



Formal versus Informal Advisees - Inside the Brain of the Advisors

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Overview

Advisors and advisees typically evolve relationships that blend personal and professional elements in various ways

This study analyzed advisors' perceptions of the overall advising process as well as the formal versus informal advising processes by deploying the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954)

It was hypothesized that both informal and formal advisors would have positive and negative experiences with the advising process

Method

There were four participants consisting of two males and two females that are currently teaching and advising at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Participants were recruited through e-mail

The interview survey took approximately 15-30 minutes to complete

The survey consisted of open-ended questions based off of the advisors' perceptions of advising and mannerisms that advisees show

Years of teaching experience ranged from 10.00 to 14.00 ($M = 12.75$, $SD = 1.9$) where teaching experience at UWEC ranged from 2.50 to 12.00 years ($M = 6.88$, $SD = 4.09$)

Their years of advising experience ranged from 4.50 to 11.00 ($M = 7.88$, $SD = 2.78$)

“The advising process is tricky and puts a lot of time pressure on both students and advisors, but is one of the most rewarding things to do!”

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Qualitative Results

Positive Aspects of Advising from Advisors' Point-of-View

Thematic Category	Key Terms	Responses
Q1. What are some positive aspects of the advising process that you have experienced?		
Respect	Polite OR reciprocal interaction	I believe in mutual politeness so I respect my students and I expect them to reciprocate that respect.
Helpful	Prepared, timely, OR organized	I help create plans for the future, such as classes or plans for after school.
Rewarding	Interest, success, OR personal relationship	It is rewarding to see students' progression.

Negative Aspects of Advising from Advisors' Point-of-View

Thematic Category	Key Terms	Responses
Q2. What are some negative aspects of the advising process that you have experienced?		
Disrespectful	Impolite OR inattentive	Their minds are made up already and they don't want to listen to your advice.
Expectations	Rude OR pushy	Students sometimes come in and expect me to give them their classes.
Time Consuming	Tardiness OR lack of preparation	No respect for my time.

Formal vs. Informal Advisor

“It is a pressure cooker at UWEC on both students and advisors”

Advisors were asked about their advisees' (both formal and informal) various attributes

Researchers then narrowed down their responses into the traits and relationship-characteristics listed below

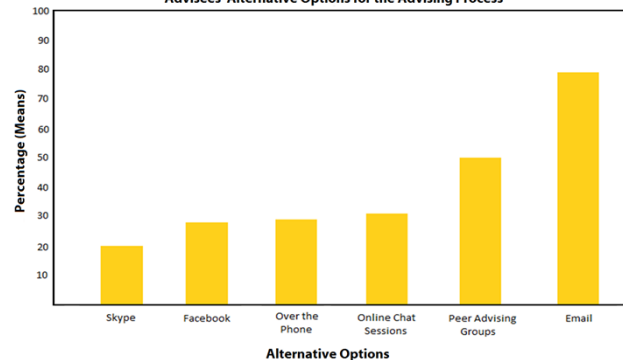
- Ambitious
- Appreciative
- Forced interactions
- Good Relationship
- Only come at a time of crisis
- *With tremendous variation in:*
- Personality
- Level of interaction

- Additional time crunch
- Advisees seek you out
- More competent
- Mutual interest
- Personal relationship
- Pre-existing relationship
- Rewarding

“We need a more efficient way to free up teachers time and meet students' needs; we've reached the point in which there isn't enough help for the need.”

Discussion

Advisees' Alternative Options for the Advising Process



Advisors favored e-mail and peer advising groups as a means of communication with advisees

One reason for the favoring of e-mail and peer advising groups was due to minimal time met directly with advisees

Peer advising groups and e-mail would help to alleviate the time constraint put on advisors when advising

Change should occur in the advising process in order for advisees to have the time they need and provide advisors with a less stressful work environment