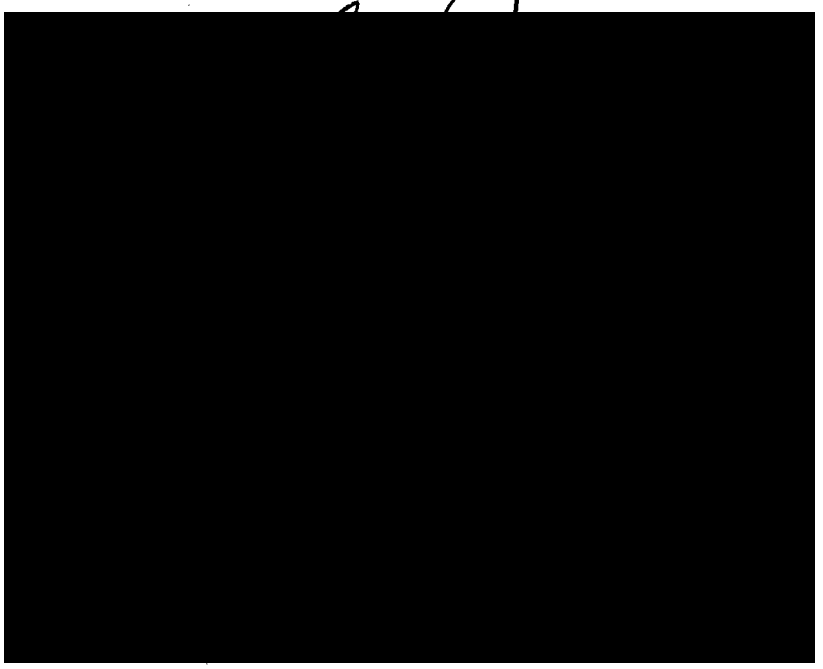

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ABSTRACT

FIRST-YEAR ACADEMICALLY UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS' JUDGMENTS OF THEIR PERCEIVED ACADEMIC ADVISING NEEDS AND PREFERENCES AND THEIR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION AND INTENTION TO PERSIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

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The purpose of this study was to examine which of the two dominant advising approaches, prescriptive (advisor focused) or developmental (relational focused), academically underprepared students prefer and to determine if this student population's advising relationships, experiences, and activities contribute to their level of satisfaction and their intent to persist at the participating university the following semester. Data were obtained in two ways: Firstly, 310 students enrolled in developmental (099) courses during the fall 2007 semester participated in completion of the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI), Parts I-V. Secondly, from the 310 students surveyed, 25 of these students voluntarily participated in one-to-one interviews which provided additional insight and personal feedback about their advising experience and its significance to their intention to persist at the institution the following semester. Results revealed a statistically significant difference (<.05) between students' perception of their advising experience thus far and their preference of an ideal advisor. Students perceived they received a developmentally advising approach but preferred prescriptive advising as shown by most of the subscale results of the AAI. In addition, although students were

only marginally satisfied with their advising experience thus far, the majority of the interviewees expressed that their academic advisors play a significant role in their return to the institution the following semester. This study provided an introduction to the understanding of academically underprepared students' advising preferences but was also helpful to delineate specific ways this institution could place more emphasis and assessment on advising and its advisors to ensure increased satisfaction and persistence of this academically underprepared student group. Implications for future research, policy, and application were discussed.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Kaitlin Nicole Ducksworth. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your hugs and kisses, your sincere prayers, and your understanding that you have given Mommy in order to pursue this goal. You are such an example, even at the tender age of 5. You are my priceless gift from God.

My hope and prayer is that the numerous times that Mommy was not there to play with you or the times I was impatient and moody will be overshadowed and forgotten in the rewards that we will share together from accomplishing this feat. It is my desire that the example of my dedication, hard work, and persistence to finish the task will motivate you in whatever endeavors you decide to take on in your own life.

Remember, you are well loved, highly favored, beautiful, talented, and blessed. I am here for you. Know that I will always love you, my little Kai, Kai. Remember also your dad, Craig F. Ducksworth, a special man who had a special love for you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"Not that I am adequate in myself to consider anything as coming from me, but my adequacy is from the Lord" (II Corinthians 3:5). Lord, in words and in my thoughts, You deserve all the praise and glory, and this accomplishment is one of my testimonies of Your goodness in my life. You have helped me to develop tenacity, long-suffering, and faith. Thank you, Lord, for this process.

Along the way, I could not have finished this journey without the help and support of my committee members, including Dr. Willie Pierce, Chair, Dr. J. T. Johnson, Dr. Debra Gentry, and Dr. Joe Paul. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of my journey and being there for me when I needed you.

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Marshall, Racquel Green, Novia Minus, Tanya Minus, Shennan Rolle, and Barbara Watkins. Forward, upward, onward, and together.

I was always so appreciative and felt blessed for having the support and encouragement of the Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education family. Thanks to you all. Special thanks to Dr. Dana Thames, Dr. Carolyn Reeves-Kazelskis, Dr. Ellen Ramp, and Dr. Beth Richmond for your kindness and support in all of my endeavors. A heartfelt gratitude to Marjorie Newsome, one of my biggest advocates and friend. I love you, my friend, for your sense of humor and always believing in me.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview to help provide a road map to situate and guide this study. Firstly, background information is detailed to encapsulate this study, followed by the statement of the problem and the purpose for the undertaking of this study. Next, to undergird this study, discussion of two theoretical models, Vincent Tinto's (1975) *Student Integration Model* and Arthur Chickering's (1969) *Seven Vectors of Student Development*, are discussed respectively as these theories relate to students' persistence and withdrawal from higher education and students levels of development and experiences they encounter that may impact their choices in higher education. Integration of these two theories and its relations to advising is also discussed. The chapter continues with outlining the guiding research questions for this study, definitions of terms, and delimitations and assumptions regarding students' responses to this study. Inclusions of institutional statistical and demographic facts are presented to introduce the student cohort of this research. An outline of the remaining chapter concludes this section of the research project.

Background

> "Nearly everything we are about depends on the quality of relationships; our marriage, and family, our friendships, our employment, and our very legitimacy as a person." (McCalep, 2001, p. 5)

Much can be said about the power and type of relationships one establishes. McCalep (2001) and Covey (1997) understood the value of relationships and summarized that they define a person. Covey (1997) also indicated that treating everyone the same is

not equitable treatment. Extending these insights to higher education relationships between students and the institution can provide valuable information and foundation for meeting the demands of a diverse student body seeking to attain higher education. The development of relationships between students, faculty, and university staff can be a major indicator in students' perceptions and satisfaction with the institution and their intent to persist.

The focus of this study was on academically underprepared students and their academic advising preferences and experiences, especially as their relationships with their advisors relate to their satisfaction and intention to persist to the subsequent semester at the participating institution. One relationship in the university setting that has potential to make a difference is the relationship between a student and his or her academic advisor. Miller and Murray (2005) clearly distinguished the importance of the advisor's role by stating that advisors are "a vital part of the institutional effort to build resiliency in students who come . . . academically underprepared" (p. 4). These are students who are admitted and enrolled in colleges and universities but are not college-ready based on higher education institutions' admissions academic standards.

President Harry Truman envisioned part of the American life to include opportunities for all interested persons to attend higher education institutions (Bean & Metzner, 1985) regardless of race, gender, age, and college level preparedness. This widespread inclusion of all constituents has created a number of unforeseen issues that higher education institutions, legislatures, students, and other constituents did not expect but must now face. Eble (1957) summarized that the American altruistic notion of education for all is part of the problem as they now must contend with "the unavoidable

clash with their educability" of those who are lacking basic skills (p. 33). Dr. Betty Siegel (as cited by Brown & Associates, 2005), president of Kennesaw State University, stated "we build beautiful campuses, hire the right people and then the 'wrong' students show up." Despite history of poor academic performance during high school or receipt of low scores on their American College Test, underprepared students are attending colleges and universities in record numbers (Seth, 2004). The "wrong persons" have steadily increased enrollment numbers, and predictions by others (Cuseo, 2003; McCabe, 2000) affirm that these numbers will only grow larger as more and more high school graduates who are not ready to compete at a collegiate level with regularly admitted students matriculate to higher education institutions in an attempt to earn a college degree (Ender & Wilkie, 2000).

Grimes and David (2002) pointed out that historically there has not been much attention placed on the predicament of the academically underprepared or remedial students, but that is beginning to change. Attention on remedial college education in recent years has sparked debates (Grimes & David, 2002) and deliberations about educational strategies regarding underprepared students. Costs to educate and retain academically underprepared students continue to plague both legislative and institutional bodies as they seek to fund and find means and ways to capitalize on their investment. Failure of strategies or methods designed to retain students have direct and costly impact on higher education and society. Jones and Watson (1990) stated that attrition of these students undoubtedly affects "patterns of institution funding, planning for facilities, and the long-term academic curricula of institutions of higher education" (p. 1). Outside of higher education, future labor markets may also be adversely affected as their pool of

well-prepared and highly skilled college applicants continue to dwindle to a poor selection of employees who are not as knowledgeable or adept in decision making nor academically equipped to be placed in higher-level positions (Grimes & David, 2002; Hunter & White, 2004). In addition, competition among institutions and other types of businesses competing for students has compelled institutions to tenaciously recruit and retain their students.

Consequently, administrators of higher education will have to become more student-oriented (Kramer, 2000), knowledgeable, and proactive in meeting the needs and demands of today's student population and to ensure that these students graduate and become contributing citizens. One way of recognizing and determining an institution's intention to develop all students who matriculate to their institution is the attention given to its mission statement regarding the significance of academic advising (Hunter & White, 2004). Academic advising has been highly lauded as one of the more successful intervention measures in the planning and preparation of promoting students' pursuit of personal and academic endeavors. With the special population of the academically underprepared, initiating some form of institutional interaction becomes essential. Knowing and meeting the academic advising needs of the academically underprepared students has been found to have retentive results (Cuseo, 2003) and enhances students' level of satisfaction. Unfortunately, despite the outcomes of positive relationships, current research accounts for the fact that many higher education institutions lack a professional operational academic advising program to retain this special population and have neglected to include this activity in their mission statement (Frost, 2000).

Although there is minimal emphasis on many campuses of the virtue of academic advising, this practice has existed since the early 1800s and was originally seen as an extension of the university president's duty known as *in loco parentis* (Cook, 2001; Frost, 2000). Later this role was extended to faculty who were then seen as both instructors and counselors of students attending colleges and universities. Academic advising became more distinguished as it began to take a more formalized role in the higher education arena due to the increased number of high school enrollees and the support of legislation promoting veterans of World War II to attend college. A number of significant studies placed academic advising in the forefront in academia helping it to gain national recognition and utility. One landmark study was Crookston's (1972) distinction of prescriptive and developmental advising activities and relationships.

Other distinctive studies included Chickering's (1969) work on college students' education and identity and Tinto's (1975) *Student Integration Model* to help explain student's integration and persistence in colleges and universities. Tinto theorized that students who were perceived as a "good fit" with the institution, academically and socially, were considered more probable to persist to graduation. Students who did not experience a good fit were more likely to drop out of college (Tinto, 1975). Each researcher's study has contributed significantly to the understanding of the dynamics and development of students and their needs and possible reasons for their dropping out. Nonetheless, this ongoing attrition baffled and concerned administrators and other significant contributors as to what should occur to decrease attrition.

Presented below are a few dismal statistics that relate to higher education changes and its economics, advancement, and special population of academically underprepared students.

- A 1995 survey by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that 78% of higher education institutions offered at least one remedial course in reading, writing, or math to the incoming freshman (NCES, 2004; Seth, 2004).
- Tinto identified the freshman cohort, more so than any other student populace, as having the highest dropout rate (Cuseo, 2003; Tinto, 1975).
- Annually, over 3.7 billion dollars is spent on remedial education for academically underprepared students, 1.4 billion in actual services and the remainder calculated as unrealized earnings based on their incompletion of their college degree (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006).
- Nearly 6 in 10 higher education institutions project increases in admission of students with lower socioeconomic status and greater racial diversity (Grimes & David, 2002).
- Regardless of institutional type, the highest dropout rate is more common during the first year of college (Cuseo, 2003).
- An ACT (2005) survey of 1.2 million high school graduates found that less than one in four students met the college readiness benchmarks in all four subjects—reading, math, science, and English (Lewin, 2005).
- Nationally, only 42% of high school graduates attending community colleges and 20% of 4-year college freshmen are college ready, requiring

that they enroll in one or more remedial courses (National Center for Education Statistics, 2004; McCabe, 2000)

- Fifty-three percent of freshmen are academically underprepared (Tritelli, 2003, as cited by Miller & Murray, 2005).
- Annually, over one million students enter college having to enroll in developmental or remedial courses (McCabe, 2000).
- Nationally, students enrolled in remedial courses are as follows: 35% in math, 23% in writing, and 20% in reading (NCES, 2004).

Implications of the aforementioned records make freshmen persistence to complete a higher education a major point of concern. This concern is increasing as the numbers of academically underprepared freshmen continues to grow. Considering that the numbers that represent underprepared students are predominantly recent high school graduates, it is prudent that all necessary means are fully utilized with this student group to closely guide and nurture them in order to give them an opportunity to succeed academically. Grimes and David (2002) readily admitted that although higher education may not be able to reverse previous academic deficits it could reinvigorate students' learning and personal development in order to raise the expectations of collegiate success. Academic advising activities and relationships can be such a vehicle. One of the first determinants was discovering these students' advising preferences, and this quest was warranted as of utmost importance (Brown & Associates, 2005; Brown & Rivas, 1994; Roosevelt, 2005). Researchers (Brown & Associates, 2005; Brown & Rivas, 1994; Roosevelt, 2005) determined that knowledge and understanding of this information allow the advisors and the administrators to meet students' needs where they are in their

academic development and significantly contribute to their college readiness completion and future potential to return as contributing alumni.

Statement of the Problem

The fact is that mass numbers of academically underprepared students will decide to enroll in colleges and universities, will be readily admitted into these institutions, and, as a result, they will continually create a dilemma of how to assist these students towards their attainment of a college degree. Many initiatives and programs have been developed to increase this student population retention, especially after their first semester; academic advising is one method that research lauds as essential and critical to help retain these students. Muedeking (2006) noted that much research conducted has used second, third, or final year college students to determine advising style preferences. However, in order to generalize to the college student body, more research on first-year students is warranted; and for this particular study, focus is on the academically underprepared students. With the entry of this special student body, knowing and understanding their academic advising needs and preferences will enable advisors to address these specific needs and advise accordingly. This assistance can foster academically underprepared students' sense of competence and support, which may promote their level of satisfaction and, subsequently, their intent to persist (Kramer, 2000), at least to the concurrent semester. In sum, the question is how one addresses this special population's academic advising needs as one way to promote and increase their intention to persist to the subsequent semester and, ultimately, to degree completion.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was twofold: (a) to discover the academic advising needs and preferences of academically underprepared students, and (b) that this discovery would provide information to the academic advising community at the participating institution of the need to foster the development of a more comprehensive, collaborative, and consistent academic advising approach for academically underprepared students. In addition, because the nature of this topic affects all areas of campus life, future exploits include the intention to share this information with other departmental administrators and advisors to bring attention to the critical role academic advising plays in college affairs in meeting and retaining academically underprepared students. Subsequently, it is desirable and necessary to have the total support of the institution for training of advisors and assessment of advising programs to begin a campus-wide plan of action.

Research Questions

This study was undertaken with the intention of answering the following questions:

1. What are first-year academically underprepared students' perception of advising approaches, prescriptive or developmental, after interaction with their advisor?
2. What do first-year academically underprepared students perceive to be their academic advising needs upon initial entry to college?
3. If the perceived needs are met and their preferences of academic advising approaches are used, would these lead students to overall satisfaction of advising?
4. Within this cohort, are there any significant differences relating to race and gender?

5. What characteristics do first-year academically underprepared students qualify to describe their ideal academic advisor?

6. If the perceived needs and advising approaches were addressed, would this fulfillment be a factor in the students' intent to persist to the following semester?

Definition of Terms

Academic advising - refers to the process and interaction between advisor and student with its main purpose to inform, encourage, support, and direct students in self-awareness and fulfillment of education program (Burton & Wellington, as cited in Muedeking, 2006).

Academically underprepared freshmen - refers to high school graduates who enrolled in the institution under study but failed to meet the minimum ACT requirement score of 16 or better in areas of reading and/or English or a score of 20 on the math due to their academic weakness(es), and, consequently have to enroll in a remedial course(es) to help bring them to the minimum acceptable level of academic performance.

Academic advisement - refers "to a plan under which each student is assigned to a faculty member or a trained advisor, who, through regular meetings, helps the student plan and implement immediate and long-term academic and vocational goals" (www.usm.edu/ir/common_data_sets/glossary.pdf)

Advisors - refers to faculty and professional staff advisors who are required by duty or employment to advise students in their individual academic programs.

At-risk students - refers to first generation students, minority students, students with disabilities, adult and re-entry students, student athletes, undecided/non-curricular students, academically underprepared, transfer students, and new enrollees who attend

higher education institutions (Dzubak, 2005; McCabe, 2000; Miller & Murray, 2005; Spann, Spann, & Confer, 1995).

Developmental academic advising - refers to a joint responsibility between advisors and advisees to provide and seek information (Crookston, 1972) and to "achieve educational, career, and personal goals through the utilization of the full range of instructional and community resources" (Ender, Winston, & Miller, 1984, p. 19). In addition to fostering students' decision-making skills and their personal development, building a caring relationship is the focus also (Crookston, 1972; Kramer, 2000).

Freshman - refers to "first year undergraduate student . . . with less than 30 semester hours" (http://www.usm.edu/ir/IRREPORTS.html).

Front loading - refers to the introduction and action of academic advising quickly and early to acclimate students to college expectations and challenges and inform students of advising services to help with their first-year transition to college (Cuseo, 2003; Metzner, 1989).

"Good fit" - refers to students' ability to adjust and succeed academically and socially to college experiences and life (Tinto, 1975).

Persistence - refers to students' completion of their first semester and intention to enroll in the next semester.

Prescriptive academic advising - refers to the advisor-focused approach in which advisors are the expert in information that is needed to help students be successful and complete their degree program. That is, the advisor teaches and the students learn (Crookston, 1972).

Professional academic advisors - refers to persons who are employed by the institution whose job is to specifically advise students in their proposed academic programs. They are responsible for students' record maintenance and are expected to be knowledgeable about campus referrals/services and be available to students.

Remedial services - refers to "instructional courses designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting" (www.usm.edu/ir/common_data_sets/glossary.pdf). Courses that are purposefully structured to help bring students who are academically deficient in, specifically, English, math, and reading up to college level standards are referred to as 099 courses. They are also known as remedial or developmental courses.

Satisfaction - refers to first-year academically underprepared students' reactions to their initial advising experiences and whether the experiences met their needs.

Institutional Facts

This study was conducted at an institution in a southern state. It is a public 4-year coeducational institution located in a small city enrolling nearly 16,000 students on the main and satellite campuses (www.usm/edu/research2/abouttheuniversity/). Information below focuses on the latest data and report as recorded for the institution. For the fall 2007 semester, a total of 866 students were mandated to enroll in 099 courses. There were 447 Black/African Americans, 365 Whites, 6 Asians, 15 Hispanic/Latinos, 5 American Indians, and 28 students who chose not to specify their race who were enrolled in 099 courses (Institutional Research Hattiesburg Campus Statistics).

For fall 2007, students were enrolled in English, reading, and math remedial courses as follows: 131, 107, and 534, respectively. Research of the institutional fact

book did not provide any data for year 2005, which may be due to Hurricane Katrina and its effects on the institution and its students. The latest report found was for fall 2004 which showed a total of 1,536 freshmen admitted and, of that number, 142 students were admitted who scored below 16 on their ACT. From the statistics provided, it shows that there is a gradual increase of enrollment of students who are academically underprepared. Likewise, these students must enroll in one or more 099 courses (math, English, reading) as a means to "bolster" their academic performance in their area of deficiency (www.usm.edu/undergradstudies).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to a southern 4-year research institution and may not be generalizable to all 4-year or 2-year institutions. Its focus is on students who are enrolled in 099 or developmental courses due to their failure to obtain the minimum ACT admissions score of 16 in English and/or reading and 20 in math. This study may not be applied to regularly admitted students, although there is some overlap in these two student populations that can be identified (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004).

This study is delimited to within students' first semester at the participating institution. Also, this study was conducted after students' first academic advising experience at this institution. This period is after students have attended 10 weeks at the institution. This time frame may be considered a short time for students to definitively adjust to college life or know what they want in a collegiate academic advising experience. Students are delimited to the developmental courses. Upon successful passing of their developmental course(s), these students will have the opportunity to enroll in

regular college credit classes. To avoid the possibility of attrition and difficulty tracking this student population, it was deemed necessary to conduct this study in one semester.

Assumption

It was the assumption that students participating in this study will answer all questions truthfully based on their academic advising preferences, experiences, and perceptions during their first semester at this institution.

Organization of the Study

The remainder of this document is structured as follows: Chapter II summarizes relevant literature that provided the framework for this study. Chapter III is focused on the methodology, including the development and use of the research tool and concludes with the inclusion of the interview questions that comprised the second phase of the methodology. Information obtained from the administering of the survey and interviews is found in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V provides a discussion as it relates to the literature detailed in Chapter II, along with the researcher's findings and comments. In addition, implications or suggestions for the institution and all concerned are highlighted and future research possibilities are suggested.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There is a proliferate amount of literature surrounding every facet of academic advising including its purpose, organization, and its significance to higher education institutions. Yet, while much literature regarding advising exists, with the ever-increasing growth of underprepared students in higher education the need to acquire knowledge and understanding advising as it relates to this group remains a pertinent issue to pursue. This chapter opens with a historical glance at the development of remedial or developmental courses and academic advising. It includes how these two concepts have merged to demonstrate the assimilation of and value of advising with students enrolled in developmental or remedial courses. Following the historical overview, the significance of academic advising is discussed in order to bring recognition to the importance of this activity within higher education institutions. Next, two theoretical perspectives have been chosen to undergird this study, including Vincent Tinto's *Student Integration Model* (1975) that provides an explanation for students' persistence or withdrawal in higher education and Arthur Chickering's *Seven Student Development Vectors* (1969) that provides insight into student development during college. An overview of the theoretical perspectives and their relationship to academic advising concludes that discussion. Next, defining who the academically underprepared of higher education are is reviewed and explanation of the relationship between advising and retention of this study cohort is discussed. This chapter concludes with an introduction and exploration of the two types of advising that are more commonly used in higher education, prescriptive and developmental, and its relations to academically underprepared students.

History of Academic Advising

"Advising—the stalwart soldier of American higher education—is a powerful strategy for managing in an era of shrinking resources and rising expectations that has actually been available, in various guises, for centuries" (Hunter & White, 2004, p. 25).

In order to understand the relationship between and the importance of underprepared students and academic advising, it is necessary to understand the history that has shaped and guided this research. Historically institutional, curricular, political, economic, and social factors have led to the origination of remedial, also known as developmental, courses to meet the needs of students. In Europe, remedial courses, as they were originally identified, were first introduced in higher education during the 17th century to the privileged or elitist populace comprised mainly of rich White male students who were unprepared in some of the basic college skills (Rester, 1996). Later, Harvard College President Charles Eliot (1870) has been credited as the first person to offer developmental courses in Latin. His intentions were to help students who were academically weak in that language to become proficient in this classical language (Rester, 1996). In addition to this task, students were groomed in other life areas and "taught discipline, memorization, and collegiality in an effort to develop character, self-responsibility, leadership, and motivation" (Rester, 1996, pp. 15-16).

The 19th century saw a large increase in the establishment of more postsecondary institutions as focus from an aristocratic emphasis to a merit basis ushered in more students to college (Rester, 1996). This increase was especially motivated by the passing of the Morrill Act in 1862 and 1890 which provided an opportunity for higher education to support practical trade education and access to an education to all races (Frost, 2000).

A need for students to fill the classrooms became important. A mandate for public schooling also gave rise to the subsequent increased enrollment in higher education. Financial survival and institutions' ability to remain open and operating were at stake and thus the need for intake of more students. Unlike centuries before, females and Blacks were now allowed to receive higher education (Cook, 2001). They were, of course, acutely underprepared for college exercises and experiences due to their brief primary schooling and isolation from the mainstream. Most females and Black students ended their education in the eighth grade which, at that time, "an eighth grade education was considered sufficient, high school excessive, and college extravagant" (Rester, 1996, p. 17). Rester (1996) explained this exception to allow females and Blacks into college as society "making every effort to correct society's ills" (p. 20). Naturally, the need for remedial courses was paramount as specific courses in reading, math, and English were implemented to remediate students lacking basic college preparatory skills. The University of Wisconsin was recorded as the first to establish a college preparatory department in 1849 (Rester, 1996). The continued pressure and fluctuation of financial support, decreasing enrollment and increasing competition for students kept the demand for remedial courses at a high peak at 2- and 4-year higher education institutions (Bigger, 2005; Dzubak, 2005; Saunders & Ervin, 1984).

The allowance of academically underprepared students in higher education learning institutions came at a cost. Along with inefficient basic skills, academically underprepared students also brought extra burdens that normally did not plague regularly admitted students ready for college work. Issues surrounding these students included poor study skills, being passive learners, having low intelligence quota, and interference of

psychosocial and cognitive hindrances (Rester, 1996; Spann et al., 1995). These were real deterrents that affected students' success in their educational pursuits and at times detrimental to their growth and involvement in college. The role and significance of academic advising became more integrated in students' success for personal and academic development and persistence.

Advising activities have always coexisted with the life span of remedial education and as remedial education evolved to developmental status likewise academic advising was becoming more defined, refined, and recognized (Cook, 2001; Rester, 1996). Forming relationships has always been intertwined with advising between faculty and students. During the colonial period advisors were regarded as surrogate parents commonly referred to as *in loco parentis* (Cook, 2001). Advisors were deemed responsible for the students' total development including moral, intellectual, and social skills, and their role continues to evolve to include some of the same multiple and diverse functions. Many colleges soon adopted the concept of systematic advising, the first being Kenyon College and John Hopkins (Cook 2001; Frost, 2000; Tuttle, 2000), but the advising relationship would prove to have many challenges throughout its history, especially during the 20th century and beyond. Reports indicated that the faculty/student relationship had "degenerated into brief, impersonal interviews" (Frost, 2000, p. 8) as conflicts regarding one another's roles and limitations began to emerge.

Whereas the 19th century was identifiable due to its rudimentary progress and process to define advisors' roles, the 20th century can be characterized as rebuilding relationships. In 1909, Lawrence Lowell, president of Harvard College, stressed the need for a sensitization of viewing students as "whole people" inside and outside of college

academia (Cook, 2001). During the 1920s and 1930s much attention was directed to students' first year in higher education. This time was seen as critical for the acclimation and retention of students on campuses. Many activities and services such as campus counseling, freshman orientation, peer mentoring, spiritual well-being activities, and faculty relations were initiated (Cook, 2001). In addition, the sole responsibility of student development by faculty was expanded and transferred to other college personnel (Cook, 2001). This undertaking to engage others in student development took on the form of student-personnel work to "interest the students in developing his or her own body, mind and character" (Frost, 2000, p. 9). Inclusive of student personnel services were educational guidance and psychological and vocational counseling services available to college students (Cook, 2001).

Post-World War II was the impetus for congressional passing of the G.I. Bill in 1944 that allowed thousands of American veterans and these who would normally not be able to afford college enroll in higher education institutions without cost (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Frost, 2000). With the entry of traditional and nontraditional students, more personnel was required to help students navigate the maze of course offerings and diversity of individuals' intellectual, personal, and social demands (Cook, 2001; Frost, 2000). Academic advising was regarded as an essential part of students' adjustment to college and society. During the 1960s students' attention was drawn more towards social issues and the role of higher education institutions and faculty became more preoccupied with research than students' needs (Frost, 2000). Records of large numbers of students withdrawing from college were noted and a need to know and understand this phenomenon was pursued. As a result, a series of surveys were developed and

administered by the American College Testing Service (ACT) to determine students' college experiences including questions related to their advising experiences. The results revealed that academic advising was considered important for the purposes of providing information, but unfortunately this was the only component of advising that was regarded as satisfactory by students (Frost, 2000).

This outcome sparked the curiosity and investigations of numerous researchers, including Alexander Astin, Vincent Tinto, and Ernest Boyer (Frost, 2000) who provided invaluable information to help to explain this phenomenon of student attrition. Their findings showed individual involvement (Astin) and finding a "good fit" (Tinto) in college were predictors of students' persistence in college (Frost, 2000). Enrollment numbers soared again during the 1970s but this time "more first generation and lower-income students, underprepared students, re-entry students, disabled students and international students requiring individualized academic adjustment and planning" (Cook, 2001; Tuttle, 2000) flocked to the doors of higher education institutions. This group of students was referred to as "at risk," which implied that these students were more prone to drop out of college compared to traditionally admitted students. Naturally, with the diversity of these students' needs and entering characteristics and maintaining emphasis on their college retention (Tuttle, 2000), academic advising became one of the means for higher education institutions to provide a service and offer help to retain these students.

In 1972, two distinguished scholars, Burns Crookston and Terry O'Banion, emerged and formulated the link between academic advising and student development theories (Cook, 2001; Frost, 2000; Tuttle, 2000). Crookston (1972) categorized advising into two distinct sects called prescriptive and developmental academic advising. The

advising relationship based on the authority of the advisor and the dependence of the student on the advisor is referred to as prescriptive advising (Crookston, 1972; Frost, 2000; Winston & Sandor, 1984). The advising relationship marked by a joint responsibility for the outcome of the advising and its interactive experience is referred to as developmental academic advising (Crookston, 1972; Winston & Sandor, 1984). Crookston's work was based on Chickering's psychosocial theory that took into account students' development of their decision-making process to manage situations that college presents upon entry and during college (Chickering, 1969; Frost, 2000; Tuttle, 2000). As stated earlier, student development became a central theme in higher education beginning in the 1930s, so the concept of developmental advising was very appealing, but not ardently practiced, by the majority of higher education institutions (Frost, 2000).

Today in the 21st century, Cook (2001) identified major factors that will continue to affect higher education and society in general and invite advisors to be more visible and active. She contended that the maturation of America's pluralistic and mosaic society (ethnic diversity, educational level, age) including changes in individual and societal roles will continue to shape higher education's role in interacting with students and society (Cook, 2001). She further acknowledged that an "information based economy, globalization, economic restructuring in firms and human resources will be clearly visible" (Cook, 2001, p. 3). Cook (2001) admonished advisors to become more aware of their roles in higher education and their responsibility to students and society in general,

> to be cognizant of our duty to acquire a worldview perspective and the need to help students acquire the knowledge to succeed in a global economy. Understanding and appreciating different cultures and respecting persons from

diverse backgrounds are critical for living responsibly and successfully in our future society. (Cook, 2001, p. 6)

Summarily, academic advising has existed and permeated higher education for centuries. The purpose and mission of academic advising has evolved, but with an increasingly steady flow of diverse student populations, including academically underprepared students' admittance to community colleges and universities, academic advising will continue to serve a viable purpose and remain significant to the academic adjustment and success of students. Consequently, research will continue to explore how to improve advising to better serve and accommodate students who are in pursuit of a higher education degree.

Significance of Academic Advising

McCabe (2000) predicted that a national dilemma faces many American colleges and universities as an increasing number of at-risk students including females, minorities, low income, and academically underprepared students will continue to seek a college degree (McCabe, 2000; Spann, Spann, & Confer, 1995). Once underprepared students matriculate, the responsibility to educate and retain these students is transferred to the institution. This is a challenging feat for any institution and requires each to develop innovative and purposeful strategies to provide quality interactions (Grimes & David, 2002; McCabe, 2000; Spann et al., 1995). The role of academic advising has been documented as one method higher education institutions can use to "invest, nurture and protect its precious commodity" (Cuseo, 2003, p. 2) by utilizing customer care and service to meet the demands of the diversity of college society (Afrassiabi, 1987; Grimes & David, 2002; Hunter & White, 2004; Hutson, 2006).

Academic advisors fill many "academic breeches" (Priest & McPhee, 2000). It has been advocated as a likely place for changes to begin to aid the underprepared students' level of achievement and satisfaction as teaching and guidance support for the first year is crucial to their integration, persistence, and achievement in higher education (Grewe, 2007). Brown and Associates (2005) and others (Smith, 2002; Spann et al., 1995) articulated the significance of advisors as a point of contact between the institution and the student. More emphatically stated by Hunter and White (2004) is that academic advising may be "perhaps the only structured campus endeavor that can guarantee students sustained interaction with a caring and concerned adult who can help them shape such an experience" (p. 21). In addition, academic advisors have a commendable and hefty role as an encourager, informer, teacher, resource person, and mediator based on a relationship between the advisor and the advisee. Various researchers concluded that it really does not matter if the relationship is based on inside or outside of classroom activities because either happenings can generate positive interactions that influence students' academic performance, intellectual curiosity, interpersonal skills, development of their educational and career goals (Alexitch, 1997; Daller, 1997; Tinto, 1975; Van Vark Edelnant, 2006) and in essence "promote a holistic development" (Daller, 1997, p. 1).

Lloyd (1995) stated that academic advising can also help to "diminish student attrition, support students to make successful transition into college life, and allow students to find academic success" (p. 21). To facilitate this process, Jones and Watson (1990) believed that advisors who are able to be very real and up-front with at-risk students in an effort to establish trust can help them believe that developing their

competencies can produce success which in turn can help them persist from one semester to the next. Besides academic advising interventions, students' involvement is pivotal. Jones and Watson (1990) postulated that a combination of students' integration in college, their level of commitment to education, and their level of support contribute to the making of successful advising experiences in higher education institutions (Jones & Watson, 1990; Kramer, 2000; Tinto, 1975).

Success of students' persistence and the institution's ability to retain its students is monumental. Academic advising has been used as a driving force in higher education to make a significant difference in students' perceptions and level of satisfaction to remain in college. Despite the underprepared entering characteristics, academic advising can encourage students to be successful, above and beyond their matriculation weaknesses (Spann et al., 1995). Wilder (1981) and others (Heisserer, 2002; Henkel, 2000; Roosevelt, 2005; Tinto, 1975) have indicated that students who receive "insightful and personal academic advising feel not only more positive about their academic advisors but also about their colleges and universities as well" (Wilder, 1981, p. 189).

The benefit from this interaction and intervention "not only fulfills the institutionally self-serving function of promoting fiscal solvency, it serves the more altruistic, student-centered purpose of promoting learning and development" (Cuseo, 2003, p. 2). Cuseo (2003) and others (Brown & Associates, 2005; Roosevelt, 2005) also acknowledged that in addition to institutions' fiscal significance, establishing advising programs based on students' needs would glean educational and social significance for the institutions.

In spite of the overwhelming consensus that academic advising can be effective to create a "culture of success" (Cuseo, 2003), some studies have not found similar results. Results have varied in its power or significance of academic advising especially as it relates to retention (Wyckoff, 1996) and learning orientation (Alexitch, 1997). Wyckoff (1996) conducted a study that investigated students' satisfaction of academic advising by faculty advisors and its influence in whether or not they remained in college. Only a moderate level of satisfaction was found and was not considered to be a significant contributor in students' persistence from their freshman to sophomore years. Afrassiabi's (1987) study determined that there were too many variables that contributed to undergraduates' persistence, their attitude toward the institution, and perception of faculty advising. This multiplicity of variables included students' attitudes towards academic discipline, students' age, students' class level, the amount of credit hours enrolled, declaration of and satisfaction with one's major, having a departmental advisor, being able to select one's advisor, the advisor's gender, the amount of contact with advisor, and the advisor's level or amount of training and qualification (Afrassiabi, 1987). Furthermore, he concluded that timing of an assignment of an academic advisor was not significant, which was contrary to Cuseo's (2003) conclusion that timing was critical to enhance students' level of satisfaction with academic advising and academic success.

Regardless, there is still an overwhelming consensus that interaction or relationships with advisor can produce positive and rewarding effects (Beal & Noel, 1980). In his book titled *Faithful Over A Few Things*, George McCalep (2001) stated that bonding, whether psychological or physiological, plays a major role in relationships. Bonding can be viewed as establishing a solid foundation that can have desirable results

for advisees, advisors, and the institution. McCalep (2001) surmised, "Bonding is similar to the process of 'imprinting'—an act in the natural world whereby a newborn animal attaches itself, in a sense of belonging, to an agent that is responsive to it immediately after birth or hatching" (p. 13). He further stated that "bonding cannot be forced, and neither should it be delayed. The earlier the bonding process begins after new members join, the higher the probability that it (bonding) will occur" (p. 13). The application of this analogy to students' relations may have similar results of students' quick and early bonding to advisors and the institution and can lead to academic and social integration as relationships are established and nurtured.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, two theories, *Student Integration Model* and *Seven Student Development Vectors*, have been selected to aid in understanding students' interactions and decisions they make in college which, in turn, may influence their choices or intentions to depart or persist in higher education. Both theories are widely researched and have provided invaluable insight for college personnel to use and to develop strategies or interventions accordingly for college students. Vincent Tinto's *Student Integration Model* followed by Arthur Chickering's *Seven Student Development Vectors* provided an in-depth understanding of the literature in this study. The researcher concludes with an overview of the integration and its relations to academic advising and academically underprepared students.

Tinto's Student Integration Model

From a theoretical stance, no other theorist has gained as much attention regarding students' persistence/withdrawal in higher education as the work of Vincent Tinto

(Bettinger & Long, 2003; Cabrera, Castaneda, & Hengstler, 1992; Halpin, 1990; Pascarella, Terenzini, & Wolfe, 1986). In his work *Student Integration Model*, Tinto (1975) developed his own theory for students' persistence and devised a model that looks at the "fit" of students' social and academic integration into the institution of higher education to determine whether students remain or abandon their educational goal (Bettinger & Long, 2003; Cabrera et al., 1992; Dougherty, 1992; Halpin, 1990; Johnson, 2003; Pascarella et al., 1986). His theoretical framework has been validated by numerous researchers who have supported his theory that the importance of a good fit between a student's commitment to academic and social integration into the institution and his or her goal to obtain a degree will form the basis for whether a student remains or withdraws from the postsecondary institution or postsecondary education. Pascarella et al. (1986) quoted Tinto that "given individual characteristics, prior experiences, and commitment . . . it is the individual's integration into the academic and social systems of the college that most directly relate to his continuance in that college" (p. 160). Academic integration is characterized by:

- college grades
- class attendance
- amount of academic contact with faculty and students
- a sense that the student feels that intellectually he or she is developing academic skills. (Dougherty, 1992; Tinto, 1975)

Social integration is characterized by:

- participation in extracurricular activities
- extra and outside classroom contact with both faculty and peers

- development of friendships. (Dougherty, 1992; Tinto, 1975)

Tinto's theory also incorporates many students' individualistic background characteristics of students that have already been discovered to have an impact on students' reasons to persist or withdraw from college. Well-known individual factors include family and student background. For example, in an article by Tierney (1992), parents' educational achievement is a variable for students' success. Students whose parents went to college stand a greater likelihood of attending and graduating from college versus students whose parents did not attend college. Also, socioeconomic status is a key factor, in that the higher the income, the greater probability that the student will attend college. Another variable is if high school students choose to pursue an academic or vocational track. Also influencing the phenomenon of higher education attrition/retention is students' ethnicity. A Caucasian student is more likely to attend college than an African American or Native American (Tierney, 1992). Merging individualistic characteristics background with his theory, Tinto developed a conceptual framework that provided a comprehensive model that was generally applicable across all student and all institution boundaries and differences.

Tinto's *Student Integration Model* was derived from the works of two renowned social theorists of the late 19th century, Emile Durkheim and Arnold Van Gennep (Tierney, 1992). The merging of these two theories produced the foundation for Tinto's model which stated that the more an individual becomes integrated into the institution's way of life, the less likely it becomes that the individual would experience isolation and commit suicide, withdraw, or dropout from that institution. Tinto recognized Durkheim's classic analysis of social factors related to suicide and posited that "the degree to which

an individual was integrated into the fabric of societal institutions lessened the likelihood that someone experienced anomie" (Tierney, 1992, p. 606). Anomie simply defined is "normlessness" which persons were disconnected or unclear as to what was expected of them (Tierney, 1992). The successful integration into the life of society consequently would reduce the likelihood of anomie and suicide (Halpin, 1990; Tierney, 1992). On the other hand, Van Gennep was an anthropologist who studied tribal societies and studied the "rite of passage" in different cultures. This process or ritual was designed to groom individuals from childhood to adulthood. Van Gennep believed that the rite of passage was a necessary mechanism for the development of the individual (Tierney, 1992). Similarly, institutions are seen as social organizations where the "rite of passage" is conducted to induct individuals into society via integration into college or university (Halpin, 1990; Tierney, 1992). Students may enter as confused and immature persons, but over a period of time their interactions and experiences may help to fully develop their skills, especially academically, socially, and cognitively. The dynamics and interweaving of these concepts birthed the theoretical model of Student Integration.

Beyond the varying background attributes and experiences of the aforementioned and the convergence of the social theorists' models, Tinto sought to answer two fundamental questions that were important for students to have a good fit or integration into the life of the institution and persist in their education: firstly, how committed was the student to his or her academic goal, referred to as goal commitment, and secondly how committed was the student to the attended institution, referred to as institutional commitment (Cabrera et al., 1992; Pascarella et al., 1986; Tierney, 1992). Therefore, the degree of strength of the student's commitment and involvement in becoming integrated

into the academic and social fiber of the institution accounted for the level of the student's commitment to the institution and the student's goal to graduate. In essence, Tinto sought to emphasize the importance of "good person-environment fit" (Halpin, 1990, p. 3).

Consequently, if a student has a poor fit, then it stands to reason that the student would not persist in obtaining his or her educational goal of attaining a college degree. Poor fit can be a result of or defined as one or more of these possible factors—lacking a strong commitment to academic and social integration due to poor grades, poor attendance, little contact with faculty and students and lack of a sense of intellectual development, little to no participation in extracurricular activities, little outside classroom contact with faculty and peers, and lack of friends on campus (Tinto, 1975). Halpin (1990) succinctly summed up Tinto's theory: "The cumulative interplay over time of these categories of variables—backgrounds, initial commitments and interactions—results in varying degrees of academic integration, which causes changes in commitments, which leads ultimately to persistence or exit from the college (or university)" (Halpin, 1990, ¶ 3).

The Psychosocial Perspective: Chickering's Seven Vectors of Student Development Theory

The psychosocial perspective, one of the theories that grounds student development, emphasizes that beyond the academic and intellectual development of students, personal development must be considered as part of the whole person concept. Researchers (Appleby, 2001; Miller & Winston, 1990) emphasized that the work of Chickering (1969) provides recognition to developmental changes college students go

through, and their identification and processing of these changes to ultimately form their identity. In addition, the psychosocial development perspective "is concerned more with the content of individuals' personal preoccupations, social interactions, and ego development" (p. 100) and is greatly affected by the interactions that occur between the individuals and their environment (Miller & Winston, 1990). Arnold and King (1997) asserted that student development theories "provide maps or guides by which to understand the ways individuals and groups experience higher education and the factors that interact with their satisfaction, achievement, and persistence" (p. viii).

Chickering's work (1969) is one of the many student development theories that provide a foundation to explain students' psychosocial development. In his highly publicized and referenced book, *Education and Identity*, Chickering (1969) identified seven vectors or tasks of student development. However, since his first publishing of his work, Chickering and Reisser (1997) revised the seven vectors to include more in-depth, broadened information. Revisions were also made to more emphatically recognize the importance of students' experiences and interactions early on to help establish the "formation of their core sense of self" (Chickering & Reisser, 1997, p. 39). The seven vectors are:

1. Developing Competence
2. Managing Emotions
3. Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence
4. Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships
5. Establishing Identity
6. Developing Purpose

7. Developing Integrity (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1997)

Chickering based his work from some other well-known theorists such as Eric Erikson's 1950s research which hypothesized the "eight stages of man" ego development and its progression through life cycles from adolescence to adulthood (Miller &Winston, 1990) and Robert White's work based on the development of competence in youths. Chickering believed that due to the complex nature of society and its demands for more skilled and specialized laborers, students entering college from ages 18-25 go through developmental stages or developmental vectors (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1997; Miller & Winston, 1990). He maintained that "college students as a group share common challenges and that development is coherent and predictable" (Miller & Winston, 1990, p. 2). Understanding of these vectors can equip higher education personnel to better facilitate, relate, and serve different college student cohorts entering with unique developmental characteristics. This understanding can facilitate the development and implementation of means and ways to assess and encourage student college development, growth, and persistence.

Chickering and Reisser (1997) provided and revised the seven vectors of development for practitioners to help students to become "excellent all-rounder" (p. 41) and to serve as a means to accommodate students' varying levels of intellect, maturation, and motivation. Explanations of the seven vectors are outlined in the following paragraphs and based on the definition of developmental academic advising, its activities, and purposes, the developmental vectors and relational link between advisors and advisees can be easily established.

The first vector, "developing competence," refers to how students physically, emotionally, and intellectually handle situations, and also how they develop and achieve their goals in college. Chickering (1969) stated that beginning as early as childhood and throughout college, competence is influenced. Competence was likened to a three prong pitchfork, with intellectual, interpersonal, and social competence representing each prong. The intellectual prong mainly focuses on the construction of abilities that allows students to comprehend, analyze, and synthesize their observations and experiences at college (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). The interpersonal prong relates to working with others in a manner that is productive and effective and to "choose from a variety of strategies to help a relationship flourish or a group function" (Chickering & Reisser, 1997, p. 46). The social prong refers to students' level of social interactions and involvement and supports the notion that increase in competence also fosters students' trust in their abilities and their self-assurance (Chickering & Reisser, 1997).

The second vector, "managing emotions," is considered one of the more early developmental tasks to master (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). This allows students to reflect early about their own feelings and to acknowledge, express, and/or trust them more to help them identify specifically what they need and want (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990). The writings of Sanford (as cited in Chickering, 1969), emphasized that freshmen are initially characterized by their "stereotyped thinking, intolerance of ambiguity, punitive morality, submissiveness towards the powerful and dominance toward the weak" (p. 10). Other emotions may include anxiety, anger, depression, desire, guilt, and shame which may hinder students' progress yet alert institutional facilitators of impending danger of withdrawal (Chickering & Reisser, 1997;

Hutson, 2006). Chickering noted that this vector marks students' ability to begin to liberate their thinking from previous authoritative, especially parental, influences and values. Chickering (1969) noted that as students begin to "make contact with a broadened life space" (p. 11) they will be required to make decisions that compel them to reflect how it affects themselves and others and to realize that their input in their future educational and career plans are relevant and significant.

As they begin to interact with persons in their collegiate environment, they begin to "move from autonomy to become interdependent," which is the third vector of student development. Chickering noted that this phase is still plagued with doubt and hesitancy but is considered normal. He used the analogy of a "hog on ice" to describe students' excitement, bewilderment, and anxiousness as they embark in their new territory. Kramer (2000) used words such as "unsophisticated" and "vulnerable" to describe students coming out or initiation to college. As students begin to become autonomous this is demarcated by "emotional and instrumental independencies that later give rise to the higher order of interdependency" (Chickering, 1969, p. 74). Emotional independence emerges as students shift from the valuation and engagement of mainly parental or authoritative influences to more of a personal inventory and validity of one's relativism and inclination more towards the support and attention of institutional personnel and their peers. This change and exchange of dependence is more noticeable during the first 2 years of their matriculation to college (Chickering, 1969). Instrumental independence is evident when students are resourceful, organized, and confident in their transitions allowing them to move beyond their comfort level and begin to grow towards self-sufficiency and self-

support. Like emotional independence, this growth occur during the first 2 years and later tapers off during their last 2 years of college (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990).

Summarily, this developmental phase is referred to as the "true coming of autonomy"—a phase when there is gradual disengagement from former authority of adult influences and replaced with influences from peers and institutional personnel (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). Students' abilities to adapt and adjust to college demands and expectations along with the materialization of their own personal goals are distinguishable (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990). This vector can also be viewed as a continuum from dependence to interdependence as this development calls for the integration and reciprocity of students with "those in the larger physical, social, and historical context" of college, the community, the society, and the world (Chickering, 1969, p. 11).

Chickering noted that "development of interpersonal relationships" is essential and necessary. This development is referred to as the fourth vector of Chickering's revised student development theory (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). He declared this developmental task as a "freeing experience," as acceptance, tolerance, trust, and sensitivity underscore their newfound relationships (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990). Thomas and Chickering (1984) denoted that the college experiences and interactions inside and outside the classroom serve as a catalyst to students' "wholesome development" (p. 91) or, vice versa, their lack of development.

The "establishment of identity" is Chickering's fifth vector (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). He defined identity as the continual yet gradual changing of one's self-perceptions while attempting to achieve or maintain congruity with one's inner self and

with others (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990). This student development vector builds on from the first three previous vectors discussed. One of Chickering's beliefs is that higher education affords a great opportunity for students to clarify their identity despite the cacophony of society's diverse and controversial issues, behaviors, and relativisms (Chickering, 1969).

The sixth vector, "clarifying purposes," addresses three domains, avocational and recreational interests, vocational aspirations, and contemplation of choices of lifestyles one would pursue (Chickering, 1969; Miller & Winston, 1990). The domains provide direction and meaning to college students' college experiences. He acknowledged that vocation choices and its pursuit is continuous and not necessarily established but that planning and prioritizing will help students discover or confirm their purposes for attending college. As students progress through their development, the seventh vector, "developing integrity," is the point which students have clarified, adopted, and incorporated in their behavior beliefs that guide and identify who they are and what they value. These values reflect their "humanizing," "personalizing," and developing of their inner consistency that indicate students' accomplishment of developing their own level of integrity versus values and conventional beliefs that once were directed and overshadowed by authoritative figures in their lives (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1997).

The seven vectors have been delineated but its progression or occurrence varies depending on the college student cohorts. Unlike other psychosocial theories in which student development follows a hierarchical order, Chickering's analysis of development is viewed from a multidimensional perspective. He noted that not all levels of

development are sequential but some developments will interact with each other; other developments occur over time or are in progress, with some developments more pronounced, and encountered earlier or later than others at certain stages of the college journey (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1997). It is noted that freshmen may progress through the first three vectors, developing competence, managing emotions, and becoming interdependent, simultaneously before advancing or maturing into the other vectors later on in their college years (Chickering, 1969; The University of Texas Advising Handbook, 2001). According to Miller and Winston (1990), the seven vectors are the "common core of development" (p. 104). Each vector or student development is meant to provide a reference to help explain and understand college students' intricate and cyclical levels of beliefs and later experiences that begin to define and identify students' personality. Chickering (1969) posited that the understanding of college students' characteristics, their intellect, their values, activities, and processes may determine and elucidate how they choose to handle situations and challenges that they encounter in college. Chickering (1969) believed that for students and institutions of higher learning to coexist, institutions must focus on students' level where they are at that particular stage in their lives and where they are heading (Chickering & Reisser, 1997). College provides a starting point for these developments but Chickering readily acknowledged that this is a lifelong task.

Integration and Relation of Theories to Academic Advising

Both theorists, Tinto and Chickering, provide credible theoretical grounds to understand the multifarious reasons students, in particular, academically underprepared students, may persist or depart colleges and universities, and the pivotal role academic

advising can play to mediate a successful college journey and experiences. Appleby (2001) stated that advisors, like educators, have the capacity to forge bridges between students and institutions, facilitate relationships, and crystallize the significance of students' importance in their collegiate development. One of the more prominent themes in both theories is the establishment of a significant relationship. This relationship can help to anchor the students in their choices to remain in higher education despite any negative characteristics or conditions they entered in college. Both theorists believe that advisors and other college personnel must see students as individuals and not stereotype them based on what they may or may not bring but that their experiences during college is markedly important as well (Kuh, 1998; Thomas & Chickering, 1984; Tinto, 1975). Academic advisors can help advisees gain insight and understanding of themselves by understanding and normalizing the stages and changes that they will experience through college (Chickering, 1969) and can provide a positive and stimulating perspective and environment to help students perceive their experiences as positive, which, in turn, solidifies their commitment to their educational goals and to the institution (Tinto, 1975). Tinto's emphasis on the interchanges between students and their college environment makes it critical that advisors, who are visible early on in these students' college experiences, provide a good, positive approach to help to maximize their potential, including connecting them to resources and encouraging them to seek help for their weak academic areas or any other concerns that may hinder their academic and personal success. Using this supportive approach, academic advisors can potentially influence these students to persist from one semester to the next until completion. Conversely, the opposite may occur if this interaction is negative and not supportive.

The first three of Chickering's vectors focus on the novelty of incoming freshmen and emphasize that from a very early period they have to make many decisions and handle many issues that can greatly influence their transition and adaptation to their new world of academia. This insight can help to offset advisors' style of advising and intervention strategies employed. Chickering stated that students strive for congruence in their inner and outer lives. Students under the tutelage of advisors can look at themselves to determine what they desire for their lives, present and in the future, and determine whether their choices influence their responses to circumstances they encounter in order to align themselves with their goals. In other words, advisors can help students, especially for academically underprepared students whose struggles may be more pronounced than regularly admitted students, to "put the college experience into perspective, become more responsible, set priorities, and evaluate sequences of events and be honest with themselves" (*Rensselaer Academic Advising Manual*, p. 13).

Although this study looked at academically underprepared students' persistence from one semester to the next, both theorists agree that early attention and intervention from significant college personnel can make a difference in students' early decisions and development. From the outset, advisors make an impact by their authenticity, accessibility, knowledge, and ability to communicate to students (Chickering, 1969; Tinto, 2004). As students develop, the guidance afforded by advisors to clarify, share, teach, and steer students in a logical sequence of experiences can serve to eliminate or minimize much of the angst, worry, inadequacies, zealousness, and overconfident attitudes or beliefs, and uncertainties that characterized this student group (Chickering, 1969; Spann et al., 1995; Tinto, 2004). Having a "good fit" (Tinto, 1975) and

development towards competence and autonomy (Chickering, 1965) interwoven together can bring about the desired goal of developing the whole student.

Who Are the Academically Underprepared Students of Higher Education?

The academically underprepared students of higher education are those who have shown a recorded area of academic weakness upon matriculation to the university. However, Metzner (1989) stated that these students have more similarities than differences from students who were regularly admitted to colleges and universities. Nonetheless, these students failed to acquire the minimum score (16) on the ACT in one or more academic skills to allow them to be regularly admitted. Dzubak (2005) defined college readiness skills as a means to navigate through college that during its course will incite the development of effective study skills, foster problem-solving techniques, and develop critical thinking. Dzubak (2005) asserted that these students were lacking college readiness skills and they were not adequate on their own to navigate through college in order to ensure their collegiate success. Similarly, in a brief provided by The Alliance for Excellent Education (2006), their findings reported that students' lack of college preparedness included weaknesses in study habits and the inability to comprehend and contend with material that was seemingly complicated. It was also found that this population sought advisors' help less frequently compared to regularly admitted students (Ender & Wilkie, 2000; Kramer, 2000; McGee, 2005). It was surmised that perhaps their judgment for needing advising services may be overshadowed and hampered if they believed it carried a negative connotation among their peers (Saunders & Ervin, 1984). If they felt that their weak academic competency was exposed through seeking help, they would not intentionally seek help.

Jones and Watson (1990) stated that there are various reasons why students were labeled as academically underprepared. Likewise, Grimes and David (2002) noted that there is a significant amount of heterogeneity among academically underprepared students. They stated that disparities in educational preparation in elementary and secondary schools (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Chaney, Muraskin, Cahalan, & Goodwin, 1998; Priest & McPhee, 2000; Saunders & Ervin, 1984) and ineffective teaching methods contributed to students' academic deficiencies. For example, not all academically underprepared students struggled academically in high school. Some of these students who take the developmental courses were strong academically in many of their secondary education courses and believed that they were college ready. McCabe (2000) and Dzubak (2005) contended that this pseudo perception of their readiness illustrates the credibility and the academic gaps that exist between high school preparation and college admissions requirements. Consequently, many of these students enter higher education institutions with unrealistic expectations of what skills it takes to successfully withstand the rigors of college (Dzubak, 2005; Saunders & Ervin, 1984). Kramer (2000) stated that entering students come with "pat, superficial, pseudo-plans" (p. 99) that makes them vulnerable to changes and difficulty adjusting to the college system (Kramer, 2000). This can then give place to contention, frustration, and initial resistance, thwarting a smooth transition and integration to college. Some experience higher test anxiety compared to regular admitted high achievers (Roosevelt, 2005). Spann et al. (1995) and others (Miller & Murray, 2005; Saunders & Ervin, 1984) attributed most of the underprepared students' woes more so to psychological and motivational needs than lower intelligence.

Spann et al. (1995) strongly believed that it is not a matter of underprepared students' academic potential that causes their academic struggle, but that their academic potential is less developed and, consequently, less academically motivated than other regularly admitted students. As a result, they may become more easily distracted from academic tasks and thus more likely to have poor academic work habits (Saunders & Ervin, 1984; Spann et al., 1995). As stated throughout this study, relationships are important and family relationships cannot be understated. Support and reinforcement from significant family members encourage academic success and lack of this encouragement or limited familial involvement may contribute to academic deficiencies (Chaney et al., 1998; Saunders & Ervin, 1984). Walsh (2003) and Saunders and Ervin (1984) simply believed that sometimes students' poor choices in high school may adversely affect them academically.

In addition to the high school and college dilemma and academic skills disparities, Dzubak (2005) stated that culture and society were two other dominant factors that lend weight to better understanding underprepared students. Some of the dominant social and cultural trends included the "instant gratification phenomenon" that has engulfed today's culture from an early age (Dzubak, 2005); working single parent homes; and even two-parent working homes, that may limit family interaction and involvement with their children's education (McCabe, 2000); and parents' socioeconomic status (SES), especially low SES, affects students' academic achievement and attainment (McCabe, 2000). Tinto (2004) asserted that income does play a role in students' academic preparation and presents social and cultural barriers that weigh in heavily of whether or not they complete a college degree.

Another characteristic of the underprepared college students is their limited attention span (Spann et al., 1995). Dzubak (2005) and others believed that this was due to their dependence on information presented in a more technological and visually stimulating fashion. Research conducted and widely supported (Dzubak, 2005; Ender & Wilkie, 2000; Spann et al., 1995; Tinto, 2004) often shows the academically underprepared as having one or more of the following characteristics. Such characteristics include low academic self-concept, unrealistic grade and career goals, unfocused career objectives, and marginal academic planning techniques. They were unable to clearly outline a plan to achieve their proposed career choice and were impractical as to what educational tendencies would be needed to successfully complete such a plan of study (Chaney et al., 1998; Saunders & Ervin, 1984). They were more extrinsically motivated—that is, they were enticed more by external rewards with the expectations that as long as rewards were extended they were motivated to perform well. They have been noted to have a healthy self-esteem but their belief in their ability to accomplish challenging feats was low; that is, they have low self-efficacy. In addition to low self-efficacy, underprepared students have an external locus of control which places control of their situation and outcomes on persons they believe are in authority or are deemed as experts and as a result forfeit the opportunity to take responsibility for their own activities (Dzubak, 2005; Spann et al., 1995). Other attributes linked to this student cohort included having inadequate study skills that do not promote their college success; there was more of a belief that "learning is memorization,"and this group of students seemed to have a "history of passive learning' (Dzubak, 2005, p. 8).

Others (Chaney et al., 1998; Saunders & Ervin, 1984; Spann et al., 1995) posited those academically underprepared students who may lack confidence in their academic ability are more reluctant to take on academic tasks and "may also be less likely to engage in behaviors that will increase their sense of belonging that are related to college retention" and integration into higher education (Chaney et al., 1998, p. 198; Tinto, 2004). Students who were considered high risk differed in their self-concept and perception of long-term goals when compared with regularly admitted students (Chaney et al., 1998). These students may also avoid courses they perceive to be challenging due to fear of failure. Subsequently, they may change, avoid, or put off taking the course(s) (Chaney et al., 1998). Their perception may only add to their level of frustration and increase their level of negative noncognitive factors if their attempts result in repetitive failure (Spann et al., 1995).

In spite of all their peculiarities and weaknesses, higher education institutions continue to admit students with standardized tests and IQ scores that are below their admissions requirements. Ender, Winston, and Miller (1984) stated that "the educational foundations of society are presently being eroded by the 'rising tide of mediocrity' and threaten the very fate of the nation and its people" (p. 4). However, as Perez (1998) pointed out, not educating these students at a college level will have repercussions for the work forces, which now more so than ever require a higher level of literacy and critical thinking skills (McCabe, 2000). In addition, the general welfare of society for the purpose of "socialization into the mainstream of society" (Perez, 1998, p. 1) presents a strong case for the education of these students.

To summarize, this study cohort displayed a weakness or lack of competency in one or more basic academic skills that originated due to an assortment of reasons resulting in various characteristics that can handicap their attempt at successfully matriculating and persevering through college. These markers gathered from the literature were more commonly associated with students experiencing a difficult time integrating into the college environment, both socially and academically. Consequently, it is believed that this "misfit" increased the probability of students withdrawing early from higher education. As part of their advising handbook, The University of Texas (2001) accurately summed up this student group and their issues upon matriculation to higher education that

> not only are they first year students which follows assimilation, expectations, influences including social distractions, academic and social integration, uncertainties, incompatibility, they are also academically under prepared, which may mean they are dependent learners with low self-concept, with deficiencies, hesitancies and issues of capability. (*The University of Texas Advising Handbook*, n.p.)

Researchers (Kramer, 2000; Spann et al., 1995; Walsh, 2003) surmised that given the right nurturing environment, one characterized by care and support, these students can achieve academic and social success in higher education. Regardless of circumstances, an overwhelming amount of literature shows that academic advising services are vital to the survival and success of these students, specifically as it addresses the needs of underprepared students (Walsh, 2003).

Researchers (Ender & Wilkie, 2000; Kramer, 2000; Saunders & Ervin, 1984) strongly asserted that it is of utmost importance for academic advisors to "frontload" and

to be forerunners at their institution, which is to be visible, proactive, and intentional in their advising strategies at the beginning of a student's enrollment in a higher education institution. Given the multiplicity of underprepared students' characteristics, Walsh (2003) readily admitted that academic advisors face a big challenge. In an article by Jones and Becker (as cited in Walsh, 2003), advisors "must become experts in advisor multi-tasking: teaching as well as counseling, being honest as well as encouraging, and being informed as well as open-minded" (p. 2) to be effective in servicing underprepared students. Chaney et al. (1998) reverberated that for students to have a higher percentage of staying in college, special and appropriate strategies must be implemented and supported by the institution. This type of encouraging environment will alert the students of their importance and demonstrate the institution's plan to support them in their college venture.

Relationship Between Advising and Retention of the Academically Underprepared

Although higher education institutions have continually allowed students access to obtain a college degree, Cuseo (2003) stated that nearly 40% of students who intended to get a degree exit the institution before completing their 4-year degree. According to Noel, Levitz, and Saluri (as cited in Heisserer, 2002), "about one-half of all students who drop out of college do so during the freshman year, many leave during the first 6 to 8 weeks" (p. 4). Emphasis on early and effective interventions is undisputable and would be even more important for those students exhibiting status deemed as at-risk (Hutson, 2006). An institution that purposefully uses academic advising can significantly retain its students. In addition, Saunders and Ervin (1984) noted from a culmination of other researchers' findings that effective advising of any kind is related to "positive outcomes

for all college students . . . [including] academic achievement, satisfaction with college, achievement of personal, social, and vocational developmental tasks" (p. 252). Advisors can help to assimilate students more smoothly and quickly into the collegiate environment despite their shortcomings.

The advisor is like a teacher and occupies many roles. Each role has been established for the success of students. Accordingly, Cuseo (2003) identified advisors as having three distinct roles and functions. The first role is as a 'reservoir and conduit" of information (Cuseo, 2003). Advisors are considered the resource persons. They should not only be well-versed in academic programs, but also in institutional policies and procedures. Secondly, advisors can be recognized as the "referral agents" who are knowledgeable about special resources on and off campus to assist students in finding satisfaction through their college experience and aid in whatever needs they communicate to advisors (Cuseo, 2003). Each referral made should reflect the advisors' genuine care and well being of the students (Cuseo, 2003; Kramer, 2000; Mottarella et al, 2004). Finally, advisors function as mentors. This role is underscored by virtues such as trust, communication, respect, time, care, and honesty (Cuseo, 2003). In turn, these qualities should offer "stability, assurance and consistency while serving as a source of confidential guidance, affirmation and support" (Cuseo, 2003, p. 35).

Academic advising is significant and is one of the more influential aspects for this student group's continuance in higher education. However, theory and practice have yet to merge effectively and expansively in higher education (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Cuseo, 2003). Due to the multiplicity of factors that have been found to be directly and indirectly significant in retention (Metzner, 1989) of academically underprepared students, 3

decades later there is still a need in this area. Recognizing the importance and difficulty in retaining these students, Beal and Noel (1980) reported that the ability to retain the enrollment of these students may be "beyond institutional control" (p. 1).

Creamer (as cited in Cuseo, 2003) conducted a research of the literature exploring academic advising impact on college retention and identified the following as pervasive qualities to an effective retention program: "targeted recruitment, planned and quality advisement, frequent student/faculty interaction, sound academic performance, integration into campus environment, and adopting a developmental approach" (p. 41). Echoing Creamer's (1980) conclusive results, Habley (1993) stated that for advising to be effective and to influence retention decisions it must be totally student-oriented and a more developmental approach used to handle students' educational goals and their educational obstacles. These students may be unaware that they initiate their own roadblocks in their college journey. These roadblocks may stem from unrealistic expectations and goals. Ender et al. (1984) stated that by the end of freshman year of study many of the enthusiastic and energetic goals of these students have become disquieted and disenchanted with their experiences of college. Here again, quick and early intervention of an advisor's honest feedback, skills, and referrals can change this story to one of realistic expectations, goal setting, and hope of success for these students.

A study conducted by Metzner (1989) provided support for academic advising of any kind to support retention. Her study explored the quality of academic advising and its effects on freshman attrition. Her findings were that high quality advising had a negative impact on attrition, albeit an indirect impact, and that poor advising was better than no advising. Henkel's (2000) study found that frequent contact with an advisor, especially

during the critical freshman year, promoted student connectedness with the institution and provided opportunities for advisors to support freshmen venturing into unfamiliar territory (Crockett & Levitz, 1984; Henkel, 2000), thus supporting their decision to remain in college.

Even institutional barriers and policies "unrelated to the real needs of the college student or that dehumanize the interactions between students and staff can have negative effects on retention" (Beal & Noel, 1980, p. 5). Beal and Noel's (1980) research posited that interaction between the student and the institution is crucial. Academic advisors can bridge the two entities to establish a "good fit" (Tinto, 1975). This good fit would result in a strong likelihood that students would interact, integrate, and intend to persist in college. Conversely, students would drop out or withdraw from college if a good fit was not established (Beal & Noel, 1980; Tinto, 1975). Beal and Noel (1980) surmised that "a student develops a sense of belonging as the result of many and varied interactions with the college and student environment. Such a feeling will enhance retention" (p. 5)

Nonetheless, it is important to remember that due to the diversity of factors that influence attrition there remains much unexplained variance and individual difference that influence a student's choice to remain or withdraw from college. As Metzner (1989) reminded the readers of retention research, most of the factors relating to attrition "are not amenable to direct institutional modification" (p. 435). Even so, it is known with certainty that academic advising does have a measurable impact on student retention (Metzner, 1989).

In summary, there is no question as to the significant role academic advising plays in retention of students in general and specifically for those who are academically

underprepared. Focus throughout this section delves or turns to a relational aspect that is essential to the vitality and promotion of this cohort's success. This relational aspect cannot be underestimated despite students' pre-characteristics upon entering college and universities. However, the following section turns its attention to what type of relational academic advising academically underprepared students may prefer. It is assumed that knowledge of this information can direct or redirect advisors' efforts in a more directional and selective way to contend with the advising needs and diverse educational requirements that this cohort portends to be more instrumental in their persistence.

Academic Advising Approaches - Prescriptive and Developmental

The two academic advising approaches in higher education that are commonly practiced but are diametrically different in its approach and activity are prescriptive and developmental academic advising. Prescriptive academic advising style provides information and guidance in a very direct and concise format, whereas developmental academic advising is characterized as being more nurturing and collaborative. Multiple definitions identify this approach, but its focus is the development of a close advisee/advisor relationship that not only promote academic success but also "stimulates and supports students in their quest for an enriched quality of life" (Ender et al., 1984, p. 19). A large amount of research in academic advising documents students' academic success when developmental academic advising approach is utilized than the prescriptive approach (Cuseo, 2003; Heisserer, 2002; Winston, Miller, Ender, Grites, & Associates, 1984). However, research supports prescriptive academic advising as being just as successful in aiding students' academic and fostering an enriched quality of life as developmental academic advising, as some researchers contend that one type of advising

may not be appropriate for all student cohorts all of the time (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Priest & McPhee, 2000; Van Vark Edelnant, 2006).

An examination of both advising approaches is provided in Table 1. Because of the continuous changing dynamics of the student population who matriculate to higher education institutions, advisors must be cognizant of who they serve and be in possession of knowledge of students' advising and academic needs in order to devise strategies or communications to effectively reach and sustain this special group of academically underprepared students. Although prescriptive approach is practiced more in higher education institutions, it is not necessarily the preferred choice (Chando, 1997). However, the use of developmental academic advising with academically underprepared students is not conclusive as the best approach to assist these students to persist in college either (Brown & Rivas, 1984; Chando, 1997; Grewe, 2007; Priest & McPhee, 2000). An examination of both types are described in the following paragraphs.

In his landmark research, Crookston (1972) identified two distinct types of academic advising practiced in higher education institutions. These advising approaches, prescriptive and developmental, are presented in Table 1. Crookston's (1972) table allows one to see at a glance the contrasting nature of these two approaches.

Prescriptive Academic Advising Perspective

Prescriptive advising is the oldest and most basic approach to academic advising. The prescriptive academic advising Crookston (1972) likened to a relationship found between a doctor and patient. The doctor diagnoses the problem and prescribes the next course of action to alleviate the medical ailment. Total trust is placed in the expertise of the doctor, and the patient believes that by following the directives all will be well.

Table 1

Differences Between Prescriptive and Developmental Academic Advising Approaches

	Prescriptive	Developmental
Abilities	Focus is on limitations (i.e., the adviser uses student's past performance to predict future obstacles).	Focus is on potentialities (i.e., the adviser uses past performance and current aspirations to anticipate potential).
Motivation	Students are viewed as passive, lazy, irresponsible, and in need of help and prodding.	Students are viewed as competent, striving, and active seekers of information.
Rewards	Students are motivated by grades, credit, income, and parental threats.	Students are motivated by mastery, achievement, recognition, status, and fulfillment.
Maturity	Students are immature, irresponsible, and must be closely supervised.	Students are responsible, maturing, and capable of self-direction.
Initiative	Adviser takes initiative on fulfilling requirements; the student initiates any additional advising.	Either the adviser or the advisee can initiate advising.
Control	Adviser is the authority and is in control.	Control is shared and negotiated.
Responsibility	Adviser's responsibility is to provide advice and the advisee's responsibility is to act upon the adviser's advice.	Responsibility is negotiated and/or shared.
Learning Output	Student learns from the adviser.	Both the student and the adviser learn and develop.
Evaluation	Adviser evaluates the advisee's progress.	Evaluation is an adviser/student collaboration.
Relationship	A formal relationship exists between adviser (authority) and student (dependent) which is based on status, strategies, games, and a low level of trust.	The adviser/student relationship is informal, flexible, situational, and based on a high level of trust.

Freshmen and, in particular, underprepared freshmen, face many challenges to survive and thrive on campus because of all the developmental weaknesses they bring with them. Prescriptive academic advising takes the guess work out of figuring out their academia part of life, which may relieve the pressure to perform at a higher level of independence and interdependence. Prescriptive academic advising may initially give them an opportunity to develop and acclimate better and more quickly to college experiences (Brown & Rivas, 1994). Also, utilizing a direct approach may be more familiar and welcoming with the maturity level of freshmen and more familiar to the guidance they may have received in the past (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Kramer, 2000).

Most research commonly refers to the advisor who practices prescriptive academic advising as being an automaton or an authority figure while the students are sponges who soak up and perform whatever directives are given. Brown and Rivas (1994) made a clear distinction between an *authoritative* and *authoritarian* advisor. An authoritative advisor is one who is confident, knowledgeable, and communicates to students a sense of calmness, steadiness, and assuredness to help students orient and acclimate to college (Brown & Rivas, 1994). This help is especially welcomed if they are new to the college scene and aware of their academic deficiency. The authoritative approach may make them feel competent and supported to face the challenges of college and decision-making processes (Brown & Rivas, 1994). In contrast, an authoritarian advisor would not support positive relations but "communicates superiority, elitism, and condescension" (Brown & Rivas, 1994, p. 110) which would not provide for good relations between advisors and students nor students and the institution.

Despite the negative depiction of this form of advising, there is research that documents support for this type of "rigid" advising style compared to developmental academic advising. Literature does support that certain student cohorts such as minorities, first generation, and millennial students prefer the prescriptive mode of advising (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Fielstein, 1989; Roosevelt, 2005; Smith, 2002). Smith (2002) and others (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Priest & McPhee, 2000) asserted that it would be presumptuous to declare prescriptive advising not as effective as a developmental advising model. In a study conducted at the University of Albany, Smith (2002) found that first-year students wholeheartedly embraced prescriptive advising over other advising styles. Smith (2002) found that these students expected and wanted college advisors to follow the same role and provide accommodating treatment like that which they had received from their high school advisors. These students expected college advisors to be knowledgeable in all areas of their specific program and to identify or assign them to classes to fulfill their program requirements (Smith, 2002). They wanted to be told what to do and when to do it. In other words, the advisors were the key to unlocking the intricacies of the world of college and its multitude of programs and associated requirements. Laff (as cited in Smith, 2002) postulated that prescriptive academic advising experiences "may serve as the catalyst to significant personal interactions and potential academic development in the student" (Smith, 2002, p. 40).

Likening students as customers, Kadow (2006) asserted that this concept perhaps is stoically upheld and overly practiced because institutions believe that responding to students' class needs, courses, and their ability to graduate in a timely fashion to begin their career is an indication of administering good quality customer service and

benevolence. Grites (1982) agreed that prescriptive advising does have functional aspects but must be seen as part of a continuum that should still include informal, relational, and conceptual aspects of the advising process.

As well as initiating careers, Church (2006) stated that prescriptive advising at the onset can spark discussions that cover the basics of an educational program, but can also gradually lead into discussions and insights about the advisees. In other words, he felt that prescriptive advising helps to "ground the advising sessions from getting too carried away in the abstract and theoretical" (Church, 2006, ¶ 2) and acknowledges that its straightforward approach and introduction of the essentials of successful mastery of one's major is valuable. Brown and Rivas (1994) described prescriptive academic advising as "concrete, tangible, structured approaches to addressing and resolving issues and problems" (p. 128) and criticized Crookston (1972) for presenting prescriptive advising in such a provincial, minimal way that is commonly perceived as negative. Brown and Rivas (1994) contended that Crookston (1972) did not do justice to the worth and value of prescriptive advising by only identifying one aspect of this style as "motivated more by expediency than by concern for the development of the student" (Brown & Rivas, 1994, p. 108) and Church (2006) asserted that at times this type of advising is exactly what should be practiced.

Faculty may readily use this approach because of its ease, convenience, and desirability (Crookston, 1972), but Pettay (2007) stated that this approach has been widely utilized by advisors with little or no training who have found it to be easy and direct. Despite its wide use and attractiveness in most higher education institutions, most literature does not support prescriptive advising's popularity of use as the best approach

(Chando, 1997). Most literary studies and discussions regarding this approach denigrate prescriptive advising. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal* (2006), published responses to the following question, "If prescriptive advising is so bad, why do advisors use it so much?" Long-time experts in the academic advising profession responded. For example, Wes Habley responded that prescriptive advising overall is not a bad approach to use because students do indeed, want and expect timely and accurate information, but he admonished advisors that utilization of this one approach will hinder students from developing strong exploratory and critical thinking skills (Habley, 2006). According to Habley (2006), "anything less than that (*developmental*) approach is to abdicate the adviser's role as an educator" (*The Mentor*, 2006).

Developmental Academic Advising Perspective

A general concern was students' limited student involvement and dissatisfaction (Daller, 1997; Van Vark Edelnant, 2006) with academic advising among students who largely received prescriptive academic advising. Crookston (1972) revised the definition and activities of advising to be more personable and relational and this approach was widely revered as the benchmark of advising. He coined this advising approach Developmental Academic Advising, described in the following section in more detail.

Developmental academic advising has been highly favored as more proactive and effective in the commitment and building of relationships between advisors and advisees. This model arose out of a student development approach that promoted students to discover who they were via optimal use of institutional resources and personnel (Pettay, 2007). In addition, the objective was to bring attention to and focus on students' realization of their educational, occupation, and life goals via caring and interested

advisors and their advising activities (Crookston, 1972). A large amount of support for the developmental academic advising approach, with regular admitted and marginally admitted students, can be found throughout the academic advising literature (Heisserer, 2002; Hutson, 2006; Winston & Sandor, 1984; Spann et al., 1995). Its title alone would indicate that a warm and caring relationship will develop and would foster students' competence and control of their own educational, personal, and vocational outcomes. However, this approach is not widely utilized due to several reasons; primarily, it is time consuming, and the pressure of the number of students that advisors see may not be able to indulge or accommodate this type of relational advising. In addition, Pettay (2007) asserted that developmental academic advising requires advisors to be highly skilled to conduct this type of advanced advising. Despite the limited use, Smith and Allen (2006, as cited in Pettay, 2007) said that "this approach acknowledges student individuality, helps students integrate life, career and educational goals, connects curricular and co-curricular aspects of their undergraduate experience, and provides scaffolding for decision making and problem solving skills" (Pettay, 2007, ¶ 3).

Appleby (2001) recognized Crookston's original distinction of the two advising approaches (Table 1) but he also included 19 other distinctions based on his over a quarter of a century's work in academic advising (Table 2). Permission was granted to use Appleby's version of the prescriptive and developmental academic advising table (see Appendix A). His version of the prescriptive and developmental dimensions utilizes psychology major students, but the questions used in his table are stated to be generalizable to any student group in any major. The inclusion of Appleby's expansion of Crookston's work was to not only highlight advising style differences but also to illustrate

that the paradigm shift from prescriptive to developmental academic advising and its goals is a gradual process. This paradigm shift from advisors's sole responsibility of students' academic success or outcomes to partnering with advisees for their growth and development and weaning them to become more self-sufficient underscores much of Appleby's perspectives and experiences (Appleby, 2001). Appleby's (2001) emphasis on developmental academic advising goals include challenging students to self-reflect and take introspection of their thoughts and behaviors, development of becoming more self-reliant, confident, conscious, and critical of how their goals fit with higher education and society goals. Detailed in Table 2, Appleby broke down what the essence of students' aim should be in order to maximize their educational opportunities and interactions along with other virtues such as effective problem solving, and sharpening of their decision-making skills. His adoption of Crookston's (1972) advising styles is presented in such a way that is provocative, futuristic, and practical. Appleby's emphasis for students to establish a clear view of their identity, being knowledgeable about their current and future goals, and to make plain their plans are important for students' manifestation of their aspirations (Appleby, 2001). This process is accomplished also with the help or mentoring relationships with advisors.

Although there seems to be a gradual shift from prescriptive advising to developmental advising, Grewe (2007) asserted that the American college entrants should determine which approach is best since it is predicted that by the year 2010 ethnic minorities will outnumber White Americans and with this trend, increasing numbers of students having special academic and social needs will be matriculating to higher education requiring differing advising needs. Her point was to advise against contending

Table 2

Appleby's Description of Prescriptive and Developmental Academic Advising Approaches

	Prescriptive	Developmental
Purpose	To deliver accurate information to as many students as possible in as efficient a manner as possible.	To develop mentoring relationships with students that will enable them to continue to develop personally, academically, and professionally after the formal adviser-advisee relationship has ended.
Ultimate Goal	The ultimate goal of advising is to enable students to earn diplomas and graduate "on time."	The ultimate goal of advising is to enable students to clarify their future goals and to plan strategies to accomplish their goals.
Location	In the adviser's office.	Anywhere (e.g., in the adviser's office, in the hall, on a campus bench, at a basketball game, in the student union or cafeteria, etc.).
Future	The future refers to next semester.	The future refers to post-baccalaureate opportunities.
Course Rationale	Courses are taken to "get them out of the way."	Courses are taken to develop knowledge, skills, or characteristics.
Curricular/Co-curricular Emphasis	The emphasis is on curricular activities (i.e., classes).	Emphasis is on both curricular and co-curricular activities (e.g., membership in organizations and volunteer activities).
Strength/Weakness Emphasis	Emphasis is on hiding weaknesses and using strengths to bolster GPA.	Emphasis is on recognizing what skills will be necessary to accomplish future goals, strengthening those that are weak, and continuing to build those that are strong.
Questions Addressed	What courses do I have to take? Who is teaching them? When are they offered? How difficult are they? Do you have to write a paper? Is there a lot of reading?	What can I do with a degree in psychology? Why are statistics and experimental psychology important classes? What classes can I take after English Composition to strengthen my writing skills?
Culpability	The advisee assumes the adviser is responsible for negative consequences if errors occur.	The advisee understands that he/she is ultimately responsible for negative consequences if errors in advising occur.

Table 2 - Continued

	Prescriptive	Developmental
Delivery System(s)	Single delivery system (one-on-one meeting in the adviser's office).	Multiple delivery systems (e.g., e-mail, telephone, classes, seminars, workshops, group sessions, alumni panels, handbooks, and peer adviser/'mentors).
Curricular Understanding	A student "understands" the curriculum when she knows what classes he or she must take and when to take them.	A student "understands" the curriculum when she realizes how she will change as a result of completing classes and how these changes will enable her to accomplish her post-baccalaureate goals.
Stability/Change	The advising process remains constant as the student progresses from freshman to senior.	The advising process changes in response to the developmental needs of students as they progress from freshmen to seniors (i.e., different questions are addressed).
Thinking Skills Involved	*Retention* (e.g., what courses to take, sequence of courses, number of credit hours for graduation, etc.).	*Comprehension* (e.g., Why do I have to take physiological psychology? I want to be a counselor, not a biopsychologist.) *Application* (e.g., How can I graduate if I have three semesters of classes to go and only two semesters of financial aid left?) *Analysis* (e.g., How can I satisfy the requirements of General Education and how do all the requirements fit together?) *Synthesis* (e.g., What electives should I take to help me work with unwed pregnant teenagers?) *Evaluation* (e.g., Is clinical psychology an attainable career for me?)
View of Electives	Electives are courses that are easy, fun, can raise GPA, and are offered at convenient times.	Electives are courses that enable students to expand upon the knowledge they gain in their required courses and to "construct" themselves as unique individuals who are different from other undergraduates with the same degree.
Rule Orientation	The adviser attempts to make sure that advisees follow all rules and procedures to the letter.	The adviser will attempt to bend rules and procedures if such accommodations are in the best educational interest of the student.
Appropriate Topics	The adviser sticks to academic advising and avoids giving personal or career advice.	Many topics can be broached and discussed during advising sessions, as long as they fall within the competence of the adviser.

Table 2 - Continued

	Prescriptive	Developmental
Skill Development	Emphasis is on passing skill courses (e.g., Statistics) to "get them out of the way" rather than on actually acquiring and retaining the skills they teach.	The development of skills is stressed in a way that allows advisees to understand the value of the skills they will acquire and how the sequence of the curriculum will require them to build upon these skills.
Personal Insight	Not stressed after an advisee has decided upon a major.	Personal insight is a driving force during all advising sessions (e.g., "Do you still want to be a clinical psychologist?").
Curricular Rationale	It is unnecessary for advisers to explain to advisees why they must take certain classes, other than that these courses are required for graduation. (Assumption: Advisees are only interested in what classes they should take, not why they should take them or how they will be changed as a result of taking them).	One of an adviser's most important roles is to enable advisees to comprehend the rationale behind classes they will take and the way these classes are sequenced (Assumption" Advisees are more likely to involve themselves in classes they know will enable them to accomplish their goals and will attempt to retain and strengthen the skills these goals require.)

Note: From "The Teaching-Advising Connection, Part III," by D. Appleby, 2001, *The Mentor*. Copyright 2001 by Center for Excellence in Academic Advising, The Pennsylvania State University. Reprinted with permission of the author (see Appendix A).

that one mode of advising is better than another, which she contends can be perceived as disingenuous (Grewe, 2007).

Instead of contrasting one advising practice with the other, Brown and Rivas (1994) posited that "prescriptive advising rather than being incompatible with a developmental approach to advising is in fact a significant and necessary part of a thorough developmental advising methodology, one which gives due consideration to individual and group differences and needs" (p. 108). Mottarella et al. (2004) found that students can appreciate either prescriptive or developmental advising as long as there is a relationship element within the advising session. They stated that both types of advising, prescriptive and developmental, were similar in their tasks but that "many interpersonal and relationship factors are woven into and subsumed under the developmental approach, and that these may be factors that lead to student satisfaction" (Mottarella et al., 2004, p. 48). Mottarella et al. (2004) identified these relational factors as warmth, support, respect, and the establishment of a relationship with the students. They hypothesized that if those relational factors are present in either developmental or prescriptive advising, students would be mutually satisfied and appreciative of either advising approach.

Lloyd (1995) conducted a study to investigate whether students' level of satisfaction, achievement, and educational aspirations were related to the type of faculty advising that they received. For one set of students, the faculty initiated the contact to establish a more personal relationship. The control group received the standard or prescriptive advising, and the groups were compared on the variables. At the end of the first semester, a survey was administered. Results did not show any significant difference between students' level of satisfaction when using the more intrusive or developmental

advising over the prescriptive advising approach (Lloyd, 1995). Similarly, Beasley's (1986) study looked at sophomores' and seniors' perceptions of their academic advising relationship. One of her main inquiries was to discover which advising approach, prescriptive or developmental/intrusive, was more effective. Her findings concluded that students have a preference more for the prescriptive than developmental/intrusive approach. The second part to this study was a face-to-face interview of students who had the highest level of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of advising relationships. It was found that students placed higher priority on activities associated with prescriptive advising and that students prefer more emphasis or assistance on academic issues rather than personal issues (Beasley, 1986).

The only similarity that may be obvious between the two approaches is that they both offer some form of guidance to students. Guidance of any kind and from any source is noted to be especially welcomed, especially with new students who are bombarded with making decisions and must assert their independence very early once matriculated into college (Light, 2001). Mottarella et al. (2004) critiqued that the advising process and activity is a much more complex activity than is given credit. In this study, it was noted that meeting the needs and expectations of students early on using prescriptive advising could be a prelude to future developmental discussions and developmental and intrusive academic advising (Mottarella et al., 2004), a sentiment shared by other researchers (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Frost, 2000).

Advising Students of Color

Whereas much literature (Appleby, 2001; Grewe, 2007; Priest & McPhee, 2000; Van Vark Edelnant, 2006) advocates the practice of developmental academic advising to

encourage students' satisfaction, involvement, and persistence, other research still shows mixed results based on the population under study. Brown and Rivas (1994) and others (Priest & McPhee, 2000) conducted studies with multicultural populations and advocated for prescriptive advising early in the advising process. Brown and Rivas (1994) underscored four observations of the relevancy and appropriateness of prescriptive advising, especially with use of students of color. They determined that "a relational or nondirective approach to advising . . . developmental approach may be in conflict with the cultural experiences of students of color" (p. 109). They posited that students of color or minorities prefer prescriptive advising and want the advisor to be in control of the advising relationship. These students originate from families where authority is often recognized as the voice of experience and wisdom, and is to be respected and adhered to. Brown and Rivas (1994) posited that for advisors to be nondirective or "developmental" may be perceived by these students as advisors' unwillingness to provide information that is needed for them to succeed in college. Brown and Rivas (1994) stated that students may feel "confused, disoriented and dissatisfied with the advising encounter" (p. 109) should the advisor use the nondirective approach (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Chando, 1997). The direct approach provides assurance to these students that they are in capable hands and that a person who is well versed in the intricacies of college has been assigned to them to help them get through successfully. Another group of students who prefer prescriptive advising are first generation students (Priest & McPhee, 2000). These students who are commonly African Americans are normally considered at risk and seek direct guidance to their proposed program of study from their advisors. Both African

Americans and first generation students make up a large percentage of students who enter college academically underprepared.

Secondly, Brown and Rivas (1994) noted that in order for a progression towards a developmental relationship demarcated by "caring, human relationship . . . [wherein] both parties must take responsibility for sustaining the relationship" (p. 109), there first must be a primary responsibility by the advisor to initiate, orient, structure, and support the students' current level of development upon their entry to higher education. In other words, these students require a prescriptive method to initially ground them in their college venture. Thirdly, Brown and Rivas (1994) postulated that students of color have a high level of mistrust towards institutional structure and policies they referred to as "bureaucracy and its bureaucratic agents or persons" (p. 110). Consequently, their perception of advisors utilizing the developmental approach too early may be interpreted as "withholding information and not being trustworthy" (p. 110). Instead of the goal to persuade students to embrace responsibility early on, students may feel that the "bureaucratic agents," or advisors, are undermining their goal to achieve a college degree (Brown & Rivas, 1994). As a result, it may be assumed that the direct prescriptive advising is the best approach to utilize early on in this advising relationship.

Lastly, they (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Chando, 1997) claimed that along with trustworthiness, expertise is even more essential for the development and sustenance of an advisor/;advisee relationship (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Chando, 1997). The belief is that the authority figure is well endowed with knowledge regarding numerous experiences which increases their trust and reliance on the authority figure. They may view

themselves as under the instruction or guardianship of the authority. As a result, they are more readily willing to relinquish their autonomy or rights to the person of authority.

Gender and Advising Style Preferences

Chando (1997) conducted a study in which he sought to determine which student characteristics reflected the advising style preferred, prescriptive or developmental. He used eight independent variables including personality variables, gender, age, ethnicity, academic ability (ACT and high school grade point average), enrollment in developmental courses, first generation status, and academic major in a multiple regression analysis (Chando, 1997). Using the Academic Advisement Inventory tool, Chando (1997) found that there was an inclination towards developmental academic advising by genders, males and females, but that females dominated more on this variable. He surmised that females' continual struggle and balance for respect within their homes and society and quest to attain an education would propel them to more readily establish and embrace a relationship with an advisor. They seek accurate and timely information in order to help them acquire their college degree. Chando (1997) stated that reciprocity of respect and responsibility is necessary to foster this type of relationship (Chando, 1997).

In another study, Winston and Sandor (1986) administered the Academic Advising Inventory assessment to assess the advising preferences of University of Georgia undergraduate students. The results did not show any significant differences between gender and advising style preferences. Instead, it was discovered that both males and females preferred developmental than prescriptive academic advising. Other studies

conducted show that females have a higher or stronger tendency towards developmental academic advising than their male counterpart (Crockett & Levitz, 1984; Frost, 2000).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The primary focus of this study was to determine whether academically underprepared students at a 4-year public institution in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, prefer prescriptive or developmental style of advising and based on their choice whether their academic advising needs are being met in order to influence their level of satisfaction and intention to persist the following semester. The information garnered can be used as an informative tool for advisors across the institution to better serve these students in their academic, personal, and career goals. It was hypothesized that these students will be more satisfied and academically and personally committed to persist in college if their specific needs are being met. This study was comprised of two phases. The first phase was the administering of the Academic Advising Inventory tool to voluntary participants in their regular classroom setting and the second phase, the interview segment, was offered to students who wish to share more of their in-depth advising experiences and comments to structured questions relating to advising, their advisor, and their perceptions of this experience to determine any influence on their intentions to enroll the following semester.

The Development of the Academic Advising Inventory and Its Use

This section details the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) instrument that was used for this study. This instrument, originally created by Roger B. Winston and Janet A. Sandor (1984 and revised 1986) was chosen because it evaluates what students' perceptions of their needs are and is designed to identify what students perceive are important characteristics of academic advising. This tool incorporates the frequently studied aspects of academic advising, including "advising relationships, advising

activities, frequency of advisor-advisee contact, and students' satisfaction with advising" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 7).

Discovering that there were no available instruments to evaluate academic advising, Winston and Sandor (1984) developed this inventory to provide a theoretical evaluation tool based on developmental academic advising and also to reinforce the importance of academic advising in higher education. The Academic Advising Inventory is theoretically founded on Crookston's two basic approaches to advising, prescriptive and developmental, and is designed to evaluate these two techniques along with students' satisfaction. The authors posited that knowing the role of academic advising in higher education "can affect positively the lives of students and the pragmatic improvement of advising programs through more thorough and systematic summative evaluation" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 9).

The Academic Advising Inventory consists of three parts or scales of academic advising that are identified and broken down further into subscales. Part I includes items related to the nature of the advising relationship as seen on a developmental-prescriptive continuum. Part II includes the frequency of various advising activities during the advising session, and Part III relates to the students' satisfaction of their advising experience. Demographic information about the students and their advising experiences were labeled as Part IV (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Part V is an exact replica of Part I, but the instructions guide the students to answer as if referring to their ideal academic advisor (see Appendix B for instrument).

Part I - The Developmental-Prescriptive Advising Scale

Part I consists of the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising Scale (DPA). This scale was designed to target the nature of the advising relationship and issues that are commonly discussed during advising meetings. This part consists of 14 items that identify the two most common academic advising approaches used by advisors, developmental and prescriptive. These contrasting approaches seek to discover whether students perceive their advising session to be more prescriptive or developmental. Prescriptive is viewed as more advisor-centered, diagnostic in its approach, and more of a formal relationship between advisor and advisee. In contrast, developmental advising is more inclined towards a warm, caring, and friendly relationship. In this advising format, both advisor and advisee engage in dialogues and decisions that concern students' total education and use of campus resources to assist in their academic success. Winston and Sandor's (1986) attempt was to "represent a continuum between the two contrasting behavioral styles and attitudes—prescriptive and developmental—as perceived by the student" (p. 11). The higher the scores (57-112) the more developmental advising is perceived and, vice versa, the lower the scores (14-56) the more prescriptive in nature was the advising perceived by the students.

To capture students' perceptions of their advising experience, the DPA is broken down into three subscales—Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision-Making (ADM), and Selecting Classes (SC) (Winston & Sandor, 1986). The first subscale, PE, has statements that attempt to reflect students' total education, including vocational/career planning, extracurricular activities, personal concerns, goal setting, and use of campus resources (Winston & Sandor, 1986). High scores (33-64) in this section

reflect a more mutually accepting and personable relationship between advisor and advisee and success is based on both parties' participation. Low scores in this section (8-32) are viewed as prescriptive in nature and the advisors are seen as the sole authority of information received by the advisees.

The second subscale, Academic Decision Making (ADM), attends to the process, the development, and the implementation of academic decisions. These questions are geared to whether advisors monitor students' academic progress, along with the collection of data, and assessing students' academic interests and, finally, registering for the appropriately discussed courses (Winston & Sandor, 1986). As usual, high scores (17-32) indicate a developmental advising relationship, and low scores (4-16) indicate a prescriptive approach to advising. The third subscale of DPA is Selecting Courses (SC). Courses are selected and then a schedule is planned. High scores (9-16) in this activity represent a developmental advising approach, and contrastingly low scores (2-8) reflect a more prescriptive advising approach in which the advisor selects and plans the advisee's schedule of classes.

Part II - Academic Advising Activities

Whereas Part I of this inventory focused on identifying the nature of the academic advising, that is whether prescriptive or developmental, Part II of the AAI focuses on the specific activities (Winston & Sandor, 1986). This second part of AAI is the Advisor-Advisee Activity Scales (AAS). The AAS is made up of five scales that demarcate activities commonly related to the advising sessions. Below is a description of each subscale that is part of the AAS scale.

The first scale is called Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationships (PDIR) and is comprised of 12 items, activities such as establishment of "interpersonal exchanges" (p. 12), discussion of students' college experiences, personal issues, and short- and long-term goals. The second scale is titled Exploring Institutional Policies (EIP). This scale includes activities that are institutional directed that can help advisees in becoming familiar with their institution. Activities such as relay of institutional information as it relates to campus resources, campus academic rules and regulations, and an overview of the college are included in this scale (Winston & Sandor, 1986).

Registration and Class Scheduling (RCS) make up the third scale and activities such as selection of courses, creating a schedule, and making necessary changes or adjustments after registration. The fourth scale is Teaching Personal Skills (TPS) which includes items related to study and time management techniques. The final scale of AAS is the Academic Majors and Courses (AMC). This scale includes the discussion of majors, its requirements, the process of declaring a major, and the possible career opportunities of that major. In total, the AAS has 30 items (Winston & Sandor, 1986).

Part III - Academic Advising Overall Satisfaction

The third part of the Academic Advising Inventory determines the students' level of satisfaction as it relates to their academic advising sessions thus far during their first semester at the institution. In particular, this part seeks to establish students' overall satisfaction, including the accuracy of information provided, sufficient notification of important deadlines, the availability and flexibility of advising when sought, and the amount of time spent during the advising session (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Students

identify their responses using a Likert-type scale with four options, A through D, with *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, and *strongly agree*, respectively.

Part IV: Advisees' Demographics and Contact with Advisors

The fourth section of the AAI includes demographic information such as gender, cultural/racial background, age, and academic class standing. This part also seeks to garner information related to the setting and the frequency of advising contact specifically "type of advising, amount of time typically spent in advising, number of sessions in current advising situation and total number of advising sessions participated in during the current academic year" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, pp. 12-13).

Part V - Ideal Academic Advisor

This part focuses on what students would want in their ideal academic advisor and advising activities. Questions in this part are identical to Part I of the AAI, but the instruction provided asks the students to reflect on their perception of their ideal academic advisor. The students were to choose from a pair of 14 contrasting statements that either were prescriptive or developmental in nature and determine on a Likert-type scale based on a continuum of importance from A-H. On one end of the continuum A and H indicated *very important* and D and E indicated *slightly important*. The responses A to H each were given a numerical value and, as before, the higher the score the more developmental academic advisor/advising was preferred and the lower the score the more prescriptive academic advisor/advising was preferred. Means and standard deviations for the DPA and its corresponding subscales, PE, ADM, and SC, were provided and compared with students' previous responses from Part I.

The remainder of the data analysis of this study incorporated face-to-face interviews in order to glean students' perspectives on how they view and interact with their advisors and to have dialogue concerning its relation to their persistence in college the following semester. Students were each asked the same question (Appendix C) and responses were recorded on a miniature tape recorder. Later at the researcher's home, recordings were replayed and typed and extraction of the main idea and responses was synthesized and are presented later in the study. The responses were separated according to each question, and the researcher counted and recorded the number of times each theme or idea occurred and presented the results in percentages and means.

Participants and Procedure

In conjunction with approval to conduct this survey, a letter from the university's Institutional Review Board was provided (Appendix D) and arrangements were made to secure the university's provost approval and support of this study. Arrangements to meet with the Provost were made and proved to be very beneficial to discuss the purpose and benefits of this study. With the understanding that different colleges would have to be involved, the Provost's endorsement permitted easier support and access among the Deans, Chairs, and instructors. The e-mail from the Provost supporting this study is found in Appendix E. Shortly thereafter, letters and correspondence via e-mail were sent to the following persons: the Dean of the College of Education and Psychology and the chairpersons of math, English, and reading, to request their support and inform them of the researcher's desire to survey the students in the developmental classes (see Appendix F). Individually scheduled meetings were made with each instructor for a time that was

suitable for them to allow the researcher entry into their classrooms to administer the survey and request for future volunteers for the interview process.

The population investigated in this study consisted of first-year students who enrolled in the participating university and were required to enroll in one or more developmental courses in English, math, or reading. These courses are identifiable by the following prefixes and numbers, ENG 099, MAT 099, and CIE 099. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. Consent forms were distributed and read aloud to all students who were willing to take part in this study (see Appendix G). The study was briefly described as a means to seek understanding by identifying and closing the gaps on what first-year academically underprepared students' advising needs may be and how advisors and the institution can effectively meet their needs and determine whether, based on students' responses, meeting their academic advising needs is a factor in helping them persist in college. To help answer this particular part of the survey in more depth, a minimum of 25 interviews were conducted with persons who agreed to participate in a future scheduled one-on-one interview to answer three questions. The responses were tape recorded and synthesized in this study. It is important to note that the interview portion of this study did not make this research a qualitative or mixed method study but more an attempt to obtain direct and personal insights from volunteers regarding their advising experiences and its impact thus far, especially as it relates to their intention to return the following semester.

Questionnaires were distributed in each of the developmental classes upon permission granted from the institution's Institutional Review Board. Meeting times were individually discussed with the corresponding instructor of the various courses. The AAI

was distributed to students during their regular class period which ensured that most of the targeted population would be available and was estimated to take 20 minutes to complete (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Tools such as a number 2 pencil with eraser, an *Inventory* booklet, and scanner answer sheet were required. This inventory was scored using an optical scanning scoring equipment. This inventory was conducted the first week in November after the first university-wide advising session which was scheduled for the second week of October. This time was chosen because first-year academically underprepared students would have become somewhat acclimated to the campus, the facilities, and faculty and should have made contact with their advisors.

Scoring of the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI)

To score Part I, the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising (DPA) and its subscales (PE, ADM, and SC), which comprise 14 items in total were recoded in order to prevent response set or random answering of questions (Winston & Sandor, 1986). This recoding outlined by Winston and Sandor (1986) is as follows: Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 13 recoded A = 8, B = 7, C = 6, D = 5, E = 4, F = 3, G = 2, H = 1. Items 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14 were recoded as A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4, E = 5, F = 6, G = 7, H = 8. Once all items were recoded, the sum of the items was recorded and the ranges of scores were interpreted by the following key provided by Winston and Sandor (1986) shown in Table 3.

Scoring Part II, the Academic Advising Activities (AAS) was done by "tabulating the frequencies of each response" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 14). The range 0-5 indicates the number of times an activity is done, with any responses over five times noted or scored as 5. The following activity categories are defined as follows: Personal

Table 3

Scoring of Developmental-Prescriptive Advising (DPA)

Scale	Items	Range	Cronbach Alpha
Developmental	1-14	14-112	.78
Prescriptive Advising (DPA)		14-56 Prescriptive 57-112 Developmental	
Subscales:			
Personalizing Education (PE)	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13	8-64 8-32 Prescriptive 33-64 Developmental	.81
Academic Decision Making (ADM)	6, 7, 11, 14	4-32 4-16 Prescriptive 17-32 Developmental	.66
Selecting Courses (SC)	2, 12	2-16 2-8 Prescriptive 9 -16 Developmental	.42

Development and Interpersonal Relationships (PDIR) include items 18, 20, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, and 44. Exploring Institutional Policies (EIP) are items 24, 25, 27, 28, and 33. Registration and Class Scheduling (RCS) are items 16, 17, 22, and 23. Teaching Personal Skills (TPS) consists of items 15, 30, and 42. The final subscale of AAS, the Academic Majors and Courses (AMC), are items 19, 21, 26, 29, 31, and 41 (Winston & Sandor, 1986). The information is presented in Table 4.

The third part of the AAI centers on students' satisfaction with the overall advising process and includes items 45-49 of the AAI. This section is scored using a Likert form where A = 1, *Strongly Disagree*; B = 2, *Disagree*; C = 3, *Agree*; and D = 4, *Strongly Agree* (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Frequencies and scoring of each item are computed and tabulated. Low mean scores are interpreted as possible dissatisfaction with the overall academic advising received and/or specific aspects of the advising process (Winston & Sandor, 1986). High mean scores imply satisfaction with advising received by the students. The fourth part of the AAI provides demographic information and contact with one's academic advisor. Responses are recorded as frequency and percentages.

The fifth part of the AAI focuses on students' opinion of their ideal academic advisor. Using the recoding system developed by Winston and Sandor (1986), the higher the mean score the more developmental oriented students prefer their advisor to be and, conversely, the lower the mean score the more prescriptive oriented indicates their preference.

Reliability and Validity of the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising (DPA) Scale

For this instrument, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the items (Winston & Sandor, 1986). For Part I of the AAI, the Developmental-

Table 4

Advisor-Advisee Activity Scale (AAS)

Scales	Items
Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationship (PDIR)	18, 20, 32, 34, 35, 36, 27, 38, 39, 40, 43, 44
Exploring Institutional Policies (EIP)	24, 25, 27, 28, 33
Registration and Class Schedules (RCS)	16, 17, 22, 23
Teaching Personal Skills (TPS)	15, 30, 42
Academic Majors and Courses (AMC)	19, 21, 26, 29, 31, 41

Prescriptive Advising (DPA) and its subscales Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Corses (SC), Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .78 for the DPA scale and .81 for the subscale PE, indicating relatively high internal consistency reliability (Winston & Sandor, 1986). For ADM and SC, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .66 and .42, respectively, which were considered as "relatively homogenous and stable enough measures for use with groups of students" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 15). Even though the creators of the AAI were content with the range of the coefficients (.42-.81), items in the subscales that received a Cronbach's alpha coefficient lower than .70 (which can be interpreted as not a very good instrument to determine its internal consistency) were not included as part of the study results (Nunnally, 1978).

Validity determines whether the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure or measures all of the constructs in the study. Since there were no other scales that measured the same construct as the AAI, Winston and Sandor (1986) determined the construct validity of the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising scale (DPA) by administering this scale to two comparative groups, regularly admitted students and conditionally admitted students, who were first-year academically marginal students, at the University of Georgia (Winston & Sandor, 1986). These marginally admitted student groups were expected to perceive advising differently and possibly have different judgments of their advising needs from the regularly admitted students. The students who were conditionally admitted had to enroll in one or more of the following remedial course: reading, English, and mathematics. Professionally trained academic advisors/teachers were assigned to each student and their goals were to "(a) assist

students in overcoming academic deficiencies by providing psychological support, (b) teach students effective academic and personal coping skills, and (c) encourage realistic personal and career exploration" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 19). Students met with their advisor twice per week for 5 months during regular class periods and also individually. At the end of this time they were asked to complete a survey based on the developmental-prescriptive academic advising scale.

In comparison, freshmen who were regularly admitted were advised through the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Advising Center and were advised by part-time professional advisors or by departmental faculty members in other colleges of the university. Through self-reports, the regularly admitted students indicated that they were advised by an advisor once per quarter for a duration of 20 to 30 minutes (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Scheduling and planning of educational programs were the center of activity (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Winston and Sandor (1986) predicted that the academically marginal freshmen who received the developmental courses would perceive their advising as being more developmental than the regularly admitted freshmen.

The results indicated that academically marginally admitted freshmen who were enrolled in developmental courses scored higher on the DPA scale and the PE and SC subscales than the regularly admitted freshmen (Winston & Sandor, 1986). For Winston and Sandor (1986), this provided sufficient support that their DPA scale was valid. However, no statistical significance was recorded for ADM and SC subscales (Winston & Sandor, 1986). The researchers attributed this result to the similarity of both student groups perceiving "little difference in the approaches (as perceived by the students) used in the academic decision-making and scheduling courses" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p.

20). Both student groups reported that their advising was more developmental in nature (Winston & Sandor, 1986).

Winston and Sandor (1986) also established validity of the DPA scale by correlating it and its subscales (PE, ADM, SC) with part two of the AAI, the Advisor-Advisee Activity Scale. Results showed that DPA scale correlated significantly with all five of the Activity categories (Winston & Sandor, 1986). These results indicate a positive relationship that the more students interact with their advisors the more they perceive their advising interactions as developmental (Winston & Sandor, 1986).

It is also important to note that the authors, Winston and Sandor (1986), gave permission to alter parts III (satisfaction) and IV (demographics) of this survey and use or eliminate parts of I and II (advising on developmental-prescriptive continuum and frequency of advisor/advisees activities, respectively) (Winston & Sandor, 1986; R. B. Winston, personal communication, August 13, 2007; see corresponding e-mail in Appendix H).

Phase II - The Interviews

Interview Questions

At the end of the Academic Advising Inventory there was a place for students to put their name and contact information should they have choosen to participate in the interview phase. This sample consisted purely of volunteers. To encourage participation in this phase, there were three random drawings of $25 gift cards for students who participated to win. The gift cards were from Target, Wal-Mart, and Old Navy.

The interviews took place in the library in one of the enclosed study rooms. Consent forms were distributed for participants to sign. Participants were notified that

their responses would be tape recorded for accuracy and memory of conversations but that there would be no identifiable names used in the write-up of the document. Instead, numbers assigned to each interviewee were used to note conversations. It was expected by the researcher to interview a minimum of 25 students. Interviews were expected to last for approximately 10 minutes. Participants who volunteered for this segment of the study answered three questions. The questions are found below. The first question was designed to determine students' perceptions or preconceived notions of their advisor's role and how they were expected to assist them in college. Also, inquiry into their thoughts of their overall encounter or experience with their college advisor thus far was sought in the second and third questions. The final question directly related to students' persistence, that is, whether or not students' level of satisfaction was related to their intention to enroll in the subsequent semester. To encourage continuous and meaningful conversation, several prompts were used including:

"Can you tell me a little more about . . . ?

"Can you give me an example or recount a time when . . . ?"

"Tell me how that made you feel when . . . ."

Below are the questions that were asked during the interview segment.

Question 1

What is your perception of what a college academic advisor's duty, role, and activities are before attending college and now that you are currently enrolled in college?

Question 2

What are the things you like about your advisor at this stage in your college experiences? What were the important things that helped you in your advising sessions?

Question 3

What, if anything, do you wish you could change about your advisor or his/her activities during advising?

Question 4

Provided that your advisor was able to satisfy your academic advising needs, would this interaction be a factor in your next term enrollment? Why or why not?

Analysis of Data

This was a descriptive statistical study and all parts of the Academic Advising Inventory were depicted as means, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviations. The following research questions were posed in this study using the Academic Advising Inventory:

Research Question 1

What are first-year academically underprepared students' perception of advising approaches (prescriptive or developmental) after interaction with their advisor?

This question was answered by Part I, the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising of the AAI.

Research Question 2

What do first-year academically underprepared students perceive to be their academic advising needs upon initial entry to college?

This question was answered by Part II, the Advisor-Advisees Activity Scales of the AAI, and responses aggregated from interview question 1.

Research Question 3

If the perceived needs are met and their preferences of academic advising approaches are used, would this lead to overall satisfaction of advising?

This question was answered by Part III, Overall Satisfaction of the AAI and excerpts from interview question 2.

Research Question 4

Demographically, are there any significant differences among this group of academically underprepared students, namely, looking at their gender and race?

This question was answered by Part IV, specific interest in their gender and race. A comparison between the total population of the institution of incoming freshmen and the sample of this study was made to determine if the sample was representative of the total population.

Research Question 5

What characteristics do first-year academically underprepared students qualify to describe their ideal academic advisor?

This question was answered in Part V of the AAI, the Ideal Academic Advisor.

Research Question 6

If the perceived needs and advising approaches were addressed, would this fulfillment be a factor in the students' intent to persist to the following semester?

This question was answered during the interview portion of this study, specifically responses from question 3.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was two-fold. The first objective was to discover which advising style, prescriptive or developmental, students who were coined academically underprepared preferred. This revelation was to lend weight and significance to the knowledge and understanding of what type of advising experiences and relationships they perceived to be ideal which may, in turn, influence their level of satisfaction and, consequently, increase their intention to return to the institution the following term. The second objective was to provide information to the university, specifically the advising community within the institution and its administrators, the need and importance to have a comprehensive and collaborative advising program in place for academically underprepared students to facilitate and support their academic success, especially during their first year of college. This chapter presents both the univariate descriptive statistics for the quantitative variables of the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI) tool, demographics of the population studied, and responses gathered from the compilation of themes and responses from the interviews that were conducted.

Demographics of Subjects

The data were collected by two means—administering a survey, the Academic Advising Inventory, and, secondly, through persons volunteering to participate in a short interview with the researcher. The information obtained was to reflect this population's advising experiences, their needs, and feedback regarding their experience. The participants were all enrolled in one or more 099 courses, and to avoid duplication of

responses/participants, participants were informed to complete the Academic Advising Inventory only once.

Data from the university's institutional research recorded a total of 866 students (N = 866) who were enrolled in one or more developmental courses including math, reading, and English during fall 2007. Of this total population (N = 866), there is an overlap of students who were enrolled in two or more remedial courses, thus the number of actual 099 students may be less than recorded. Students were told that they only needed to participate in the survey one time, resulting in a participation rate of 310 participants in this study. Table 5 represents a description of the participants including their gender, racial background, age, and class status. The majority of this sample was comprised of females (67.1%) in comparison to male participants (31%). African-American college students made up over half of this study population (51.9%) followed by Caucasians representing a little over one third of this population (36.4%). This sample consisted of students' age ranging from under 18 to over 31. The researcher requested that any students who were under 18 not participate in this survey due to the need to first obtain parental permission. The largest age group ranged from 18 to 19 years (88.8%). Freshmen participants comprised the majority of this sample (86.8%). A total of 40 (12%) participants in this study responded that they were not freshmen, and one participant declined to respond.

A possible explanation for the range of ages and class standings may be due to the recent changes in enrollment requirements for College Algebra. Beginning in the fall of 2007, students were mandated to enroll in Math 099 if their ACT scores upon admission to this institution did not meet the admissions requirements of 20 on their Math ACT

Table 5

Distribution of Subjects by Gender, Racial Background, Age, and Class Standing

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	96	31.0
Female	208	67.1
No Response	6	1.9
Racial Background		
African American	160	51.9
Caucasian	112	36.1
Asian American	9	2.9
Hispanic	6	1.9
Biracial	5	1.6
Native American	2	.6
Other	3	1.0
Decline to Respond/No Response	13	4.0
Total	310	100
Age		
18 or Younger	172	55.7
19	100	32.3
20	14	4.5
21	5	1.6
22	7	2.3
23	5	1.6
24	1	.3
25-50	2	.6
51 or Older	3	1.0
No Response	1	.3
Total	310	100
Class Standing		
Freshman	269	86.8
Sophomore	16	5.2
Junior	17	5.5
Senior	4	1.3
Other	3	1.0
No Response	1	.3
Total	310	100

scores. In previous terms, the requirement to enroll in Math 099 was a 16 on the Math ACT. Other possible explanations would be that students who were not freshmen and had not taken Math 101 already during the course of their college academics, or had not passed the Math accuplacer test to be exempted from Math 099 subsequently had to enroll in this developmental course. Also, students previously enrolled in Math101 but had failed the course were now required to take Math 099 before re-attempting Math 101.

The next part of the results of this study will proceed in the order of the research questions that guided this study and are provided in Tables 6 through 15. Each question will be restated followed by a presentation of the findings.

Research Question 1: What are first-year academically underprepared students' perception of advising approaches (prescriptive or developmental) after interaction with their advisor?

Part I, the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising Scale (DPA), sought to determine academically underprepared students' advising preference and their perceived judgment of whether their advising was more prescriptive or developmental. Students had to make a decision based on a continuum, from A to H, of how true a pair of statements, either prescriptive or developmental in nature, described their academic advising experience thus far. The responses at each end, A and H, represented *very true* whereas the middle responses, D and E, indicated *slightly true*. Each response was given a numerical value and scores were tallied. Scores ranged from 14-112. Scores from 14-56 indicated a prescriptive advising experience and scores from 57-112 indicated a developmental advising experience. An overwhelming response indicated a belief that the nature of their advising style or approach was developmental (67.1%), achieving scores ranging from

57-109, whereas 31.9% viewed their advisor-advisee interactions as more prescriptive in nature, achieving scores from 29-56. There were 3 (1%) persons who did not complete Part I of the AAI (see Table 6).

In addition to the overall response, the DPA scale was divided into three subscales, Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision-Making (ADM), and Selecting Classes (SC), to determine whether their experience was perceived as prescriptive or developmental academic advising. Using means and standard deviations, students' responses to their current academic advising situation are shown in Table 7. Based on the participants' responses, DPA ($M = 62.61$, $SD = 12.43$) and subscales PE ($M = 35.7$, $SD = 10.27$), referring to their total education, and ADM ($M = 18.73$, $SD = 5.80$), referring to their academic processes to determine their courses and registration, on average participants perceived their experiences as employing more of a developmental academic advising approach. However, the subscale SC ($M = 8.18$, $SD = 3.71$), referring to the selection of courses and subsequent schedule, on average participants' responses indicated that a more prescriptive academic advising approach was employed.

Research Question 2: What do first-year academically underprepared students perceive to be their academic advising needs and activities upon initial entry to college?

This question was answered by Part II, Advisor-Advisee Activity Scale (AAS) which sought to discover students' exposure to and recollection of certain advisor-advisee activities during their current semester. Scores were based on the frequency which ranged from 0-5 or more times an activity students may or may not have experienced. Part II is divided into five subscales and the following means and standard deviations were recorded in Table 8. When categorizing the items according to the scoring of Part II, it

Table 6

Developmental-Prescriptive Advising

Advising Style	Range of Scores	No. of Students	Percentage
Prescriptive	29-56	98	31.9
Developmental	57-109	209	67.10
No Response		3	1.00
Total		310	100.00

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics of Current Advising Experience

Items	Min.	Max.	Means	SD
Developmental-Prescriptive Advising (DPA)	29	109	62.61	12.43
Personalizing Education (PE)	11	64	35.70	10.27
Academic Decision-making (ADM)	4	32	18.73	5.80
Selecting Courses (SC)	2	16	8.18	3.71

was found that items surrounding Registration and Class Scheduling (RCS) and Academic Major and Courses (AMC) occurred the most frequently with means ranging from 1.21 (*SD* = 1.49) to 1.62 (*SD* = 1.48). Discussion relating to one's degree requirements occurred the most frequently (*M* = 1.62, *SD* = 1.48). Items related to Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationships (PDIR) were considered as the next most frequently occurring activity ranging in means from .71 (*SD* = 1.32) to 1.13 (*SD* = 1.24). Items related to Exploration of Institutional Policies (EIP) were the least experienced activities with means ranging from .55 (*SD* = 1.08) to .62 (*SD* = 1.11). Discussion surrounding advanced placement and exemptions had the lowest mean (*M* = .55, *SD* = 1.08).

As expected, all responses to the questions in Part II of the AAI had a low mean score indicating students' little to no participation or opportunity to experience specific advising activities. Since the majority of the participants in this sample were freshmen and had attended the university less than a full year, they may have yet to fully experience much advising activities described in this inventory.

Research Question 3: If the perceived needs are met and their preferences of academic advising approaches are used, would this lead to overall satisfaction of advising?

In response to research Question 3, Part III, Satisfaction of General Academic Advising of the AAI, is related to the academically underprepared students' overall satisfaction regarding accuracy of information, sufficiency of time allocated or given for meeting, advisors' availability to advise students, deadline notification, and general regard for the advising received (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Responses were coded using

Table 8

Frequency of Academic Advising Activities

Activity	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Q31. Discussing degree or major/academic concentration requirements	0	5	1.62	1.49
Q22. Selecting courses for the next term	0	5	1.61	1.27
Q23. Planning a class schedule for the next term	0	5	1.49	1.19
Q21. Discussing content of courses	0	5	1.48	1.41
Q19. Discussing possible majors/academics	0	5	1.39	1.48
Q16. Signing a registration form	0	5	1.39	1.25
Q36. Evaluating academic progress	0	5	1.21	1.49
Q17. Dropping and/or adding courses	0	5	1.13	1.24
Q42. Discussing time management	0	5	1.13	1.62
Q35. Talking about or setting personal goals	0	5	1.10	1.53
Q30. Discussing study skills or study tips	0	5	1.10	1.53
Q37. Getting to know each other	0	5	1.08	1.47
Q40. Discussing the purposes of a college education	0	5	1.04	1.55
Q29. Identifying other campus offices that can provide assistance	0	5	1.04	1.42
Q15. Discussing college policies	0	5	1.02	1.42
Q28. Discussing financial aid	0	5	1.01	1.49
Q32. Discussing personal concerns or problems	0	5	.94	1.39
Q43. Talking about experiences in different classes	0	5	.91	1.39
Q18. Discussing personal values	0	5	.88	1.43
Q33. Discussing studies abroad or other special academic programs	0	5	.86	1.26
Q44. Talking about what you are doing besides taking classes	0	5	.86	1.46
Q26. Discussing career alternatives	0	5	.82	1.24
Q38. Discussing extracurricular activities	0	5	.82	1.41
Q41. Declaring or changing a major/academic concentration	0	5	.80	1.21
Q39. Discussing job placement opportunities	0	5	.77	1.32
Q34. Discussing internship or cooperative education opportunities	0	5	.71	1.26
Q20. Discussing important social or political issues	0	5	.71	1.32
Q27. Discussing probation and dismissal policies	0	5	.62	1.11
Q24. Discussing transfer credit and policies	0	5	.62	1.06
Q25. Discussing advanced placement or exempting courses	0	5	.55	1.08

a Likert-type scale and recoded 1-4. Mean scores ranging from 1-2 indicated dissatisfaction with advising activities and means ranging from 3-4 indicated satisfaction. "I have received accurate information about courses, programs, and requirements" had the highest mean ($M = 2.68$, $SD = .97$). The mean for "Sufficient prior notice has been provided about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures" was the lowest ($M = 2.42$, $SD = .98$). Results were recorded in Table 9.

In general, the means and standard deviations were all relatively similar and the scores reflect that students did not have a strong opinion for or against the advising they received but perceived it as acceptable or on average, in agreement that the advising they have received thus far was satisfactory.

Research Question 4: Demographically, are there any significant differences among this group of academically underprepared students, namely, considering their gender and race?

Exclusive surveying of students enrolled in 099 classes including math, English, and reading was conducted. Statistical information regarding the enrollment, ethnicity, and gender of the total student population enrolled in 099 courses for the fall term was retrieved from the Institutional Research Department. Table 10 provides a breakdown and comparison of the gender and ethnicity of 099 total population enrollment and this study's participants for fall 2007. Females made up the vast majority of the population for both total university 099 population (63.74%) and participants of this study (67.2%). Ethnically, African Americans outnumbered the enrollment of all other races for both the total population (51.6%) and the participants in the study (51.6%). Caucasians made up the next largest ethnic group for both the total student population of 099 (42.2%) and

Table 9

Overall Satisfaction with Academic Advising

Item	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
1. I have received accurate information about courses, programs, and requirements	1	4	2.68	.97
2. Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions	1	4	2.64	.99
3. Advising has been available when I needed it	1	4	2.62	1.00
4. Satisfaction with advising in general so far	1	4	2.48	.98
5. Sufficient prior notice regarding deadlines of institutional policies and procedures	1	4	2.42	.98

participants in this study (36.1%). From the aforementioned data, three observations can be made: firstly, in light of the percentages of total 099 population and this study's participants, demographically the participants in this study are an almost mirrored reflection of the percentage of total student enrollment of 099 students for fall 2007; secondly, females of this study are representative of the total 099 freshmen enrollment for fall 2007. Thirdly, more females are attending college, and there is an overrepresentation of African-American females than any other ethnic group who are required to take 099 courses.

In addition to demographical information, Part IV provided information regarding participants' contact time with an advisor and the manner in which advising was delivered, by whom advised, the length of time in the advising session, the number of sessions in current situation, and the total number of advising sessions they have participated in (Winston & Sandor, 1986). Data are detailed in Tables 11-14. Table 11 revealed that the most common form of academic advising was by an individual who was assigned to them (63.9%). Ten participants (3.2%) indicated that they received no type of advising.

Table 12 references the amount of time participants reported spent in an advising session. The majority (41.3%) of the participants reported spending less than 15 minutes in advisement sessions, followed by 36.1% participants reporting 15-30 minutes of advising time. Two participants (6%) reported experiencing an advising session that lasted for over an hour.

Data relating to participants' frequency of contact with their advisor in their current term are presented in Table 13. In general, over half of the participants, 52.9%, in

Table 10

Demographic Characteristics of Population of Overall First-Year Students and Academically Underprepared Students for Fall 2007

	n	%	n	%
Group	Total Freshmen 099 Students Fall 2007		Participants of Study Fall 2007	
Sex				
Male	314	36.26	96	31.0
Female	552	63.74	208	67.1
No Response			6	1.9
Total	866	100.00	310	100.00
Racial Background				
African American	447	51.62	160	51.6
Caucasian	365	42.15	112	36.1
Hispanic	15	1.73	6	1.9
Asian American	6	.70	9	2.9
Native American	5	.57	2	.6
Biracial			5	1.6
Other			3	1.0
No Response	28	3.23	11	3.5
Total	866	100.00	310	100.00

Table 11

Delivery of Academic Advising

Delivery	Frequency	Percentage
Individually assigned advisor at center	198	63.9
Individually by any available at center	30	9.7
Individually, not through center	29	9.4
With a group of students	11	3.5
Peer advisor	3	1.0
In conjunction with al course	18	5.8
In a manner other than above	9	2.9
No advising	10	3.3
No response	2	.6
Total	310	100.0

Table 12

Time Spent in Advising Session

Time (Minutes)	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 15	128	41.3
15-30	112	36.1
31-45	51	16.5
46-60	15	4.8
More than 1 hour	2	.6
No Response	2	.6
Total	310	100.0

this study had experienced one academic advising session in college; 89 (28.7%) participants responded as having two sessions thus far, whereas 24 (7.7%) participants reported not having any academic advising sessions with their advisors in their current term. Two participants (2%) indicated that they had nine or more advising sessions. It may be assumed that the higher number of advisor contact is an indication that participants who were not freshmen had more opportunity to meet with their advisors throughout their tenure thus far in college.

Table 14 provides data representing the total number of advising sessions participants in this study had received. Similar to the results in Table 13, the data show that the majority of the participants (79%) had 1-2 advising sessions by the end of fall 2007. Identical to data in Table 13, 24 (7.9%) participants indicated that they did not participate in any academic advising sessions.

Research Question 5: What characteristics do first-year academically underprepared students qualify to describe their ideal academic advisor?

The questions in Part V are exactly the same as those in Part I of the AAI. The major difference is that Part V seeks to discover participants' ideal academic advisor, whereas Part I sought to capture their opinion on their current advising experiences. A pair of opposing statements was provided and participants had to choose from Likert-type scale responses that reflected degrees of importance to best represent their ideal advisor. The items were recoded and tabulated. Means and standard deviations were presented to indicate whether the scale and subscales were prescriptive or developmental academic advising. Table 15 presents participants' responses regarding their perception of an ideal academic advisor and advising activities. Inclusion of the ranges for prescriptive and

Table 13

Frequency of Academic Advising in Current Semester

Advising Session	Frequency	Percentage
None	24	7.7
One	164	52.9
Two	89	28.7
Three	24	7.7
Four	1	.3
Five	3	1.0
Eight	1	.3
Nine or More	2	.6
No Response	2	.6
Total	310	100.0

Table 14

Total Academic Advising Sessions

Academic Advising Session	Frequency	Percentage
None	24	7.9
One	126	41.3
Two	119	39.0
Three	21	6.8
Four	5	1.6
Five	2	.6
Six	4	1.3
Eight	1	.3
Nine or More	3	1.0
No Response	5	1.6

developmental academic advising scale and subscales were repeated for easy reference. The means of participants' ideal DPA (M = 55.3, SD = 18.5) and its corresponding subscale, ideal PE (M = 30.0, SD = 10.2) reflected a preference for prescriptive academic advisor and advising activities. The means for ideal ADM (M = 17.8, SD = 8.1) indicated a preference for developmental academic advising. Participants ideally preferred prescriptive academic advising when it came to their selection of courses (SC, M = 8.1, SD = 4.6).

Research Question 6: If the perceived needs and advising approaches were addressed, would this fulfillment be a factor in the participants' intent to persist to the following semester?

Response to this question was documented using the interviews.

Findings from Student Interviews

In addition to the administering of the Academic Advising Inventory, participants had the opportunity to be a part of a one-on-one interview with the researcher at an arranged time. This phase of the methodology was important in order to determine if the advising that the participants received aided in their decision to return to the university the following semester. Interviews were held in the Cook Library in an enclosed study room and tape recorded. A total of 25 interviews were conducted and common themes and quotes of interests were aggregated from their responses and later typed. The interview pool consisted of four questions that were structured to allow participants to reflect on their advising experiences and to respond honestly and openly with the researcher. The findings below address the majority of interviewees' responses followed with quotations to help qualify their thoughts. Interviewees will be identified by the

Table 15

Descriptive of Ideal Academic Advisor and Advising Activities

Subscale	Mean	SD
Ideal DPA	55.3	18.5
Prescriptive	(14-56)	
Developmental	(57-112)	
Ideal PE	30.0	10.2
Prescriptive	(8-32)	
Developmental	(33-64)	
Ideal ADM	17.8	8.1
Prescriptive	(4-16)	
Developmental	(17-32)	
Ideal SC	8.1	4.6
Prescriptive	(2-8)	
Developmental	(9-16)	

numerical order in which the interview was conducted. Typed versions of the interview recordings are found in Appendix I.

1. What is your perception of what a college academic advisor's duty, role, and activities are before attending college and now that you are currently enrolled in college?

This question provided mixed responses. Responses ranged from high school guidance counselor, a friend, and some simply had not formed an opinion. The majority of the interviewees felt that before college advisors' role was similar to their high school guidance counselor who scheduled classes. One interviewee responded, "My first thought was that they are like a high school counselor . . . he tells us what classes, and we just had to go (to the classes)" (Interviewee 4). Seventeen out of 25 interviewees (68%) perceived their advisors' prevailing function was to schedule classes, that is, "to help [us] make a schedule of what we should take" (Interviewee 3) in order to meet the requirements of their degree plans. Three interviewees (12%) stated that they really did not know what a college advisor's role entailed and two (8%) interviewees stated that they envisioned advisors to be like a friend, one who was available and helpful. Table 16 summarizes the findings.

Interviewees were also asked to share their opinion of how they perceived their advisor now that they were enrolled in college and had experienced an advising session. One major difference to be noted is that before college, interviewees' perception was more of the doctor-patient dynamic, that is, they were told what to do and they closely followed the provided instructions. However, after having experienced interaction with an advisor and advising activities, 16 interviewees (64%) revised their opinion and viewed

Table 16

Perception of Advisors' Role Before College

Role	Count
Advisor tells students what to do/schedules classes	17
Advisor is like a friend—helpful, available	2
Advisor informs about scholarship and career	1
Do not know role of a college advisor	3

their advisor as not just a person who schedules classes but one who guides them and who they can trust to provide support and knowledge about their academic program to ensure their academic success, and "Advisors [were] not just a person who tells you to do something, they guide you through it" (Interviewee 2). Another interviewee expressed that "the setting was different and [I was] not really sure what I expected. Now they stay with you through the process and the whole program for guidance and clarification" (Interviewee 12). However, there were 5 (20%) interviewees who maintained that college academic advisors', like high school counselors', main function was to instruct or tell them what to do specifically in the selection of courses for their degree program, to "assist us in schedule of classes. That is it. High school counselors are similar and are there to tell us what classes to take and college advisors should do the same also [to tell us] what we need to do to pursue our careers" (Interviewee 15).

Whereas some interviewees' expectations matched up with their actual experiences, there were others whose expectations did not align with what they experienced. Four of the inteviewees (16%) stated that their experience was rushed, unhelpful, and the advisor was not readily accessible. The quotation below summarized their perception:

> In high school I thought I would meet them monthly and talk about what I needed to do to prepare for things. Now everything is rushed and now equally rushed to tell them your concerns. I thought more like a person guiding you through instead of being so directive without answering the "why." I am still confused on what I want to do and less of what I am supposed to do without any explanation of why, but "that is just how it is." He decided for me; he knows what he is doing and I

> was to just take his advice, so I went with it but [I] wanted more. I prefer a longer session, and as a freshmen you really are still unsure and need someone to say this is what is or not. (Interviewee 13)

Another interviewee shared similar sentiments of being rushed and acknowledged the limited time allocated for advising but also made a clear distinction between high school and college advisors' interactions.

> Here, [I] did not have much time to really talk. They are not here to baby you. They are there to help, but it is not high school [which they] take every step with you. [They] tell you what you need to know and you take it from there. [They] will not pick your classes or make a schedule; it is up to you. I think it is a good thing because we are in college and we are young adults. It is our duty to know what classes and what hours. (Interviewee 16)

Twelve (48%) interviewees added or mentioned some form of a relational component to what they preferred from their advisor/advisee interactions. This went beyond the humdrum of scheduling of classes and class requirements. One interviewee expressed, "I expected more—more into my personality, not just schedule of classes, but college gives you a choice and asks questions to make sure you can handle it" (Interviewee 14). Another student expressed similar thoughts:

> Before college, I supposed they were to help with schedules and what classes to take; and if I were having any problems, I could ask them questions. Now the same thing, except better for you personally and not just in your major but other interests I may have, getting to know you a little bit, your hobbies, bases your personality with professors you may have. (Interviewee 17)

Table 17 provides a listing of topics that underscore and summarize their perspective regarding their before and after advising experiences and preferences.

2. What are the things you like about your advisor at this stage in your college experiences? What were the important things that helped you in your advising sessions?

The most recurring themes in response to this question were advisors' helpfulness regarding instruction on which classes to take, advisors' friendliness, and advisors' receptivity of students' opinions. Many of the students in the interview process appreciated the advisors' direct approach to select courses for them which they accounted as a pleasing or satisfactory advising experience: "Actually my advisor chose classes for me and sat me down one-on-one; he asked my opinion also and had questions about my classes and choices" (Interviewee 3).

Terms such as friendly, honest, genuine, and nice were also used to describe advisors, "I only met him once but I liked the one-on-one and his honesty. He told me what to do to be successful" (Interviewee 22). There were several mentions of the advisors' disposition that helped to make the advisees comfortable and welcomed. The interviewee described the experience as "nice" and went on further to state, "When I came in I felt welcome, as if I was her child or as if she brought me up my whole life" (Interviewee 14). Another stated that the advisor "gave [me] all the attention [I] needed; [advisor] did not rush me. [The advisor] made me feel comfortable to come and talk to [her/him] as a friend" (Interviewee 3). Another participant appreciated that the advisor was caring and expressed genuine interest in them, noting that "they actually care how you are doing in the classes by asking how we are doing and how our grades are, classes

Table 17

Perception of Advisors' Role After Advising Experience

Common Themes	Count
Advisors offer guidance and welcome advisees' participation in course selection	16
Advisors attend to and pairs advisees' interests and academic course selection	2
Advisors specifically inform advisees what classes are needed and create schedule, like a high school counselor	5
Advisors provide information related to career development, resume writing, internships	1
Advisors are unhelpful, unavailable, rushed, and non-relational	4

Note: This table includes multiple responses.

we are taking, assignments, tests, how we feel about the classes, and the campus" (Interviewee 23). One interviewee referred to her advisor as a "guardian angel" who has helped her be prepared and aware of what to expect in advising sessions, which would allow more time and focus on other issues she may have (Interviewee 2).

Other responses included advisors' flexibility, accessibility, instructions on how to prepare for advising and discussion of educational priorities, provision of updates on campus events relevant to major, and aid in how to enroll in classes using the computer. Two of the interviewees (5 and 12) found that discussion of career and educational goals was important in their advising sessions since they already knew what major they were going to pursue. Table 18 provides a review of interviewees' descriptors of things liked and things that were important during their advising session. There is considerable overlap in these responses.

Contrary to the positive accolades shared by most interviewees of their advisors and sessions thus far, only one interviewee was completely discontented with his advisor and voiced a need for a more fulfilling interaction and activities with his advisor:

> To be honest, I really do not like much of my advisor at this stage. I feel I do not get much help at all and just classes that I need for next term and that is it. The procedures I feel I have to learn it all on my own without getting much details. I would prefer a better relationship with my advisor and more in-depth with my classes. (Interviewee 24)

Other themes that emerged included too short duration or time restraints during advising session, feelings of being rushed, and the infrequency of advisor-advisee meetings (Table 19).

Table 18

Advisees' Responses of Likes and Important Variables for a Successful Advising Session

Liked	Important
Advisors' friendliness	Nothing really helped
Advisors' helpfulness in schedule of courses	Advisors' attentiveness
Advisors' flexibility	Open door policy
Advisors' accessibility	Advisors' accessibility
Provision of relevant workshops, programs	Advisors' friendliness
Asked participants' opinions	Advisors' help in course selection
Taught how to enroll in courses via the computer	Advisors' knowledge about program
Provided assistance on being prepared for classes and advisement	Advisors' honesty
Advisement	Advisors' openness to students' input/participation
Advisors' honesty	Advisors' time to discuss personal and academic issues
Advisors' monitoring and relay of academic progress including GPA standing	Advisors' effort to make students aware of personal responsibility for academics
One-on-one interaction with advisors	

Table 19

Changes Advisees Would Make During Advising Session

Nothing
Limited time spent in advising
Infrequent advising meetings
Unable to be focused; lack attentiveness
Not as helpful with selecting courses
Felt rushed
Impersonal

3. What, if any, do you wish you can change about your advisor or his or her activities during advising?

Of the 25 students interviewed, 15 (60%) boasted that they have had great advising experiences and interaction with their advisor thus far and would not change anything. "Everything has been great so far; I just really do not think I would change anything. Been a great experience" (Interviewee 2). Another stated that "I could not say; no trouble out of him" (Interviewee 7).

However, 5 (20%) of the interviewees voiced that they wished their advisor was more concerned about other issues beyond academics. They wanted them to "be more interested in me. Have a session to get to know me first" (Interviewee 1). Another interviewee, after completing the AAI, realized that advisors' roles were multidimensional comprising of more than just scheduling. This prompted a desire for deeper interaction.

> To be more involved in whole session. Be more personal and do not be like you have to do it; just help more; the survey allowed me to see other duties. Seems like they are just trying to make a schedule out; when I did the survey it defined roles more and enlightened me. (Interviewee 11)

Similar to the previous interviewee's response above, another believed that advisors taking even a small amount of interest in their personal well being can be significant in their adjustment away from home while in college:

> Things to change would be if my advisor would ask more personal questions, because sometimes I feel I do not really belong here with it being my first time away from my home and friends. Questions such as "How are you?" "Do you feel

> you will stay here next semester?" "How do you feel about school?" "Are you involved in any activities?" Questions not like so personal, but questions just getting to know a little bit about my well-being, so I can get to know them a little better. (Interviewee 18)

Included in that concept for a more relational aspect to their advising, others wanted more time (n = 5, or 20%). One interviewee (24) expressed a need for more time "to sit down and talk about my classes and build a relationship during this time also" (see Table 19).

The last question was related to their level of satisfaction and their intentions to return to the university the following semester. Responses are reflected below.

4. Provided that your advisor was able to satisfy your academic advising concerns, would this interaction be a factor in your next term enrollment? Why or why not?

The responses could be placed on a Likert-type scale that depicts the degrees of influence an advisor has on these interviewees' intentions to return the next semester. This scale would be from *Strongly Agree*, *Somewhat Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, *Somewhat Disagree*, and *Strongly Disagree*. Sixty eight percent (n = 17) of the participants strongly agreed that advising was significant and that it would impact their intentions to return to this institution the following semester. Several responses to the aforementioned question are listed below:

> It really is, because when you go off somewhere and away from home and you feel that you are out in the world alone, no one to help or be there for you. You do not want to come back to an environment like that. It is great here and

do not want to go home; they (advisors) play a part in that; also the staff and faculty here are supportive. (Interviewee 2)

"It will. I think as a freshman you do not know what to expect, so having one (an advisor) helps your chances to see college life as it is and its classes" (Interviewee 6).

"He would make me come back. The more people you have to help you, the more you want to do, so since he gave me a lot of advice I have someone to talk to and go to for help" (Interviewee 8).

"Yes, without that help, I would be lost" (Interviewee 15).

Mmm—yes, I see advisors as a mentor, someone who I could talk to, and make sure I am in the right thing. There is a preference of wanting to be told what to do versus having a rapport with advisor . . . half and half . . . tell me what I need to do and then be able to ask questions later to make sure I am on the right track. (Interviewee 20)

"Certainly . . . I struggle in classes and he tells me to keep going and without that, besides family and friends (it is) good to have someone at that level to encourage you" (Interviewee 21).

A few of the interviewees appeared to somewhat agree as to the influence of advisors' impact in their subsequent return, but the more they thought about an advisor's usefulness they seemed to become more definitive or agree that advisors' utility did influence their return:

"It would affect a little bit. I think she is a good advisor. Yes, it is important and I really want to know what to do. [I] don't want to backtrack and be in school longer than necessary [so it is] very important to have that help" (Interviewee 5).

Six interviewees (24%) strongly disagreed that their advisor/advising experiences bore any influence on their intent to return the next semester. Some responses are shared below:

"No, I feel secure. His help helped and would keep me on the right path to my major but not a factor to come or not. They are not specialized as they should be. Anyone knows the classes by looking at a book; I needed the personal touch to help me clarify that if I do not like this then I may like that" (Interviewee 13).

"No, because I do not see her as she is all right. If she messes up, it won't hurt me. This is my thing" (Interviewee 14).

Ancillary Findings

Comparisons of the current and ideal academic advising outcomes were conducted and the results are provided in Table 20. On average, the scores for the current academic advising activities were found to be higher than the ideal academic advising activities on all scales except SC which had the same means for both current and ideal academic advising. A paired samples *t* test was performed to compare the means of both the current and ideal output for the DPA and its subscales, PE, ADM, and SC. The results indicated that the means were statistically significantly higher at the .05 level on the current DPA scale ($M = 62.58$, $SD = 12.54$), $t(301) = 6.00$, $p < .05$; and on the subscales, PE ($M = 35.73$, $SD = 10.36$), $t(301) = 6.66$, $p < .05$ and ADM ($M = 18.73$, $SD = 5.60$, $t(290) = 2.14$), $p < .05$. There was no statistically significant difference between current and ideal advising regarding the SC subscale, current ($M = 8.14$, $SD = 3.74$) and ideal ($M = 8.17$, $SD = 4.57$). Table 21 illustrates the results of the paired samples test.

Table 20

Paired Comparison Between Current and Ideal Academic Advising

Pair		Mean	SD
Pair 1	Current DPA	62.6	12.5
	Ideal DPA	55.3	18.5
Pair 2	Current PE	35.7	10.4
	Ideal PE	30.0	10.2
Pair 3	Current ADM	18.7	5.6
	Ideal ADM	17.8	8.1
Pair 4	Current SC	8.1	3.7
	Ideal SC	8.1	4.6

Table 21

Paired Sample Test of Current and Ideal Academic Advisor

Subscale		*t*	*df*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Current DPA Ideal DPA	6.0	301	.00
Pair 2	Current PE Ideal PE	6.7	301	.00
Pair 3	Current ADM Ideal ADM	2.1	290	.03
Pair 4	Current SC Ideal SC	-.10	299	.92

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Academic advising and advisors are to "invest, nurture and protect its precious commodity" (Cuseo, 2003, p. 2), which is the students. With continual influence on society's economy and output of citizenry, along with higher education institutions' reputation and existence (Grimes & David, 2002; Hunter & White, 2004), attention to and investments funneled to students enrolling in college will only increase and persist. In essence, the position of the majority of the participating institution's advisors who interacted with academically underprepared students during their initial entry understood the value of students based on the results of this study. This study focused on the academically underprepared students and their issues regarding advising, but the spotlight has inadvertently also been cast on the advisors of this institution. This spotlight positively emphasized advisors' understanding and careful undertaking of this student cohort initial entry on campus. The visibility and involvement of academic advisors to mainly first-time academically underprepared students proved invaluable as they educated, informed, and provided a service that even surpassed advisees' expectations.

Scheduling of classes was definitely the dominating theme in this study, an activity that this student cohort perceives as impacting their level of satisfaction and persistence. In addition, it can be surmised that a need for a relational aspect also undergirds this cohort's advising experiences. Academic advisors have been widely and long-time lauded as essential and effective in the academic success of students including academically underprepared students (Kuh, 1998). A continuation and improvement of reciprocal working relationships between advisor and advisees can produce a wealth of

good including student attainment of a degree to benefit family and society and the institution's continual growth and survival in an ever-changing and competitive world. Considering the importance of obtaining a higher education degree, and just as important the continual migration of underprepared high school students to higher education to obtain a higher education degree (McCabe, 2000), implementing ways to retain this group of students is critical.

The final chapter of this study is divided in the following order: the first section provides a brief anecdotal account of this study followed by a relay of the major findings and conclusions derived from the analysis of data. The third section of this chapter reflects on previous research found in this study to support or refute existing literature. The fourth section includes limitations of this study, and the final section of this chapter offers recommendations for future research and future implications regarding advising at this 4-year research institution.

Brief Anecdote of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the academic advising needs and preferences of academically underprepared students at a 4-year research institution. In addition, the study proposed to provide information to the institution and its advisors that may aid in providing a more collaborative, comprehensive, and effective advising regimen to this special student population. It was assumed that this population entered college with more pronounced needs and academic deficiencies than students who are considered traditional or academically prepared to handle the academic rigors of college life and, consequently, may have need of more involved advising experiences. Academically underprepared students were those students who were admitted with ACT

scores of 16 or below for English and reading and 20 or below for math and were required to enroll in one or more developmental or remedial courses to help improve and bring up to par their academic proficiency in English, math, or reading. For the purpose of this study, two popular advising models used in higher education institutions, prescriptive and developmental academic advising, were discussed. Prescriptive academic advising can be summed up as authoritative and employs a one-way transmission or direct means of communication from advisor to students providing direct instructions to help them succeed in college. Unlike this direct approach to advising, developmental academic advising delves deeper into students' personal, career, and educational goals to promote and provoke student development.

The sample, which was representative of the total population of academically underprepared students, consisted of 310 participants comprised predominantly of first-time freshmen and females. Of the 310 participants, 25 students volunteered to be interviewed later in this study. The interview was to provide support and responses to whether their advisor and advising activities were related to their intent to return the following semester. Data were collected in a two-fold manner. The first method surveyed students in their classrooms who were enrolled in 099 courses including math, English, and reading utilizing the Academic Advising Inventory (AAI). This inventory was designed to determine students' academic advising preferences, occurrence of advising activities, level of satisfaction with advising, and ideal academic advisor.

There were five parts to this inventory, and these parts are divided accordingly: Part I describes the Developmental-Prescriptive Advising (DPA) Scale which comprised of 14 items consisting of two opposing statements from which students had to choose the

statement that best assessed their current advising situation. The survey items were based on a continuum, recoded, tabulated, and interpreted based on the developer's range of scores to indicate whether their academic advising experiences were developmental or prescriptive in nature (see Table 3). The DPA was further divided into three subscales, Personalizing Education (PE), Academic Decision Making (ADM), and Selecting Classes (SC). Specific items for each subscale were identified, recoded, and the sums of the responses were placed within a range preset by the developers of the inventory to determine if these advising activities were perceived as more prescriptive or developmental. Part II of the AAL, Academic Advising Activities (AAS), assessed different advising activities and discussions that occurred and was sectioned into five subscales—Personal Development and Interpersonal Relationship (PDIR), Exploring Institutional Policies (EIP), Registration and Class Scheduling (RCS), Teaching Personal Skills (TPS), and Academic Majors and Courses (AMC). This part was scored from 0-5, indicating the frequency an activity occurred. Part III assessed their overall satisfaction with advising and was scored using a Likert-type scale with the lower mean score indicating dissatisfaction and the higher mean score indicating satisfaction with their overall advising experience. Part IV collected demographic information including frequency of contact with advisors. This part was especially useful in determining if there were any differences between gender and race of this cohort when compared to the institutional ethnic and gender enrollment of 099 freshmen for fall 2007. Part V was designed to discover what attributes and characteristics made up students' ideal advisor. The questions were identical to those found in Part I of the AAI. Students' responses were recoded and, again, the higher the score, the more preference for an advisor to be

developmental and, conversely, the lower the score, the more prescriptive their preference or need.

The second method used to collect data for this study included interviews. The information garnered was to provide a more in-depth look regarding students' advising experiences and intention to persist to the subsequent semester.

Discussion of Findings

The following section provides a restatement of the research questions that guided this study and the corresponding findings.

Research Question 1: What are the first-year academically underprepared students' preferences of advising approaches, prescriptive or developmental, after interaction with their advisor?

The findings indicated that the vast majority of the students (67%) in this study perceived their advising relationship to be developmental. Winston and Sandor (1986) characterized developmental advising as students perceiving their advising which

> (a) advisor and student have established a warm, caring, and friendly relationship, (b) advisor and student share and clearly negotiate responsibilities for various advising tasks, and (c) advising is based on a concern for the students' total education and use of all available resources within the collegiate environment. (p. 11)

Regarding the subscales Personalizing Education (PE) and Academic Decision-Making (ADM), the results showed an overwhelming response for developmental advising experiences and activities which may convincingly support what literature refers to as "front loading." This process possibly creates a foundation for students in which advisors

quickly, yet in a personable and friendly way, acclimate the students to the world of college academia and resources to help prepare them for the trek awaiting them. It is an attempt to help students be aware early on of the importance of their involvement and their responsibility to the upkeep and sustenance of their academic affairs, along with any other factors that could be involved in their early success or failure.

However, the third subscale, Selecting Courses (SC), was perceived as more prescriptive than developmental, which indicated that advisors maintained the authoritative position in telling students what they needed to enroll in to make a schedule that complemented their choice of major. These students preferred to trust the expertise of their advisor to tell them which courses they needed for their program instead of being self-reliant at this point in their college experience (Dzubak, 2005; Spann et al., 1995). This outcome is echoed among the interviewees who perceived their advisors' main function as scheduling classes that fit their major. At this initial stage of their college experience, these students are naturally uncertain about their program requirements. This flip-flop between confidence and uncertainty is reminiscent of common expectations whenever one begins a new experience and feelings of excitement and fear are housed at the same time. Chickering (1969) would posit that their level of competence in this area is still developing.

Summarily, this student cohort is receptive to developmental advising interactions from very early on of their college career despite some research that posits that they may prefer a more prescriptive approach (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Fielstein, 1989; Roosevelt, 2005; Smith, 2002; Spann et al., 1995). With the exception of course selection, developmental academic advising was utilized. Although this prescriptive approach may

appear contrary to the other findings, some researchers posit that being told what classes to take may be perceived by students as their advisor being helpful and genuinely interested in their well being to succeed in college and may ultimately evolve into more of a developmental type of academic advising (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Mottarella et al., 2004).

As it relates to advisors and the furthering of information to the advising community regarding this special student population, the results clearly demonstrate that advisors are providing a developmental advising style very early on that encourages students' acclimation, involvement, and responsibility for their college experience. This approach facilitates students' integration and increases their knowledge base about their major and introduces persons who are employed at the institution as being friendly and approachable. Tinto (1975) referred to this as having a "good fit" and one of the factors that aid in students' persistence in college. Responses from the interviews also support the significance of advisors' employment of developmental academic advising. Advisors are reported to show a genuine concern and interest in the accuracy of courses for students' academic success despite their initial entry of academic deficiencies at a collegiate level. It can also be noted and applauded that unlike many institutions that greatly ascribe to prescriptive academic advising, especially during students' first year, this institution's advisors utilize an approach that is found to be more conducive and effective for students' personal and academic development.

Research Question 2: What do first-year academically underprepared students perceive to be their academic advising needs upon initial entry to college?

The following information illustrates advising activities that students experienced thus far in college. In general, registration and class scheduling activities were reported as the most frequent advising activity which can be considered as a standard expectation among all freshmen. In addition, this activity would align itself with the popular belief that advisors' role and expectations are to "select courses and plan class schedules" (Winston & Sandor, 1986, p. 12). This perception may linger from their high school interactions with their guidance counselor who is mainly described as the person who tells them which courses to take and when to take them (Smith, 2002). This direction provided by the guidance counselors prevents them for signing up for unnecessary courses and provides reassurance to them in an area that can foster much anxiety. They feel secure that advisors are doing the right thing for the eventual completion of their degree. Responses from the interviews also support this similar expectation. The low occurrences of all other activities (PDIR and EIP) may be attributed to the brevity of their time in college since this survey was conducted during their first semester at the institution.

Research Question 3: If the perceived needs are met and their preferences of academic advising approaches are used, would this lead to overall satisfaction of advising?

This section sought to understand students' level of satisfaction with their advising so far. The majority of the respondents somewhat agreed that they were satisfied with their experiences so far. That is to say that responses on all items including overall satisfaction, receipt of accurate information regarding their courses and programs, advance notification of important dates and times relating to institutional affairs,

availability of advisors, and sufficient time did not lean to either extremity of strongly disagree or strongly agree. Answers to this trend may be found in the interviews which list some of the changes students desired to occur for a better advising session including more time and a concerted effort by the advisor to get to know the advisee a bit more during the session. Literature purports that it takes time and meaningful interactions with advisors to establish a developmental type of relationship (Smith, 2002). In the study conducted by Mottarella et al. (2004), they concluded that, in essence, it really does not matter what type of advising occurs because the essential ingredients that guarantee satisfaction from students regardless of cohort type is an establishment of a relationship comprised of warmth, support, and respect from advisors (Mottarella et al., 2004). Lloyd (1995) also researched the different advising styles and students' responses and discovered that there was not any significant difference in level of students' satisfaction regardless of which approach was used.

Summarily, although students did not soundly express their satisfaction about their overall academic advising thus far it leaves room to further investigate what could make this happen. This will be further discussed in future implications.

Research Question 4: Demographically, are there any significant differences among this group of academically underprepared students, namely looking at their gender and race?

In order to respond to this question, knowledge of the institution's freshmen total student population required to enroll in 099 courses for fall 2007 was necessary. It was found that even though Caucasian females were the highest entrants to the university, more African-American students are required to take 099 courses. In addition, African-

American females disproportionately comprised the majority of 099 classes, surpassing their male counterpart and other races. Summarily, it can be deduced that African-American females are enrolling in college more academically underprepared (Rester, 1996) than other students (McCabe, 2000; Spann et al., 1995).

Part four of the AAI also highlighted times and frequency of advising sessions. In general, it was recorded that majority of students' advisors were individually assigned to them and they met with them on an average of once or twice that term for a period of 15 minutes or less.

Also, previous literature stated that one reason not many institutions pursue developmental academic advising as the practiced choice is due to time restraints (Pettay, 2007). This type of advising calls for more time to invest in the students' interests, abilities, and personal concerns in order to address the whole person. However, in this study, the majority of the students responded that they experienced developmental academic advising despite the short duration most of them spent in an advising session, which ranged from 0-30 minutes.

Research Question 5: What characteristics do first-year academically underprepared students qualify to describe their ideal academic advisor?

The responses from the participants characterized their ideal academic advisor as more prescriptive in its description and qualities than developmental. Their responses indicated that they preferred the advisor to maintain the role of expert and they the apprentice or the advisor as teacher and they the learner. The results showed that they may be a bit timid and are still more comfortable and resigned to a relationship that is mainly a one-way conduit which the advisor funnels most of their instructions to them.

This phenomenon may highlight that perhaps these students are very unsure of their level of authority/independence, and knowledge (Kramer, 2000). Chickering (1969) penned that at this phase freshmen are going through a lot of decisions, including a break away from familiarity and must make a huge adjustment to a new environment, new rules, and new players of the collegiate game. Similar to Beasley's study (1985), the results demonstrate that these students place higher value and priority on academic concerns than any other personal or outside issues. Therefore, having someone to directly inform them of what to do or guide them at this stage in their college career becomes invaluable and a lifeline for their survival (Light, 2001).

Unwilling to take full charge, they are open to discussion regarding their interest and how it may fit into decisions that govern the classes they take for their major. Perhaps with their new sense of adulthood, and being in college, they appreciate the ability to let their opinions be heard and respected. Trusting in their abilities in conjunction with their advisor's knowledge may begin to cultivate a deeper sense of satisfaction. Thomas and Chickering (1984) noted advisors "as an individual change agent [who] can and must, if they are to remain true to their convictions of the validity of developmental academic advising, create supportive islands of change promotion with their students" (p. 110). Despite that perspective, this study supports prescriptive academic advising and supports a similar study done by Smith (2002) in which the majority of the participants actually embraced prescriptive advising and measured their experience as satisfactory.

Another attribute which tilts their choices towards more prescriptive advising may be from a cultural perspective. African Americans are more commonly known to adhere to authority and may be more comfortable at this point of their college career to submit to

the authority figure and wisdom of an advisor (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Fielstein, 1989; Roosevelt, 2005; Smith, 2002).

Research Question 6: If the perceived needs and advising approaches were addressed, would this fulfillment be a factor in the students' intent to persist to the following semester?

Part six of this research was the interviews. In sum, this part revealed several factors that students considered were important to establish a working and satisfying relationship between themselves and their advisor. In general, interviewees were pleased with their advisor/advisee relationship thus far and attributed a great deal to being instructed on what classes to take. They found this direction helpful and were pleased with the advisors' friendliness and rapport. The lack of sufficient time for sessions and the need for advisors to take more interest in them as an individual and not just "about business" were expressed most frequently as areas needed for improvement. Both of these attributes are necessary for relationships to be established. The majority of the students who were interviewed acknowledged that their interaction with their advisor plays an important role in their return to the institution the following semester.

Limitations

The following limitations are recognized as part of this study:

1. This study was conducted at a southeastern 4-year research institution and is not generalized to other geographic areas or other higher education institutions.

2. A small percentage of the participants were not freshmen. As a result, some responses may have an overrepresentation of frequency due to the longer exposure to college experiences.

3. This study collected data from students who were required to enroll in 099 courses based on their admissions score that was 16 or below on all courses except math. Beginning fall 2007 students whose entering ACT score was below 20 on math or students who had failed College Algebra were mandated to enroll in Math 099. This ruling would have increased the numbers of 099 students in this subject area who originally would not have been considered academically underprepared.

Future Research

1. To conduct a longitudinal, qualitative research study to determine if students' preference for advising has changed and, if so, why. A longitudinal research study was suggested in order to record students' academic advising perception over time and whether their academic deficiency affected their future enrollment or if their success or lack of success in these courses affected their future enrollment. To do this, volunteers would need to be sought out who are required to enroll in two or more 099 courses and track them for at least 3 semesters or until completion of their freshman year.

2. To conduct further studies using either method of qualitative, quantitative, or mixed to determine if regularly admitted students' perceptions of current advising practices and advising preferences are similar or different from students who are marginally admitted or academically underprepared as it relates to their level of satisfaction and intention to persist the subsequent semester(s).

3. To conduct a qualitative or mixed study to determine what components of a relationship academically underprepared students define as more helpful or unhelpful in their overall advising satisfaction and persistence.

4. To conduct a study to discover if academic advisors' perception of their advising activities and approaches to academically underprepared students and regularly admitted first-year students are similar or different.

Future Policy

Because academic advising has been proven to be significant in students' perception of the institution and their persistence, then it would deem necessary that the institution should make more of a concerted effort to:

1. Conduct multiple assessments or collection of data to gauge advisors' effectiveness of targeting the academic advising needs of academically underprepared students. With an increased amount of pressure for accountability and institutional effectiveness, these data can be beneficial for future support from the institution's supporters.

2. Support advisors financially to attend national or major conferences or workshops that focus on the exchange of ideas and methods for the furthering of understanding and knowledge of academically underprepared student populations and other diverse student groups.

3. Provide structured training and pilot programs to improve or hone advisors' skills and knowledge regarding various student groups. In other words, although advisors at this institution displayed a developmental mode of advising, much of this activity probably stemmed from their helping personality or by chance more so than any specific training that they would have experienced.

4. Involve academic advisors, especially those who directly work with the students versus the ones who set up advising programs, in discussion, development, and

implementation of retentive models and strategies for the academically underprepared students.

Future Application

1. One of the issues that students felt dissatisfied with was with the amount of time allotted for advising. Students' time may have been shortened due to the large amount of student advisees individual advisors are responsible for. It is suggested that having more advising sessions instead of once per term may help offset the rushed feeling and help to initiate a growing rapport by creating more visibility, and thus more room for a relationship.

2. There are a variety of student affairs programs that support freshmen adjustment to college at initial stages. It would be beneficial if a partnering of these two divisions, student affairs and academic affairs, created a closer working relationship to ground these students not just to the university but also to support their commitment to self and academics by learning early responsibility and contributing to their academic success.

3. Advisors can become mentors to students in order to provide open, didactic interaction, guidance, support, and resources in an effort to foster students' academic and personal growth, trust, and accountability which may lead to an increased level of satisfaction and persistence.

4. Distribute information that publishes the value and functions of college academic advisors so that high school students will know what to expect, what is available, and to have increased or higher expectations of advisors' support and utility early during their first college semester and subsequent years. One way to accomplish this

is advisors' participation in high schools' career nights, or visitations to classrooms. This way, relationships and trust can be established early.

5. Advisors can establish a system to contact students in the same major, via email, meetings, phone calls, and visits to class to inquire about their progress and adjustments to show a concerted and visible effort to display genuine interest and support.

6. Create an Academic Advisee's Handbook. One of the lowest satisfaction scores was regarding institutional policies and procedures. An easy-to-read and simple guide would provide easy access to valuable information that students need, such as grade point averages and good standings, repeats, etc. Much frustration and deferment of responsibility is housed in the common expression of advisees claiming "my advisor did not tell me." The handbook will deflect some of the responsibility onto the student, which is part of students' development.

7. Some students throughout the interview expressed the value and importance of family support and encouragement to attain their college degree. Therefore, the involvement of family members can be instrumental. Providing information and suggestions on useful ways to support their loved ones by communicating via letters, emails, newsletters, and websites may be a way to forge a bridge between academically underprepared family and the college community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sought to discover the advising preference of 099 students and whether or not their perception would influence their level of satisfaction and intention to persist to the following semester. This chapter has provided an overview of this study, along with the interpretations of the findings, limitations, and

recommendations for future research, future policy, and future applications at this institution. There were several conclusions that could be made regarding the outcomes of this research. Firstly, this study supports other research that applauds the virtues of prescriptive advising especially for this cohort of students identified as academically underprepared student population. Although this study showed that advisors at this institution from its early beginnings practiced more of a developmental advising style that created a positive environment and positive interactions between advisor and advisees, it was still clear that this student cohort preferred directives more so than suggestions at this phase of their college career.

Another observation is that regardless of the advising style, prescriptive or developmental, in general the participants seemingly agreed that their advising experience was satisfactory. Both methods were employed, prescriptive being instructed on what courses to enroll in for their choice of major and developmental in their desire and appreciation to be involved in their academic decision making. Students felt more involved when they were partnering with the advisor regarding their courses. This may be viewed as the beginnings of a small turn towards developmental advising and integration into the institution's community. The research of others posits that prescriptive advising is fundamental to the birth and evolution of a more developmental academic advising approach (Brown & Rivas, 1994; Church, 2006; Kramer, 2000). It is wise for advisors to know what students expect, to perform that activity, and know that it is possibly a set-up for future conversations, building of trusting relationships (Brown & Rivas,1994; Mottarella et al., 2004) and satisfied consumers (Cuseo, 2003; Kadow, 2006) of the services of higher education. The researcher concurs with other research that

demonstrates that even though the advising methods are diametrically different, one advising method does not necessarily overshadow the other as better since each has purpose and links to students' satisfaction. Fundamentally, if the basic needs are met then all other hierarchical needs such as formation of a relationship can ensue. Then satisfaction is most certainly guaranteed, and if this is solid then institutions have a great position to be supported and maintained and society will gain a wellspring of educated and contributing citizens.

Advisors can act as a fulcrum to support academically underprepared students growth and encourage them to challenge themselves to raise their level of expectations not just in advising but throughout all of their college experiences. This, in turn, can change their perspectives of how they view their input and encourage them to build and form relationships within the entire university community.

APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO USE APPLEBY'S CONTRASTING DIMENSIONS OF PRESCRIPTIVE AND DEVELOPMENTAL ACADEMIC ADVISING APPROACHES

Jennifer Ducksworth

From: <ducksworthj@bellsouth.net>
To: <jennifer.ducksworth@usm.edu>
Sent: Sunday, September 16, 2007 4:59 AM
Subject: FW: RE: Permission to use academic advising table Appleby

---------- Forwarded Message: ----------
From: "Appleby, Drew C" <dappleby@iupui.edu>
To: <ducksworthj@bellsouth.net>
Subject: RE: Permission to use academic advising table
Date: Mon, 13 Aug 2007 18:44:37 -0400

Jennifer,
I would be honored for you to use my table. Be my guest...
Drew

From: ducksworthj@bellsouth.net [mailto:ducksworthj@bellsouth.net]
Sent: Mon 8/13/2007 4:15 PM
To: Appleby, Drew C
Subject: Permission to use academic advising table

Good afternoon, Sir

My name is Jennifer Ducksworth and I am currently employed as an academic advisor at The University of Southern Mississippi, located in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I am also a doctoral student interested in the academic advising preferences of underprepared students. I am request ing to use the table you provided in the Mentor distinguishing the differences between the two advising approaches. Based on your almost three decades of advising experience using this information can help to provide more clarity and provoke further discussions of these approaches. Please inform me of your response to the following email jennifer.ducksworth@usm.edu. Thanking you in advance,

Sincerely,

Jennifer

APPENDIX B

ACADEMIC ADVISING INVENTORY PARTS I-IV

ACADEMIC ADVISING INVENTORY

Roger B. Winston, Jr. and Janet A. Sandor

PART I

Part I of this Inventory concerns how you and your advisor approach academic advising. Even if you have had more than one advisor or have been in more than one type of advising situation this year, please respond to the statements in terms of your **current situation.**

There are 14 pairs of statements in Part I. You must make two decisions about each pair in order to respond: (1) decide which one of the two statements most accurately describes the academic advising you received this year, and then (2) decide how accurate or true that statement is (from *very true* to *slightly true*).

Mark your answers to all questions in the *Inventory* on the separate optical scan answer sheet provided. Use a number 2 pencil. If you need to change an answer, erase it completely and then mark the desired response.

EXAMPLE

80. My advisor plans my schedule. A——B——C——D very true … slightly true	**OR**	My advisor and I plan my schedule together. E——F——G——H slightly true … very true

---

RESPONSE ON ANSWER SHEET:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
80	0	1	2	3	4	●	6	7	8	9

EXPLANATION: *In this example, the student has chosen the statement on the right as more descriptive of his or her academic advising this year, and determined that the statement is toward the slightly true end (response F).*

---

1. My advisor is interested in helping me learn how to find out about courses and programs for myself. A——B——C——D very true … slightly true	**OR**	My advisor tells me what I need to know about academic courses and programs. E——F——G——H slightly true … very true
2. My advisor tells me what would be the best schedule for me. A——B——C——D very true … slightly true	**OR**	My advisor suggests important considerations in planning a schedule and then gives me responsibility for the final decision. E——F——G——H slightly true … very true
3. My advisor and I talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising. A——B——C——D very true … slightly true	**OR**	My advisor and I do not talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising. E——F——G——H slightly true … very true

4. My advisor shows an interest in my outside-of-class activities and sometimes suggests activities.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor does not know what I do outside of class.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

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.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor identifies realistic academic goals for me based on my test scores and grades.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

6. My advisor registers me for my classes.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor teaches me how to register myself for classes.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

7. When I'm faced with difficult decisions my advisor tells me my alternatives and which one is the best choice.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

When I'm faced with difficult decisions, my advisor assists me in identifying alternatives and in considering the consequences of choosing each alternative.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

8. My advisor does not know who to contact about other-than-academic problems.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor knows who to contact about other-than-academic problems.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

9. My advisor gives me tips on managing my time better or on studying more effectively when I seem to need them.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor does not spend time giving me tips on managing my time better or on studying more effectively.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

10. My advisor tells me what I must do in order to be advised.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor and I discuss our expectations of advising and of each other.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

11. My advisor suggests what I should major in.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor suggests steps I can take to help me decide on a major.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

12. My advisor uses test scores and grades to let him or her know what courses are most appropriate for me to take.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

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.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

13. My advisor talks with me about my other-than-academic interests and plans.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor does not talk with me about interests and plans other than academic ones.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

14. My advisor keeps me informed of my academic progress by examining my files and grades *only*.

A----------B----------C----------D
very true — slightly true

OR

My advisor keeps informed of my academic progress by examining my files and grades and by talking to me about my classes.

E----------F----------G----------H
slightly true — very true

PART II

Directions-Consider the following activities that often take place during academic advising. During **this academic year,** how many times have you been involved in each activity? Use the code below to respond to questions 15-44 on the separate answer sheet.

A=None (0 times) **C=2 times** **E=4 times**
B=1 time **D=3 times** **F=5 or more times**

How frequently have you and your advisor spent time...

15. Discussing college policies
16. Signing registration forms
17. Dropping and/or adding course(s)
18. Discussing personal values
19. Discussing possible majors/academic concentrations
20. Discussing important social or political issues
21. Discussing content of courses
22. Selecting courses for the next term
23. Planning a class schedule for the next term
24. Discussing transfer credit and policies
25. Discussing advanced placement or exempting courses
26. Discussing career alternatives
27. Discussing probation and dismissal policies
28. Discussing financial aid
29. Identifying other campus offices that can provide assistance
30. Discussing study skills or study tips
31. Discussing degree or major/academic concentration requirements
32. Discussing personal concerns or problems
33. Discussing studies abroad or other special academic programs
34. Discussing internship or cooperative education opportunities
35. Talking about or setting personal goals
36. Evaluating academic progress
37. Getting to know each other
38. Discussing extracurricular activities
39. Discussing job placement opportunities
40. Discussing the purposes of a college education
41. Declaring or changing a major/academic concentration
42. Discussing time management
43. Talking about experiences in different classes
44. Talking about what you are doing besides taking classes

PART III

Considering the academic advising you have participated in at this college this year, respond to the following five statements on the answer sheet using the code below.

A = Strongly Disagree **C = Agree**
B = Disagree **D = Strongly Agree**

45. I am satisfied in general with the academic advising I have received.
46. I have received accurate information about courses, programs, and requirements through academic advising.
47. Sufficient prior notice has been provided about deadlines related to institutional policies and procedures.
48. Advising has been available when I needed it.
49. Sufficient time has been available during advising sessions.

PART IV

Please respond to the following questions. Continue marking your responses on the same answer sheet.

50. What is your sex?
(a) male
(b) female

51. What is your cultural/racial background?
(a) African American/Black (c) Asian American or Pacific Islander (d) Native American (e) White/Caucasian (f) Biracial/multiracial (g) Other (h) Decline to respond
(b) Hispanic American/Latino/a

52. What was your age at your last birthday?
(a) 18 or younger (c) 20 (e) 22 (g) 24 (i) 31 or older
(b) 19 (d) 21 (f) 23 (h) 25 - 30

53. What is your academic class standing?
(a) Freshman (first year) (c) Junior (third year) (e) Irregular/Transient/Special Student
(b) Sophomore (second year) (d) Senior (fourth or more years) (f) Other than any of the above

54. Which of the following **best describes** the majority of the academic advising you have received this academic year? *Select only one.*
(a) Advised individually by assigned advisor at an advising center
(b) Advised individually by any available advisor at an advising center
(c) Advised individually, **not** through an advising center
(d) Advised with a group of students
(e) Advised by a peer (student) advisor
(f) Advised in conjunction with a course in which I was enrolled
(g) Advised in a manner other than the alternatives described above
(h) No advising received

55. Approximately how much time was generally spent in each advising session?
(a) less than 15 minutes (c) 31-45 minutes (e) more than 1 hour
(b) 15-30 minutes (d) 46-60 minutes

56. How many academic advising sessions have you had this academic year in your **current** situation?
(a) none (c) two (e) four (g) six (i) eight
(b) one (d) three (f) five (h) seven (j) nine or more

57. How many academic advising sessions **in total** have you had this year?
(a) none (c) two (e) four (g) six (i) eight
(b) one (d) three (f) five (h) seven (j) nine or more

PART V

Part V 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 at this college.

Record your answers on the same answer sheet used for Parts I through IV.

59. My advisor is interested in helping me learn how to find out about courses and programs for myself.
A---------B---------C---------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor tells me what I need to know about academic courses and programs.
E---------F---------G---------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

60. My advisor tells me what would be the best schedule for me.
A---------B---------C---------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor suggests important considerations in planning a schedule and then gives me responsibility for the final decision.
E---------F---------G---------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

61. My advisor and I talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising.
A---------B---------C---------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor and I do *not* talk about vocational opportunities in conjunction with advising.
E---------F---------G---------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

62. My advisor shows an interest in my outside-of-class activities and sometimes suggests activities.
A---------B---------C---------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor does *not* know what I do outside of class.
E---------F---------G---------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

63. 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.
A---------B---------C---------D
Slightly Important — Very Important

OR My advisor identifies realistic academic goals for me based on my test scores and grades.
E---------F---------G---------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

Continue on reverse side.

64. My advisor registers me for my classes.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor teaches me how to register myself for classes.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

65. When I'm faced with difficult decisions my advisor tells me my alternatives and which one is the best choice.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR When I'm faced with difficult decisions, my advisor assists me in identifying alternatives and in considering the consequences of choosing each alternative.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

66. My advisor does *not* know who to contact about other-than-academic problems.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor knows who to contact about other-than-academic problems.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

67. My advisor gives me tips on managing my my time better or on studying more effectively when I seem to need them.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor does *not* spend time giving me tips on managing my time better or on studying more effectively.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

68. My advisor tells me what I must do in order to be advised.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor and I discuss our expectations of advising and of each other.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

69. My advisor suggests what I should major in.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor suggests steps I can take to help me decide on a major.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

70. My advisor uses test scores and grades to let him or her know what courses are most appropriate for me to take.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR 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.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

71. My advisor talks with me about my other-than-academic interests and plans.
A--------B--------C--------D
Very Important — Slightly Important

OR My advisor does *not* talk with me about interests and plans other than academic ones.
E--------F--------G--------H
Slightly Important — Very Important

72. My advisor keeps informed of my academic

OR My advisor keeps informed of my academic

progress by examining my files and grades *only*.

A---------B---------C---------D

Very Important — Slightly Important

progress by examining my files and grades and by talking to me about classes.

E---------F---------G---------H

Slightly Important — Very Important

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1:

What is your perception of what a college academic advisor's duty, role, and activities are before attending college and now that you are currently enrolled in college?

QUESTION 2:

What are the things you like about your advisor at this stage in your college experiences? What were the important things that helped you in your advising sessions?

QUESTION 3:

What, if anything, do you wish you could change about your advisor or his/her activities during advising?

QUESTION 4:

Provided that your advisor was able to satisfy your academic advising needs, would this interaction be a factor in your next term enrollment? Why or Why not?

APPENDIX D

APPROVAL LETTER FROM INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Institutional Review Board

118 College Drive #5147
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
Tel: 601.266.6820
Fax: 601.266.5509
www.usm.edu/irb

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
  Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: **27100404**
PROJECT TITLE: **First-Year Academically Under-Prepared Students' Judgements of Their Perceived Academic Advising Needs and Preferences, Their Level of Satisfaction, and Their Intention to Persist at a Four-Year Research Institution**
PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: **11/01/07 to 12/10/07**
PROJECT TYPE: **Dissertation or Thesis**
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: **Jennifer Rolle-Ducksworth**
COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Education & Psychology**
DEPARTMENT: **Educational Leadership & Research**
FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**
HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: **Expedited Review Approval**
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: **11/15/07 to 11/014/08**

Lawrence A. Hosman
Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
HSPRC Chair

11-19-07
Date

APPENDIX E

SUPPORT LETTER FROM PROVOST

Jennifer Ducksworth

From: "Betty Boney" <Betty.Boney@usm.edu>
To: "'Rex Gandy'" <rex.gandy@usm.edu>; "'Denise vonHerrmann'" <denise.vonherrmann@usm.edu>; "'Wanda Maulding'" <wanda.maulding@usm.edu>
Cc: "'Dr. Joseph S. Paul'" <Joe.Paul@usm.edu>; <jennifer.ducksworth@usm.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 1:09 PM
Attach: Proposal September 10 2007.doc
Subject: Message from the Provost

A doctoral student in Administration of Higher Education, Jennifer Ducksworth, is proposing a student academic advising that has promise to give us some very good baseline feedback. Jennifer, who is also a staff advisor in Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education, proposes to study the satisfaction with advising provided to freshmen who are considered under-prepared. The project will involve surveying students in 099 courses (the proposal for the project is attached as a WORD Document). Conduct of the survey is expected to take about 20 minutes of class time. In addition, selected volunteers from the courses will be interviewed outside of class. Your support in facilitation of this project would be greatly appreciated. If you have concerns or objects, please let me know. Otherwise, it would be helpful if you would forward this information to the Chairs/Directors for transmission to the appropriate instructors. The project does have the support of the Office of the Provost.

Thank you for your assistance,
Bobby L. Middlebrooks, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

APPENDIX F

LETTERS TO DEANS: COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY, COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

Dear (Name of Dean):

My name is Jennifer Ducksworth, and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Leadership and Research at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting a research for my dissertation that investigates the academic advising needs and preferences of first year academically under prepared students, and whether or not the advising received supports their decision to persist to the subsequent semester. This letter is written to request your support for me to be able to garner the permission among the Chair and the instructors of the (Corresponding department) to survey students enrolled in (099 course respectively). It is my intention to administer this survey during the first week in November.

Research purports the fact that nationally there continues to be an increase of academically under prepared students enrolling in higher education. One of the challenges that continue to plague higher education is how to address their specific needs in order to effectively and successfully matriculate and nurture this student cohort with ultimate goal being their successful completion of a higher education degree. National data from ACT reports document that advising is a significant retention tool. It is hoped that information gleaned from this research project will guide persons who advise to specifically address and meet this students population needs, which in turn will benefit students and institution and society.

To secure that this study has met institutional ethics and human rights standards approval from Institutional Research Board will be obtained. Results of this study will be shared with you at its conclusion. Should you have any questions regarding this study please feel free to contact me at 601-266-6189 or email at Jennifer.ducksworth@usm.edu. I thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rolle-Ducksworth
Graduate Student

APPENDIX G

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY AND INTERVIEW

Dear Student,

My name is Jennifer Ducksworth and I am a graduate student currently pursuing my doctoral degree in Higher Education Administration. I am interested in discovering your perceptions of academic advising at this institution and whether or not the advising you received was satisfactory and could possibly lend support to you enrolling in the next semester. Your participation in this research will help me and others that work in the advising arena to know more precisely what are your preferences and needs are as it relates to academic advising.

If you agree to participate you will be asked to fill out a survey that comprise of questions related to your academic advising activities experienced, your level of satisfaction, your ideal advisor and demographic questions about yourself. This survey should only take about 20 minutes to complete.

Participation is voluntary and there are no drawbacks for not participating in this survey. In addition, to get more in depth information on your academic advising needs and preferences I will like to interview participants who are willing to share more about their advising experiences and intentions to persist or not at this institution. Your identity is strictly confidential and pseudo or false names will be used to protect your identity. This interview is expected to be conducted within 20 minutes. Students who volunteer will be eligible to participate in a random drawing and win one of three $25.00 gift cards redeemed at one of the stores Wal-Mart, Old Navy or Target.

If you agree to participate in the survey, please check and sign this consent form. If you agree also to participate in the interview portion, at the end of the survey please check "I agree to participate in the interview" and write your name and phone contact on the spaces provided. Should you have any questions, you may contact Dr. Willie Pierce, Chairman of my research project at 601-266- 4569 or w.pierce@usm.edu.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rolle-Ducksworth
Graduate Student

___ I agree to participate in this survey.

Signature:_____

Date:_____

___ I agree to participate in this survey and the interview.

Name:_____

Phone #: _____

Email:_____

APPENDIX H

CORRESPONDENCE GRANTING PERMISSION TO USE ACADEMIC ADVISING INVENTORY TOOL

Jennifer Ducksworth

From: <ducksworthj@bellsouth.net>
To: <jennifer.ducksworth@usm.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2007 2:21 AM
Subject: [Fwd: Use of the AAI]

>
> From: "Roger Winston" <rwinston2@bellsouth.net>
> Date: 2007/07/26 Thu AM 09:11:21 EDT
> To: <ducksworthj@bellsouth.net>
> Subject: Use of the AAI
>
> Jennifer: We would be pleased for you to use the AAI in your research. In regard to your other questions,
>
> 1. I am needing about 150 copies of this inventory for my population. Would I make copies or is there another way to obtain that many copies directly from the Student Development Associates Inc.? You can just download the instrument from the NACADA site and then make as many copies as you want.
>
>
>
> 2. On the Preface of the manual on Nacada's website, it stated that the scantrons are no longer available. How do one go about scoring the inventory or would regular scantrons be appropriate? You will need to adapt the collection of responses to your local situation. If you have access to a computer-based data collection program, you might be able to collect the responses on-line. If you have an optical scanner available, you could use an optical scan sheet.
>
>
>
> 3. I am looking at underprepared freshman and there are several questions that are not applicable to this population. Can I eliminate them, modify them to apply to this group? What are my options or parameters in using this assessment tool? For example there are questions that refer to transfer items, or job placements, internships that may not be appropriate at this time. You may alter the demographic items to fit your local situation. We recommend that you not alter scales, that is, use all the items for Part I (Developmental-Prescriptive Scale. However, we have placed no restrictions on your use of the AAI. If you do change any thing, except demographic items), please acknowledge that the contents of a scale/s have been altered in any report of your study.
>
>
>
> 4. Dr. Winston had conducted a survey using the underprepared students at UGA to establish construct validity of this tool. Is there any way I can obtain a copy of this original study? The study you refer to was published in the NACADA Journal (citation is in the AAI Manual).
>
>
>
> Good luck on your study. -- Roger
>
>
>
> Michael, once again thank you for your assistance and I look forward to hearing from you. I am at home today and so you can email me at this address or call me at 601-264-0967 (home).
>
>

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following questions were consistently asked of all the interviewees and responses were numbered to correspond to each question

Question 1: What is your perception of what a college academic advisor duty, role and activities are before attending college and also now that you are currently enrolled in college?

Question 2: what are the things you like about your advisor at this stage in your college experience? What were the important things that helped you in your advising sessions?

Question 3: What if any, do you wish you could change about your advisor or his or her activities during advising?

Question 4: Provided that your advisor was able to satisfy your academic advising concerns, would this interaction be a factor in your next term enrollment? Why or why not?

Interviewee 1

Q1. I believe they should help you get into your classes, and help guide you to your goal and your goal is to get your degree. Before I did not know what they were suppose to do. In high school they basically made you pick classes, there was no other option. They just set up schedule for you

Q2. I only met with her once, but she was nice. I like how she helped me get classes for next semester but I did not like that we only met for 30 minutes and I did not get to know her at all. I want longer time in first meeting. She, um... I don't think that anything really helped me. I picked the classes and she just signed off on my advisement form.

Q3. I want her to be more helping. I do not know. She did not really help me that much; I want her to be more interested in me, session to get to know me first, because she is my advisor and she is helping me find classes that will affect me daily;

Q4. Not really, because I like Southern Miss and I was relieved of that fact and not just because of an advisor (laughs)

Interviewee 2

Q 1: Well, when I was in high school I did not know much about academic advisor until it became important for me to go to college and I found out they help you with your classes and enroll you in them. Well, once I found out in high school what they were about such as to help you with classes, around school, I still feel the same way. They tell us what classes are required to take for our major and our desired program. But since attending college they play a much greater role than that because they not only tell what is required for major but help me find classes that fit my personal

interest, and meet the needs I have to have for my major. This made college life easier as a freshman;

I did not know if would attend USM but I attended the last orientation day and a lot of classes were closed and filled. I did not know what to do. I did not know what prerequisites were for the nursing program, and I did not just want to take classes for just hours, but I wanted classes that were required. An advisor is not just a person who tells you to do something, they guide you through it. Because honestly I would be lost because I would be enrolled in classes I did not need, not prepared for. I realize her (advisor) busyness and she did not have to go above and beyond rushing tween two offices to see if could get me in classes and I really appreciated that

Q2. I do not have much to say for current advisor. I met her only once but another advisor helped me to decide to attend USM. He has been a guardian angel to me since attending USM. He contacts me, lets me know about meetings, programs, workshops and things I would be interested in. He shows me classes taken that go towards my major; provides notices on workshops, advise classes for me, and prepares me to be ready for advising for Spring. Being prepared gives me more time to bond, so instead of just talking about classes and what you going to do about this, it has taught me to be ready and prepared when I go in so if other questions we have more focus and time to do that.

They really listen to me when I come in. no matter what the problem is; comfort in knowing can ask for help if with classes also I can visit them for help if issues or problems with school work and will request for someone to get personal help

Q3. Everything has been great so far, I just really do not think I would change anything. It has been a great experience.

Q4. It really is because when you go off somewhere and away from home and you feel that out in world alone, no one to help or there for you and you do not want to come back to an environment like that. It is great Sometimes do not want to go home; they play a part in that; also the staff and faculty here too are supportive

Interviewee 3

Q1. To help us to make schedule what we should take, before college; now the same

Q2. Actually she chose classes for me, sat down on one on one time, ask my opinion also, had a questions asking about classes and choices

She gave me all the attention I needed and did not rush me. She made me comfortable to come and talk as a friend

Q3. Everything went well

Q4. I guess, you can say that; I would change departments if I had a bad experience. He encourages me to follow out with my degree plan I would come back; I would come back anyway

Interviewee 4

Q1. I first thought college advisors were like high school counselor, but it is a bit more. High school counselors tell us what classes and we just had to go. It is similar to college advisors but college has broader areas of programs and advisors make sure the classes you need you get;

Q2. Advisors are very friendly, flexible and accessible to answer questions

Q3. There are no changes I could think of. Each session we talked as if we knew one another for more than a couple of days

Q4. Yes m'am, if I need help I pretty much go to that person about my academics; She is a very important person; But yeah, it will not affect me because I would ask for a different advisor and if not, I will still stay because I want my education. The advisor is a big support and so will influence me to come back; I guess my advisor does make a difference;

Interviewee 5

Q1. Before I attended high school I thought an advisor should help more with scholarships. I had to seek out my own [scholarship]. They did not prepare me for what school to go to and I missed out on applying for scholarships. Now I think college advisors should help with career planning, schedule, and that I graduate at what time I want to graduate. Also help with resume, finding internships- things beyond just scheduling

Q2. I like her because she has chosen my schedule. This is pretty much all she has done; I took on another faculty to help me with finding other scholarship and with my resume. She helped me more than my original advisor. I want more help career wise since I know what major I want to pursue.

Q3. My sessions were more rushed. She was busier due to her university role and so it was way more rushed. Also I would want to know why I have to take the class and to validate that this is what I should be doing

Q4. It would affect a little bit. I think she is a good advisor, so yes it is important because I really want to know what to do, and I don't want to back track and be in school longer than necessary so it is very important to have that help

Interviewee 6

Q1. Before college I was not sure of what a college advisor's duty was. My dad went to college and he said they were to help me to schedule my classes and if I had any problems or questions to visit my advisor. Now that I am in college my dad was right but a different outlook in schedule of classes because they also give you their opinion but you have to know what is best for you too. They give great feedback and also allow you to voice your opinion.

Q2. There is nothing really I would change. They are friendly and seek answers if they do not know. I am undecided if anything really helped in advising because I talk to my family first and then relay to my advisor what we discussed for more feedback and compare the two responses.

Q3. I had to take over since he did not really adhere to my wishes. He gave me extra classes based on his interest since I was undecided. I wanted more core classes but she did not listen to where I was coming from. Also I wish I had more time, 30 minutes to 60 minutes if he would listen to what I wanted.

Q4. It will. I think as a freshmen one does not know what to expect so having someone helps your chances to see college life as it is and classes that are needed.

Interviewee 7

Q1. Before, I believed that college advisors were to point me in the right direction for classes as far as what I should and should not take. Now it is the same but they help out more than what I thought. They tell you and do it for you and ask what you want to change. They set the standard for you.

Q2. What helped me was the way he talked as if he knew me for a long time and told me this is what he would do to get courses for my major and get them out of the way first.

Q3. I could not say [I would change anything]. I had no trouble out of him.

Q4. No, I like school as a whole and my advisor would not play a pivotal role. I would not like if there were bad interactions, but I will find a way around it to get my education. Advisors can mess you up but if you know for yourself what you need to take then you are aware. I did background on what I needed on my own and my advisors confirmed the same ones I chose.

Interviewee 8

Q1. I believed that advisors were there to help with everyday needs as far as what to do, how to register for classes, where my classes were. Now – it is different from what I thought. He told me what I needed to know and to what to do and in college I thought they let you take and do what you want. But I see that they are more helpful than that.

Q2. My advisor did not force anything on me but told me what I needed to take. He asked me how I felt about things such as my classes and hours I wanted to take.

Q3. There is nothing I can think of [my advisor to change].

Q4. Yes, he would make me come back. The more people you have to help you, the more you want to do so, especially since he gave me a lot of advice. I now have someone to talk to and go to for help.

Interviewee 9

Q1. I believe that high school counselors are there to help with enrolling in classes and to answer questions related to academics, and if other problems arise for them to be there to help and encourage you. I believe college academic advisors role are the same.

Q2. I like that she made suggestions and asked me what I wanted to do.

Q3. There is nothing I would change. She asked me about my classes, if I had any questions, and how I was doing.

Q4. No, because I like USM and one person or bad thing or good thing will not stop me from enrolling the next semester.

Interviewee 10

Q1. Before I believed that college advisors were to help me along the way and tell me the right courses to take. Now I still believe the same way.

Q2. The only thing was that he asked me what classes I wanted to take, and he suggested what I should take. Any questions I had he answered them.

Q3. Although my advisor suggested classes I should take he acted as if he did not care. I emailed him because I needed help with my schedule. Instead he stated that advising time was passed and he never answered my question. My request for change would be to have more access and time.

Q4. Although he treated me badly, it would not be a factor if I returned to Southern and I would agree that they would be other

factors more significant. Also I would not hold the institution accountable for one person [advising/action].

Interviewee 11

Q1. Before enrolling in college I believed that college advisors were there to help you make your schedule and talk to you about your classes and how they were going and what interests I had in order for me to make decisions and have choices. Now I still see college advisors the same, there is no difference. In high school I did not really talk to my counselor but here I need stuff from my advisor. But I cannot reach them to talk with them so they are about the same. However, I think maybe it is just my advisor. I think it would be better help to us [if the advisor] be more involved but it seems like they are just trying to make a schedule and like just trying to get it done.

Q2. I liked that they registered me. Also, I think it made me more responsible to make my own schedule and to become more aware of my classes I needed. It makes me more responsible and to know what I need or do not need. I would prefer if they tell me but giving me my choices of classes if I have one lets me be aware of my options.

Q3. I would want the advisor to be more involved in the whole session. I guess be more personal and not like you have to do it but like just help more – I guess. Because when I did the survey I said "my advisor do not do any of this" and it allowed me to see other duties [they were to do]. It seems like they were just trying to make a schedule out; and when I did the survey it defined their roles more and enlightened me.

Q4. I know for spring I got the classes I needed and I did not need them all at one time so next semester I know how to make my schedule and manage my time on my own. So no, an advisor would not be a factor but it would make it a lot easier.

Interviewee 12

Q1. Before college I believed a college advisor helped you to pick out classes and advisise you what subjects were best for your major, and if you were not sure which ones to take they help you get classes together. Now that I am in college it has changed a little bit. I think the setting was different and I was not really sure what I expected exactly. But now I see that they stay with you during the process and through the whole program of your degree plan, and helping you in your major and minor providing guidance and clarification.

Q2. She was very nice and helpful in trying to figure out what I wanted. She asked me what I wanted and this helped me clear and organizes my thoughts on what I want. One of the questions she asked was "Where was I going?" In other words what was my ultimate goal and [she helped me to] explore career and educational goals. I liked that.

Q3. I have not seen her much to really want to change anything. She was helpful but nothing [to change].

Q4. Yes, because the more she clarifies I can get the classes I need and what I want to do for the rest of my life and get the classes I need. It plays a part but most of decision making is more up to the professors and classes work jointly together.

Interviewee 13

Q1. In high school I thought I would meet them [college advisors] monthly and talk about what I needed to do to prepare for things, and tell them how I really feel. Now everything is rushed and now equally rushed to tell them your concerns. I thought it would be more like a person guiding you through the classed instead of them being so directive without answering the why. I am

still confused on what I want to do and less of what I am suppose to do without any explanation of why, or a response of "that is just how it is". I am still kind of confused about that. My advisor decided for me, because He knows what he is doing and wanted me to just take his advice, so I went with it but I wanted more. I prefer a longer session and to know more about my major because when you are a freshman you really still are unsure and need someone to say this is what it is or is not; need more of a direction.

Q2. He is really nice and made me feel comfortable. But then again I felt rushed and I needed to get my questions out there. He was helpful but there was a sense of urgency despite being courteous and I felt he had to go somewhere. Some important things that helped me in advising session was that I walked in and had my registration book with me and my classes that my friends helped me pick out that they thought I would need.

Q3. I think he should have advisement more often. I know it is only before semester starts but in the middle of the semester I wanted to change my major. If I wanted to change my major then if I talked to him ahead of time it may help me to determine if it is a wise choice. It is a major decision and advising in less than ten minutes is too little time, so more time throughout the session would be helpful.

Q4. I mean even though he was nice, no it would not be a factor. I feel secure in the classes I was taking next semester and his help helped and would help keep me on the right path to my major. But his help did help a lot but it was not a factor for me to come or not [to USM]. Also I really do not think they are as specialized as they should be. Anyone knows the classes you should take by looking at a book but I needed the personal touch to help me clarify that if I do not like this then I may not like that, and details to find out more of what I want.

Interviewee 14

Q1. Before college I believed that college advisors were just to give me advice and to help me with classes. High school and college advisors are not much difference. Actually college advisors are a little bit more because they are there to talk to you and they probably get more into your personality. College advisors have more time to get into your personality and to steer me in the right way because I am paying for this [education] and in high school I did not [have to pay]. If I am paying for this [college education] and not paying for high school then I expect more. Now I see college advisor as a person to guide you on your way, and to keep up with you, to ask you about your grades. College gives you a choice to let you pick your classes and ask questions to make sure you can handle it, whereas high school just tells you [what classes to take].

Q2. My advisor was really a nice lady. When I came in I felt welcomed. She acted as if I was her child or if she had known and brought me up my whole life.

Q3. There is nothing really I would change. I just went in and I was reading the class schedule guide ahead of time which helped me. The only thing she did was to emphasize for me to get my major classes over with.

Q4. No because she is just there to advise me and I do not see her as if she is all right so if she messes up it won't hurt me. This is my thing

Interviewee 15

Q1. I believed that college advisor duties were to assist us in filling out schedule of classes and that is about it. High school counselors are similar and they are there to tell us what classes to take and the need for your class schedule. College advisors should

do the same thing also. Now that I am attending college, besides the scheduling and stuff, college advisors also give us knowledge on what we need to do to in order to pursue our career.

Q2. I did not know what classes I was to take and I liked that they told me what classes to take. One of the most important things for me during advising was being comfortable.

Q3. Because he had a lot of students he had to advise, most of the time it was very rushed. So I guess more time.

Q4. Yes, because without that help I would not know what to do and I would be lost.

Interviewee 16

Q1. Before attending college I thought college advisors were there to help with class schedule and other questions about college as far as your major and what classes I needed to take. In high school my counselor was more like a friend. I always went to her and she would stop what she was doing and help with all my questions. Sometimes she would actually take my classes and say "I know what you need" and she would look over the classes. She gave me attention.

Now that I am in college actually my advisor's secretary helped me. I do not think she had much time to really talk with me. I realize that they are not there to baby you, but that they are there to help you but it is not high school and they are not going to take every step with you. From my experience they tell you what you need to know and you take it from there. In college they will not pick or make your classes or make your schedule but it is up to you. I think it is a good thing because we are in college and we are young adults so it is our duty to know what classes we want to take and how many hours we can handle.

Q2. I like that they are friendly and took the time to meet with me and help me with my schedule and answer my questions as much as she could. I asked important questions regarding my program, the right schedule and to ensure that I was on the right track. When my advisor looked at the courses I had done in high school, she noted that I had taken an upper level course that could be used specifically for my major. A lot of freshman had not taken that advance class as yet.

I liked that my advisor just told me the facts and she told me about my next semester classes and how I needed to keep my GPA at a certain level.

Q3. I wish I had more time to ask more questions like future classes, what occurs in student teaching which is my fourth year in college. But there was no time which was understandable due to her living at a far distance.

Q4. Yes! I think it would be. I already know what to expect and she is willing to guide me so far that I know what I need for the rest of my classes. I am anticipating college and I am more ready and prepared because of how she helped me.

Interviewee 17

Q1: Before college I suppose college advisors were to help schedule classes and help with idea of what classes I was to take, and what is suited for me and if I was having any problems I could ask them questions. Now that I am in college, I expect the same thing except they are able to give you advice on what is better for you personally, and not just in your major but other interest I may have. They also can get to know you a little bit – like getting to know you who you are and your hobbies. Instead of them just saying "these are the classes you need" they base it on your personality and match up your learning skills with the professors you may have.

Q2. I like that she does that. She knows a little bit about me and she tries to pair me up with the professors to take based on my personality. She has gotten better on what professors I should take and not just classes.

I also likes that she takes the time to talk with me. The other guy would just advise me on classes but she spent around 45 -60 minutes not just on school but she actually wanted to get to know me. She was concerned about my well being and how I was doing in school.

Q3. I wish there was more interaction with faculty as an advisor and to see them outside of the classroom than just during advising period. I would rather have something that is outside the box. During the advising period being able to see them more than just during this time, after the advising period to have more contact.

Q4. I guess not really. If I really wanted to be here based on my personal opinion I will. I have had a good and bad advisor and it is nice to have someone to help you with your scheduling, and say what is best for you. I guess it does play a small significant factor. It is really important especially since I am still not sure what I want to do and she lets me know there are other career and courses out there I may like. She has steered me to other resources and given me classes that may help me decide what I want to do.

Interviewee 18

Q1. Before college in high school we had counselors who would call us in at least once a month to check on our classes, and see if we were still enroll in our classes, and to ensure are grades were good. Now I believe college advisors are the same and they are there to just make sure we enroll for the next term, to find out how our grades are and to make sure we have the proper GPA to get in our program. They are also there to help us choose a balance of hard and easy courses.

Q2. I liked that she was looking at what classes I should be taking and then choosing the classes I needed to make sure I have some easy and hard classes. She also was looking at the big picture from beginning to end and letting me know how many hours I needed so I would not have to stay in college for a long time.

Q3. Things to change would be if advisor would ask more personal questions, because sometimes I feel I do not really belong here with it being my first time away from my home and friends. Questions such as how are you? Do you feel you will stay here next semester? How do you feel about school? Are you involved in any activities? Questions not like so personal but questions just getting to know a little bit about my well being, so I can get to know them a little better.

Q4. Yes. They have helped me a lot. I had heard about the teacher scholarship program in Louisiana where they pay for your tuition in Louisiana and well I was going to go but she told me about the Special education program here and how wonderful it was and the percentages of those students who graduated, and jobs one could get, so it would persuade me to return.

Interviewee 19

Q1. Before college I was not sure of what a college advisor was suppose to do. People told me that the advisor was a person who was to schedule my classes and if at any time I had a problem everybody would say go to your advisor. In high school it is similar duties because they made sure we understood classes we needed to take, and if any problems we had whether it was personal problems, or anything we could visit. The high school counselor got us prepared for college such as financial aid, and has any papers we may need. Now that I am in college advisor – I think as far as roles it should be the same, but truthfully do not know how to talk to him about my personal problems and I do not

know him as well. I would like to talk to him more because it is always helpful to have some kind of counseling.

Q2. I liked that my advisor prepared me for my classes. I had a lot of questions I had to ask and I did not want to ask everybody because people tell you things. My advisor told me about my major, what degree I would be getting and taught me how to enroll using the computer. She also asked important question related to my choice of program which was a bachelor of science in the arts. He helped me clarify which degree [in the arts] I wanted to get and if he did not know answers to questions I asked, he went to find the answers.

Q3. I am not sure there is anything I would change but I would make myself available to talk to him and see if he is available to talk more about other things. I believe it is my responsibility also to seek out help.

Q4. Yes, I mean next semester I should know most of the questions but I still need and will have more questions but I will know who to go to instead of being confused and running around trying to find my advisor I know who he is. As my friends and I talk about our schedule and later on taking our classes, the number one response is "go to your advisor".

Interviewee 20

Q1. Before college I believed college advisors were to ensure I get in the right classes for my profession for what I am going to do after college. Also they are to help with my scheduling and basically helping me stay on track for graduation. Now I believe it is pretty much the same thing with suggestion that college advisors really try to ensure and think a little bit harder of ensuring I am doing what I want to do.

Q2. I like that they made sure I focus on my classes [in my program] first before [focusing on] extracurricular activities. Also what helped me during my advising session- one good thing was that I knew what I wanted to do before I went to advising and the information that was shared was relevant.

Q3. There is nothing really. She did a good job and I was pretty satisfied.

Q4. Mmmm – I do think that it will [affect my decision] if they do a good job to keeping me on track, but if they do not do a satisfactory job I would seek help from somewhere else and from someone different. I see advisors as mentors - someone who I could talk to, and who can make sure I am doing the right thing. I have a preference of wanting being told what to do versa having a rapport with advisor. I would say half and half- tell me what I need to do and then let me be able to ask questions later to make sure I am on the right track.

Interviewee 21

Q1. A college advisor is someone who could help me with my schedule and papers. I could go to them to help me if I had trouble with classes and they would let me know what to do to prepare for that. It was very beneficial and I hope to receive this type of relationship in my college. In high school I had a lot more of a closer relationship with my counselor and it was more open and I could walk in anytime, as opposed to now in college I have to set appointments. I prefer to walk in and talk with my advisor instead of the more professional format. Now that I am in college I want it basically like it was in my high school. If he was available or if I had trouble with my classes, I would go to him and he would set me on the right path to make it smooth as possible.

Q2. He laid it out for me, as opposed to me going on and getting all my classes together. If I had any troubles he will do what he thinks is best and think out a better way to allow me to still keep a reasonable schedule.

What was really important was him being very understanding. I already know what profession I want and obviously they place you with an advisor based on what you want to do. I was able to talk to my advisor about different things beside schedule and this kind of gets you to know him and allows you to get to know him and where he is coming from. You can trust him to lay out the best potential schedule for classes.

Q3. Like I said [advisors] being more open is what I would want changed. If I have time to kill I would want to be able to visit with him. If he is not busy I would go knock on the door to say hello. I see him as a big aspect of my college experience.

Q4. Certainly, because I know that based on the things he told me to get ready for this semester he has helped me in lots of ways. Like if I struggle in classes he tells me to keep going and that it is all going to work out. Besides family and friends, it is good to have someone at the professional level, even though you want to look at him as a friend, someone to boost you to encourage you

Interviewee 22

Q1. Before college I definitely would have compared it to high school counselors who helped throughout the school year as far as grades and getting you ready for those classes to take that year. But now I am in college and as a freshman I was really skeptical on what to expect from an advisor, but he was everything I expected for the most part. He told me the truth, he did not sugar coat anything and he was telling me what to do to be successful throughout my four years here. He said that sometimes when I enter an office for the first time, most advisors will try to steer students in other areas but that I need to take class I need as a

freshman, and be sure of what I want to do because I will be giving out a lot of money. And he told me personally that I was already a semester behind because of the remedial classes I am enrolled in - MAT 099, LS101, CIE 099 and SOC 101. He told me that he was not there to be my friend but to help me through my college experience which is different from high school where they want to be your friend instead of telling what you need to do.

Q2. I only met him once but I like the one on one that I needed and he told me what I needed. I like his honesty and he told me what to do to be successful. He also said I should not be afraid of him because he is kind of a bigger guy, he is a coach, so and if I need anything to let him know to see if he could assist. If I have any problems with my classes he said to tell him and he will see what he could do.

Q3. He was kind of all over the place and I wish he was all there more. He spoke of his tennis team, his kids and family and I wish he could just come in and be all there; other than that he was fine, he was perfect.

Q4. I would think that my next term enrollment will go a bit more smoothly because I have met my advisor for the first time and he has helped me with my classes. I assume that my second time I would know what to expect. Yes the interaction would be a factor if I persist at USM. I think having this relationship between you and your advisor should be very important. This is basically what I think: he is going to be there during the whole time at USM so you might as well get to know him because you need to trust that he is going to be there. He has to help you with your classes and is going to give you advice, he is going to get to know you as well as you know him, tell you which teachers to take. It is very important that relationship work and goes really well. I think that the advisor should be there if you need to talk about things not only academically, but socially as well. I really do not because

there are so many other programs that are strictly for that [talking about social/personal issues].

Interviewee 23

Q1. Before college the counselors basically transitioned us from high school level to college level. In high school counselors were more like teachers and they prepared us for college, so when we got to college we actually got to experience what a college advisor does. Now they are to help prepare our classes, and get our classes in order.

Q2. I like how they actually care how you are doing in the classes by asking you how you are doing and how your grades are, the classes we are taking, our assignments, essays, test and how we feel about the classes, and the campus. Basically their personality helped in my advising session because they listened, like if I was an early person they schedule my classes earlier.

Q3. I wish we had more advisors. I am on the track team with over 60 team members. Therefore he does not have much time to see each student so time is an issue.

Q4. Yes it would be a factor because if he was to have more time to see each student, he would get to know us and which classes we were better off taking and getting us situated with our major; and things like that so, yeah.

Interviewee 24

Q1. My first perception before college was that they should be able to "get into" the student and make them feel good about how they like to go about attending college without having to worry about what classes I should take and something like that. I mean, the way I see it is not just about you should take this class or you should take that class for graduation and what not, but it is all

about making students feel good about classes and what he or she should take and not have to worry about that. Now, I would say it is pretty much the same but I just wish I could get more out of it here as I did in high school. I was able to get more help in high school. Well in high school I could see my counselor every now and then throughout high school. She was able to help me know what I needed to do, what classes should I take and was very helpful, not just in identifying my wants but my needs as well.

Q2. Well, to be honest I really do not like much about my advisor at this stage of my college experience right now. I feel as though I did not get much help at all but just the class that I needed for next term and that was it. It was all about the procedures and what not and I feel I have to learn it all on my own without getting much more specific details. I would prefer like a better relationship with my advisor and more in depth with my classes.

Q3. I am not so sure but I guess just more time to sit down and talk more in depth about my classes and building a relationship, not just about this is what is here and what you need to take or I recommend that you take this. It is not just about sitting down but guidance during this time also.
Q4. I am undecided at the moment if I want to come back in the spring. I did not receive as much as help as I thought I would and I wish I could get more help for advisement. I am still thinking about it. Yes, advisors do play a role in my return and actually it plays a significant role.

Interviewee 25

Q1. Well when I was in high school I did not know much about academic advisors until I came on to college. I found that they help you with your classes and enrollment and things like that. Once I found out when I was in high school what they were about I still feel the same way as I did in school, such as activities surrounding school, community, and services.

Q2. I have seen my advisor twice and I met her couple of months ago for my classes so she can sign off. She seems nice and told me what I needed to know about my classes, how many hours and things like that.

Like I said, she gave me the paper and showed me the classes I would have to take for next semester, and explained to me what was expected of me and classes outlining for my major and what grade was needed for the major, and what grades I needed to pass my classes.

Q3. There is nothing I would change. She explained everything to me well and she was just a nice person.

Q4. Yes! As far as going to her and getting help, because I think as classes go she can help me with more than classes. We can have a relationship beyond the school thing and she can help me beyond just this. Yes mam it does affect whether or not I return you know because she has been here for a while and she knows things about the school and my major.

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