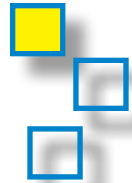




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Despite New Technologies CU-Boulder students Crave Personal Advising

Academic advisers spending more time than ever with students

WHILE THE UNIVERSITY of Colorado's budget crunch has halted expansion of traditional academic advising, demand for specialty programs continues to grow on the Boulder campus as students seek more individual help toward completing their degrees and finding post-graduate employment.

CU students' desire for personal contact with advisers is at an all-time high, university officials say, despite access to online resources intended to help them become more self-sufficient, including departmental checklists, a personalized degree audit system and Web-based course listings.

But CU students still look for face-to-face validation from their advisers, even though students typically are required to see their adviser only when declaring or switching majors and as entering freshmen and just prior to graduation.

"Students are still interested in the personal interaction despite what technology has done," said Michael Grant, associate vice chancellor for undergraduate education. "Prospective students and parents are looking for that individual contact. It's an important aspect of their college experience and it's something students expect."

CU junior Garrett Graston said he used the Web to help him decide what major to choose and he uses several online tools to help him plan course schedules -- but that doesn't keep him from seeing his academic adviser.

"I want them to check my class list and make me feel good about my decisions," Graston said. "It's just easier to check everything with them so you don't end up taking the wrong class or missing a class when you try to graduate or something."

MORE THAN EVER

Elizabeth Guertin, director of advising and assistant dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, said advisers have had more contact with their students in recent years than ever before.

During the 2001-2002 academic year, the

college recorded 57,621 contacts between students and their advisers, including e-mail and phone correspondence and individual and group appointments. Contacts increased to 70,589 during the 2005-2006 academic year and hit a record in 2008-2009 with 115,615 contacts, the most recent number available.

Advisers in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences and the Leeds School of Business said they've also experienced the growing demand from students for academic advising.

A push to inform students about advising services on campus and an increasingly competitive attitude among students to get ahead in a struggling economy have contributed to students' growing interest in advising, Guertin said.

After more than eight years as an academic adviser, Valerie Matthews, an adviser for CU's Electrical, Computer, and Energy Engineering Department, said she has had more communication with her 359 students this year than ever before.

"This year I'm seeing more students for longer periods of time," Matthews said. "I think the other advisers would agree."

PICKING CLASSES

CU sophomore Ruth McClure said she visits her academic adviser at least once every semester for help deciding what classes to take to maintain her expected graduation date.

"I use the degree audit system to see what I think I should take," McClure said. "I never make my schedule without talking to my adviser first, though. I want to make sure I'm taking the right classes."

Matthews said most students are asking about what classes to take and looking for validation that the step they think they should take next is the right one.

"I never want to get to point where students are completely relying on the degree audit or online curriculum for planning," Matthews

said. "But I want them to be more self-sufficient and make their own choices and then get reassurance."

REDUCED FUNDING

Budget cuts have hit academic advising especially hard, CU Regent Joe Neguse, D-Boulder, said at the Board of Regents' retreat earlier this month.

The university does not keep records of funds budgeted to campus-wide advising, but the College of Arts and Sciences' employment figures show a halt in hiring of academic advisers in recent years.

As the hours of contact between students and advisers increased in recent years, so did the number of academic advisers -- or full-time equivalents -- at least until 2006.

During the 2001-2002 academic year, the equivalent of 36.65 employees were dedicated to academic advising. But as the demand for more contact continued to rise, the number of employees filling that need remained stagnant.

The college had the equivalent of 43.71 employees dedicated to full-time academic advising in 2005-2006, which increased to

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Web 2.0 Tools in the Classroom: Embracing the Benefits While Understanding the Risks

EARLIER THIS YEAR a UCLA student made a video tirade against Asian students and posted it to YouTube. She quickly removed the hateful clip, but it was too late. The damage was done.

Although an extreme case, it's a good example of how inappropriate behavior can not only spread rapidly far beyond one's circle of friends, but can damage a reputation for years to come. Students don't always think about this, nor are they aware that employers now regularly use Google and social networks to check out prospective employees.

"People have always been behaving badly, but the thing that's different about behaving badly now is that it stays with you for years to come," said Stephanie Delaney, J.D., Ph.D., director of eLearning for Cascade Community College.

In the recent online video seminar, *Apps & Web 2.0: Legal Issues in Using the Internet in Class*, Delaney outlined the proactive steps institutions and individual faculty members can take to ensure that in their enthusiasm to embrace Web 2.0 technologies and all of their benefits they don't expose themselves to unanticipated legal problems.

Consider the following scenario. A professor wants his students to contribute to a public blog, both by making posts and responding to the posts of others. In order to do this, the blog requires the students to create an account, and the instructor says that students should register using their real names so that he can grade their work efficiently.

Does this create concerns about student privacy, particularly with regards to FERPA protections of educational records? According to Delaney, who says she takes a conservative stance to such matters, "Student posts and replies could be construed as student records, though opinions are split on this issue. Whether blog posts and similar web and app postings are educational records or not, prudent institutions should take steps to protect student privacy."

Privacy issues are just one of the concerns Web 2.0 applications bring to the forefront. Another is document retention. If you're using Twitter in the classroom, for example,

and are grading students on the frequency and quality of their tweets, do you have a "paper trail" should a student challenge his or her grade? Delaney recommends a tool like TwapperKeeper for archiving tweets, or Backuptify for backing up a whole host of Web 2.0 applications, including Google apps, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr.

Finally, many institutions are creating a formal social media policy which outlines the professional standards and expectations for faculty, staff and students who participate in social networking that's associated with the institution. If your college or university doesn't have a social media policy, now is the time to bring together all relevant stakeholders to develop one and then communicate it across campus, Delaney said.

Mary Bart, Trends in Higher Education, Faculty Focus.com; June 22, 2011;

[<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/trends-in-higher-education/web-2-0-tools-in-the-classroom-embracing-the-benefits-while-understanding-the-risks/>]; June 22, 2011



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ADVISING

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only 43.96 by the most recent academic year on record, 2008-2009.

In some departments at CU, one academic adviser serves more than 600 students, Neguse said. But many students are seeing multiple advisers, thanks to niche programs that serve the individual needs of students, Grant said.

NICHE ADVISING

Some of these specialty programs offer both academic and personal advising for military students and veterans, minority students, athletes, honors students and students applying for graduate school. These advisers do not replace academic advisers, but work in conjunction with the student to maximize their college experience.

CU sophomore Caryn Maconi has three advisers helping her meet her goals.

"I see my journalism adviser for help with my schedules, and then I'm talking to an education adviser about possibly getting my teaching license," Maconi said. "I'll be meeting with a study abroad adviser to see what credits I can get traveling one semester."

CU sophomore Alex Marwitz visits his academic adviser every semester, but has only met with his pre-professional adviser twice.

"They're helping me prepare to apply for med school, if that's what I decide to do," Marwitz said. "That way I can be more competitive in what classes I'm taking and make sure my application looks good when I apply."

Many of the specialty programs were started as part of a campus-wide effort to improve retention and graduation rates, Grant said.

MORE GRADUATES

Graduation rates and retention rates for freshmen and sophomores have improved over the past three decades, after advising became a priority for CU, assigning students academic advisers instead of putting the responsibility on professors, Grant said.

Successful graduation and retention rates and positive feedback from students proves that advising programs should continue to expand based on students' wants and needs, he said.

"These are aimed at students' success," Grant said. "We want to see them graduate and graduate on time. That's what these efforts are all about."

Whitney Bryen, Dispite New Technologies, CU-Boulder Students Crave Personal Advising, DailyCamera.com, January 29, 2011, [http://www.dailycamera.com/ci_17231472], June 22, 2011