

# Advising Styles & Roles

CSP 6023 – Introduction to CSP

Dr. Christine Austin

- One of the key professional competencies required of student affairs practitioners. This presentation gives an overview of the styles & roles that might be expected of an advisor.

# What is Your Advising Style?

## Product-Oriented

*Functions related to tasks performed by the group*

- Planning a program
- Running a meeting
- Publicizing a program
- Conducting elections
- Evaluating programs/goals
- Setting goals

# Advising Style

## Development-Oriented

*Functions related to stimulating individual development*

- Assertiveness skills
- Time management
- Conflict resolution
- Decision making
- Leadership skills
- Communication skills

# Advising Style

## Linkage-Oriented

*Functions related to continuity of group*

- Institutional policies
- Past successes and failures
- History of group
- Maintaining group records
- Institutional resources

# Advising Style

## Supervisory-Oriented

*Functions related to administrative tasks and approval processes*

- Clear all expenditures
- Approve all correspondence
- Approve group activities

# Academic Advising Styles

## **Developmental: Personal Coach vs Trainee**

Advisors establish a relationship that fosters and generates student responsibility through personal interaction with the advisee.

Advisors become concerned with specific personal and vocational decisions, and also with the student's rational processes, environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness, and problem solving, decision-making, and self-evaluation skills.

# Academic Advising Styles

## **Intrusive: Parent vs Child**

This style has a goal that results in an academic adjustment. This means that the “adjustment” involves the student’s ability to self-refer and assume responsibility for academic performance. It is not solely the result of the advisor providing specific information about academics and performance, but it may be invasive in that it is personal rather than merely professional.

# Academic Advising Styles

## **Prescriptive: Doctor vs Patient**

Advisors are in a position of authority. “The advisor is the doctor and the student is the patient” in which the former makes a diagnosis and prescribes information and the student follows the advice.

# Advisor Roles

- Different advisors have different styles that they bring to a student organization. Sometimes that organization will determine the style that is required. Some advisors are very hands on, while others are more distantly involved.
- The important thing to remember is that you are an advisor and not the leader of the organization.

# Advisor Roles

## **Mentor**

Many students will come to see their advisor as a mentor and the success of these relationships can last many years and be rewarding for both the student and the advisor. If the student is seeking an education and a career in your field, you may be asked to assist in his/her professional development.

To be effective in this capacity, you will need a knowledge of their academic program and profession, a genuine interest in the personal and professional development of new professionals, and a willingness to connect students to a network of professionals. You may be approached to review resumes, to connect students with community resources, or to be a sounding board for their ideas of what they want to accomplish in the field.

# Advisor Roles

## **Team Builder**

When new officers are elected or new members join the organization, you may need to take the initiative in turning the students from individuals with separate goals and expectations into a team. Team building is important because it enhances the relationships of the students between one another and the advisor. Positive relationships help the organization succeed and to work through conflicts and difficult times.

# Advisor Roles

## **Conflict Mediator**

Inevitably, students are going to join the organization with different agendas, goals, and ideas about how things should function and the direction they should be taking. When working with students who have come in to conflict, it may be necessary to meet with them and have them discuss their issues with each other. In many cases, it may be necessary to remind them that they both want what is in the best interest of the organization. Ask them how they think they can work together, point out the organization's mission, and ask how their conduct is helping the group achieve its mission.

# Advisor Roles

## Reflective Agent

One of the most essential components to learning in “out of classroom” activities is providing time for students to reflect on how and what they are doing. As an advisor, you will want your officers to talk to you about how they think they are performing, their strengths, and their weaknesses. Give them the opportunity to discuss their thoughts on their performance. Then be honest with them. Let them know when you agree with their self-perceptions and in a tactful manner let them know when you disagree. Remember, any criticism you provide students should be constructive and you will want to provide concrete examples of actions the student took that seem to contradict their self-perceptions. When students discuss their weaknesses, ask them how they can improve those areas and how you can help them. Students usually have the answer to what they need; they just don’t like to ask for help. Remember to have students reflect on their successes and failures.

# Advisor Roles

## **Educator**

As an advisor, your role of educator will often come through the role modeling of behavior, guiding the student in reflection of their actions, and being there to answer questions. One of the most difficult actions to take as an advisor is to do nothing, but sometimes this can be the most important action of all. Allow the students to make their decisions even if they do not agree with your ideas. Sometimes, students will succeed; other times, they may fail. The key is to return to the role of the reflective agent and give the students a safe place to reflect on their experiences.

# Advisor Roles

## Motivator

- As an advisor, you may have to motivate students to excel and to carry out their plans and achieve their goals. Some students are easily discouraged and at the first sign of difficulty they may want to quit. You will need to be their “cheerleader” to keep them excited about all of the potential successes they will experience. You can motivate students through the recognition of their efforts, appealing to their desire to create change, and to connecting their experiences here at the University to the experiences they will have in the community.

# Advisor Roles

- **Policy Interpreter**
- Student organizations operate under policies, procedures, and rules. At times, students may not be aware of these policies
- and they will do things in an inappropriate manner. The more you know about these policies the better advising you can give
- to the students on their plans.

# When/Where Can You Use Them?

How do you decide when and where to use a particular advising style?

What are some of the areas/functions that require advisors?

# Counselors vs Advisors

- **What is the difference between a Counselor and an Advisor?**
- **Counselors** are professionally trained to address personal issues, resolve academic anxieties, assist students in choosing career fields and majors, and problem solve other academic difficulties. With students on restricted academic or financial aid status, counselors work to develop individual success plans, which address the specific issues inhibiting academic success.
- **Advisors** specialize in matters pertaining to your educational program: college policies, placement/assessment test interpretation, degree requirements, transferability, schedule planning, and graduation checks. Faculty performs ongoing advising. Every effort is made to match degree seeking students with faculty from areas of particular interest to the individual advisee.

# Counseling

- Provide short term personal counseling for issues that may interfere with studies
- Facilitate decision making on educational and career goals
- Facilitate college adjustment for in-coming freshmen (homesickness, time management, depression, anxiety)
- Facilitate college adjustment for returning adult students (balancing roles of student, parent, spouse, and/or employee).
- Mediate conflicts in student housing
- Teach coping skills and stress management
- Provide crisis counseling
- Develop individualized retention interventions
- Interpret career inventories
- Teach Human Development Classes

# Advisors

- Help you pick your classes
- Facilitate educational transactions; e.g., schedules, drop/adds, withdrawals, change of major, waivers, graduation requirements, etc.
- Clarify instructional policies, procedures and requirements
- Provide general information on special services including academic remediation, admission, placement testing, courses of study, and registration
- Explain course transfer differences between institutions
- Interpret placement scores and recommend appropriate classes.