

Office of Academic Programs and Student Services

Master Plan ~June 2013

Mission: The Office of Academic Programs and Student Services Office manages the effective delivery of all *undergraduate* recruitment and academic advising functions and student support services in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

I. SERVICES WE PROVIDE

A. Academic Advisement and Support

- Coordinate and support academic advisement to all new and current students
- Maintain students' academic records; manage degree progress; certify graduates
- Interpret and administer UD academic policy to students, faculty, advisors, and staff
- Advise students in the ANR interdisciplinary major (Approximately 80-100 students per year)
- Meet students experiencing academic difficulty
- Monitor students involved in personal/family crisis, verify documentation, notify instructors of absence from class
- Approve course substitutions and waivers to academic program requirements, authorize change of grades, major and other requests
- Make student referrals and encourage participation in on-campus resources
- Assist students in ways to ensure their personal and academic success
- Respond and resolve undergraduate student and parental concerns and complaints
- Monitor internal applications, admissions, course scheduling
- Make recommendations for changes in academic policy
- Assist and consult with CANR Courses and Curriculum Committee
- Evaluate and approve CANR readmission applications
- Work daily with students and faculty through in-person, telephone, and written and electronic correspondence
- Dean's List, probation, dismissals, and retention mailings

B. College Promotion and Undergraduate Recruitment

- Coordinate all undergraduate recruitment activities including over 100 customized prospective student visits per year, Exploration Days, mailings, emails, and calls to prospective and admitted students
- Revise all recruitment brochures and handouts, Admissions Curriculum Guides.
- Oversee and direct the Ag Ambassador Program
- Manage the undergraduate prospective and current student portion of the CANR website
- Maintain the "Talk of Townsend", our online undergraduate student blog
- Assist with the development of "major" videos and student noteworthy news articles

C. Special Event/Program Management

- CANR Convocation
- CANR New Student Orientation
- The ANR major which is CANR's interdisciplinary major
- CANR "U-Can-Do-It" program for students on academic probation

II. SERVICES WE DON'T PROVIDE

- Graduate Student Support: Although we currently make revisions to the graduate portions of the catalog, we are responsible for serving the undergraduate student population only. Since graduate students have the same academic and personal needs as undergraduate students and there isn't an "Academic Programs" type office in the college, we recommend adding a graduate services coordinator position. Most graduate faculty coordinators are NOT comfortable providing these services or referrals.

III. STAFFING AND BUDGETARY NEEDS

- Increase staff by at least two professional members in the next 1-2 years. Growth of staff should correlate with planned growth (15% increase by 2015) of the student body and student services offered. (Please see Appendix 1 for potential responsibilities of these additional staff members)
- CANR Communications to produce new website, publications, and social media campaigns for unit to use with prospective and current students.
- CANR Communications and Facilities staff to make improvements to common areas, TNS lobby, messaging on bulletin boards, etc.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS OF DUTIES SHIFTING OUT OF UNIT

- Ag Day – This event does not have anything to do with the mission of this unit.
- South Campus Classroom Scheduling- Recommend Registrar's Office in collaboration with a support staff member in each department oversee this process.
- Scholarship Coordination – Process would benefit from collaboration with CANR Development Director, CANR Financial Manager, and departmental designees.
- Catalog Revisions – Currently all revisions from all CANR units are submitted and coded. Departmental support staff can be training to revise their departmental sections.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Office In General

- Name Change - Change to "Office of Undergraduate Student Services" or "Office of Undergraduate Student Support Services" to reflect true mission of unit.
- In less than 1 year, become more proactive versus reactive advising office by providing more programming for current students.
- In less than 10 years, serve as an institutional, regional, and national model for recruitment, advisement, and the retention of students by becoming active leaders in our national advising organization. (NACADA)

B. Undergraduate Recruitment

- Revise current recruitment timeline - to better utilize resources and possible overlapping of efforts with the CANR Communications staff, and Admissions.
- Faculty Involvement – Discuss with departments, ways to promote increased and improved participation and have faculty take more ownership over the recruitment process. How can we get away from the, "someone else is taking care of that" attitude?
- Departments must provide value propositions - Each major should have at least 3 value propositions for unit to use with messaging to prospective students.
- Facilities - College commitment to provide a more welcoming atmosphere for families entering CANR facilities. In addition, it would benefit us by having more space for prospective families

to meet faculty and current students that is separate from the advising office for current students (i.e. waiting room, presentation room)

- Vehicle for CANR Tours - Vehicle for Ag Ambassadors to use for tours rather than using visiting family vehicles.

C. Academic Advising

- New Advisement Model - Investigate instituting a hybrid academic advising model whereby students would be advised by professional advisors in their FR and SO years and faculty mentors in their JR and SR years.
- Develop assessment process for future advising practices
- Establish advising awards for faculty and staff around the college to promote and reward good advising practices
- Develop automated graduation clearance process so that more focus can be placed on advising
- Develop additional non-traditional advising modes of communication to students (i.e. YouTube Advising Videos, Student blogs)
- Revise ANR interdisciplinary major to make more academically rigorous and to have a more focused theme (i.e. sustainability; agricultural communication)

D. Student Retention and Success

- Investigate Career Services liaison having office hours in TNS Hall
- Coordinate satellite tutoring services by Academic Enrichment Center offered in TNS
- Establish more intrusive advising and programming by intensively following-up with students
- Assess the current U-Can-Do-It program for students on academic probation
- Establish Big Brother/Big Sister type program where seniors are paired with new students to provide transitional support.

E. Technology

- Work with CANR IT to develop or support an online appointment management system for prospective and current students for scheduling visits and advising appointments AND a client relationship management system to track interactions and automate responses with prospective students.

VI. FOUNDATIONAL STEPS FOR FY14

- Most of the “Action Items” listed in this report are goals of this unit beginning immediately but will be discussed more thoroughly with CANR programmatic and support units throughout FY14 and beyond.

APPENDIX 1: Potential Responsibilities of Additional Staff Members

Taking on two additional staff members, the current Academic Programs and Student Services Office would be in a much better place to deliver proactive versus reactive advisement and support.

- **Internships & Career Counseling** - One of the things that prospective and current students ask about most often is how our college supports and connects students to internships and career opportunities. These proposed new positions would work closely with our academic departments and UD's Career Services Center, promoting internships, seeking, finding, and creating new opportunities for students, meeting and building relationships with employers, and assisting outside companies in building internship opportunities for our students. Essentially, these positions would be responsible for doing whatever it took to make it easier for our students to get connected and to get a head start on the internship and career-seeking process which is important in working with today's college student.
- **Assessment of our Advisement and Academic Services** - One of the ways to know if we are doing well in the eyes of our students is to assess them on a regular basis to ensure that we as a college are providing the academic and advising services that we've promised and that students have come to expect. These proposed new positions could be responsible for developing a Student Satisfaction Exit Survey in addition to other surveys during the academic year and would benefit our office and college in learning what we're doing right and where we need to improve (i.e. advisement models we practice, support we provide, advisor training that we offer, etc.).
- **Retention** – Responsible for initiating and developing ways to retain our students (including traditional, transfer, and international) especially our first-year student population who are most vulnerable and have the most challenging time making connections (i.e. welcome postcard, routine majors meetings, birthday cards, study nights, study skills and time management workshops).
- **Advisement** - With an increase in our ANR major population and potentially the addition of all Agricultural Education advising for the college in the not so distant future, dividing this group of advisees among 2-3 staff members instead of just 1 would benefit the students and provide them with more support and personal attention. In addition, UD's International numbers are continuing to increase and for those students coming through special CANR and UD articulation agreements, having an individual to work with this special population is essential to their success. These staff members can also initiate work with recruiting transfer students and advise other majors in the college if we were to move towards the hybrid advising model mentioned in this report.