

Academic Advisor Fundamentals

Participant Guide



Welcome to the Academic Advisor Fundamentals course!

This participant guide has been developed to provide you with additional support to help make the most of your learning. Completion of this guide is optional, and your answers in this guide are for your own personal use. However, we do recommend using the guide to discuss the reflection questions with your supervisor

What to expect from this course. This course was developed to provide a foundational understanding of academic advising at Virginia Tech. The course was developed with newly-hired academic advisors in mind, but the course has value to experienced advisors, as well as other campus faculty and staff who may have an advising aspect to their role.

The course is broken into three modules, with each module covering topics in policies and procedures at Virginia Tech, understanding degree requirements, technology used by advisors, and campus offices and resources. Each module ends with a scenario and opportunity for reflection on what was covered within the module. The course concludes with a 20-question multiple choice quiz covering the topics in all three modules. A minimum of an 80% is needed on the quiz to complete the training.

Because this course is open to all Virginia Tech faculty and staff, the information is focused at university-level topics. Policies, procedures, and forms which are specific to the colleges and departments will not be covered in this course. You will need to work with your supervisor to learn how your specific college and departments interpret and enforce some of these policies.

When you complete the course, please be sure to complete the feedback survey at the end of the course.

Module 1

After reading the Virginia Tech Advising mission and the NACADA Pillars of Advising, develop a first draft of your personal advising mission statement:

Policies & Procedures

1. As you work through the policies and procedures, search the Office of the Registrar's website for the dates, deadlines, and forms for course add/drop, course withdrawals, and full semester withdrawals/resignations.
2. Find the full list of force add procedures on the University Studies website (<https://www.universitystudies.vt.edu/>) and see how force adds are handled in your college or department.

1. After learning about graduation check sheets and Pathways to General Education, review the check sheet(s) for a major you will be advising. Make note of major-required courses that can also fulfill Pathway requirements.

Degree Requirements

Campus Offices & Resources

1. Bookmark the websites for the campus offices and resources.
2. Make a plan to visit these offices in the first few weeks to know where your students have to go for these resources.
3. Check with your supervisor to see if there are any direct contacts in those offices specific to your college or department.

Module 1 Reflection

1. Think about the NACADA Advising Pillars. Which Pillar resonates the most with you? Why?
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2. Which adjective(s) would you prefer your students to know you as? Examples might include being reliable, dependable, easy to talk to, etc.
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Module 2

Policies & Procedures

1. Search the Timetable for CS 2114 and review for meeting times/days/ location, course modality, final exam time/day, listed prerequisites, lecture versus lab sections/CRNs, if approved as Pathway(s)
2. Search the VCCS Equivalency Database to find the transfer equivalent course for the following VT courses: ENGL 1105, CHEM 1035, and PSYC 1004
3. Review course request and drop/add videos to help familiarize yourself with the processes (created by Department of Engineering Education)
 - Course request: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CfmZk3YTipc>
 - Drop/add: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD_PYJ0VttU

1. Review the DARS report for one of your assigned students to see if the student has applied for their degree, is missing any Pathways requirements, and is meeting in-major GPA requirements
2. Familiarize yourself with the change of major dates and determine if your department is a restricted or unrestricted major
3. Check with your supervisor or search your college/departmental website for the location of student forms for course substitutions and major/minor additions or drops

Degree Requirements

Technology

1. Try to calculate a student's GPA based on grades earned
2. Run a student listing report for your program in data warehouse and sort by declared graduation date

Campus Offices & Resources

1. Add yourself to the Transitional Advising Canvas page and review some of their recent announcements. Which resources might you save to share with your own students?

Module 2 Reflection

1. How do you see yourself incorporating advising as teaching in your role?
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2. When would you use a prescriptive model for advising? When would you use a developmental model for advising?
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Module 3

Policies & Procedures

1. Review your major checksheets to see if field study/internships are required for graduation, or if one can be approved and used as a major elective.

Degree Requirements

1. Review the minor checksheets, if any, that fall under your college/department.
2. Talk with other advisors or your supervisor about common minors or suggested minors your advisees may want to consider exploring.

Module 3 Reflection

1. What tools, resources, and offices that have been shared do you feel more comfortable utilizing to assist students in advising?

2. How would you approach sharing bad news with your advisees?

3. What are the specific resources you use in your area to assist students in advising?

4. What areas do you feel you need to know more about in order to use these resources as an advisor?

Congratulations on completing the Academic Advisor Foundations course!

We hope the information throughout these modules has provided you with knowledge, skills, and resources to help you begin your work as an academic advisor at Virginia Tech. As you continue to work with and advise students, be aware of your personal growth and successes in advising, while taking stock of areas for more growth and learning. Utilize your supervisor and other academic advisors at Virginia Tech to act as mentors to improve your knowledge and advising abilities. Finally, start to develop plans and goals for your own personal and professional growth in advising.

Academic advising at Virginia Tech is committed to continuous improvement, professional development, and personal growth. To help support this growth and development, a range of professional development offerings have been developed for advisors. These opportunities include the Academic Advising Academy (the next step in growth for advisors at Virginia Tech); the annual Advising Matters Conference; and the events and networking offered by The [Advising Network](#). You can learn more about these events, as well as other on-going professional development opportunities, at the following link - <https://advising.vt.edu/professional-development.html>.

Congratulations on beginning and continuing your journey as an academic advisor at Virginia Tech!