

RESULTS OF THE SJSU ADVISING SURVEYS

Spring 2009

Survey Background

- The Advising Effectiveness Taskforce reviewed instruments that would provide insight into (and establish benchmark data for) not only students' and advisors' satisfaction with advising at SJSU, but also its quality.
- 2 surveys: The Student Survey of Academic Advising and the Survey of Academic Advisors.
- The surveys were administered by the Office of Institutional Research.
- We have piloted use of a related student survey at the department (program review) level.

2 Surveys

- Student Survey of Academic Advising
- Administered electronically to 5000 students; 1484 students provided usable responses (29.7% response rate)
- Use of proportional weights helps create comparable sample
- Survey of Academic Advisors
- Administered electronically to 285 *Advising Alert* subscribers; 106 provided usable responses (37% response rate)

Key Findings: Student Survey

- Most students do seek advising during the academic year, and many seek multiple visits.
- For GE advising, students primarily rely on: the Student Advising Center, a faculty advisor in the major, or an advisor from a college-based advising center (e.g., BSAC).
- For major advising, students primarily rely on: a faculty advisor in the major, an advisor from a college-based advising center, or the SAC.

Key Findings: Student Survey (cont)

- Students report the following advising topics useful:
 - Obtaining information on GE or major requirements
 - Selecting courses
 - Obtaining information on remedial requirements
 - Obtaining information on academic policies
 - Scheduling classes
 - Obtaining information on transfer credit/articulation
 - Dropping/Adding and withdrawing from courses
 - Registration procedures

Key Findings: Student Survey (cont)

- Students report that their advisors treat them with respect, allow sufficient time to discuss issues or problems, provide accurate information & are available when they need assistance.
- 69.6% of students report they are satisfied or very satisfied with GE advising; overall satisfaction with major advising was 75.6% (students' satisfaction with advising improved with additional advising visits)

Key Findings: Student Survey (cont)

- Students' preparation for advising sessions includes:
 - ▣ Knowing (or bringing) their ID number (64.5%)
 - ▣ Preparing questions (53.2%)
 - ▣ Bringing a copy of their transcript (48.1%)
 - ▣ Completing department advising forms (35.3%)
 - ▣ Bringing the degree audit report (32.4%)
- Most students (72.3%) had not yet used the Advising Hub, but 60.5% of those who visited were satisfied (& satisfaction increases with use).

Key Findings: Advisor Survey

- 76.3% report satisfaction with the overall experience of advising at SJSU, though they express concern for their advising workloads (59.6%)
- Advisors report most commonly discussing:
 - ▣ Major requirements/course selections (73.3%)
 - ▣ Long term academic planning (63.7%)
 - ▣ GE requirements/course selections (59.6%)
 - ▣ Transfer credit/articulation (56%)
 - ▣ Academic policies and procedures (54.9%)

Key Findings: Advisor Survey (cont)

- 48% of faculty advisors report spending 1-4 hours/week in face-to-face advising (34% report 5-8 hours/week, 17% report 9 or more hours/week)
- 34% of staff advisors report spending 1-4 hours/week in face-to-face advising (18.4% report 5-8 hours/week, 5.3% report 9-12 hours/week, and 36.9 report over 13 hours/week)

Key Findings: Advisor Survey (cont)

- 60% of faculty advisors report spending 1-4 hours/week in advising via phone or email
- 76% of staff advisors report spending 1-8 hours/week in advising via phone or email
- Advisors most commonly use the following resources:
 - ▣ CMS PeopleSoft (60.8%)
 - ▣ MySJSU (60.2%)
 - ▣ Online Schedule of Classes (57.4%)
 - ▣ Online Catalog (57.4%)
 - ▣ SJSU Articulation Website (43.1%)
 - ▣ Info.sjsu.edu (34.3%)

Key Findings: Advisor Survey (cont)

- Advisors report the following challenges:
 - Students getting conflicting advice from other advisors (87%)
 - Other aspects of workload too heavy to focus on students (85.1%)
 - Too many students, not enough time (84.3%)
 - Poor coordination with other offices/colleges (81.4%)
 - Students unprepared for advising sessions (79.6%)

Key Findings: Advisor Survey (cont)

- Though advisors report receiving formal training in MySJSU (66.3%), diversity-related issues (59.3%), academic regulations and policies (57.5%), counseling referrals (57.1%), measuring learning outcomes (54.9%), and learning disabilities/ADA (53.8%), between 40 and 50% of respondents expressed a need for additional training in these areas.
- 54.7% of advisors report formal evaluation of their performance (33% by students, 38% by self-evaluation, 42% by supervisors, and 20% by peers).

Analysis

- Tension between a collective understanding of advising as prescriptive and advising as developmental
- Tension between students' satisfaction with advising and public negative perception of advising
- Tension between advisors' satisfaction with advising and dissatisfaction with advising workloads

Implications: Culture of Accountability

- Consider developing advising mission statements, linked to university, college and department/unit missions
- Develop advising contracts with all or certain populations of students
- Develop feedback loops to report misinformation

Implications: Workload

- Training must address effective, time-efficient models of and “best practices” in advising; this might include tools like MySJSU or the Advising Hub, or it may include sharing how different programs encourage students to assume responsibility for preparation (e.g., by running a degree audit prior to the meeting, printing and completing relevant paperwork in advance of the meeting, etc.)

Implications: Communication

- Communicate a developmental (and not just prescriptive) understanding of advising to all
- Clarify responsibilities and roles of advisors and students
- Address and, where possible, resolve roadblocks to effective advising, including problems associated with morale, gatekeepers, limited hours
- Clarify structure and process of decentralized advising at SJSU (e.g., reach out to students with the names and contact information of their advisors)
- Clarify the Advising Hub in relation to the SAC

Implications/Next Steps

- We need to resolve the delay in transcript evaluations
- We need to resolve inaccuracies in the MySJSU degree audit process
- We should provide students with instruction in MySJSU (e.g., a degree audit module in orientation)
- We should provide additional (night/weekend/online) advising hours

Implications/Next Steps (Cont)

- We should make more proactive (or mandatory) advising appointments at key junctures in students' development
- We need to develop and consistently implement a means to record communication between advisors regarding particular students
- Departments must develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for GE advising
- We need to develop and consistently implement a means to report and correct inaccuracies in advising

Implications/Next Steps (Cont)

- We need to develop, to the greatest extent possible, common advising procedures and processes (e.g., consistency in major forms)

Implications/Next Steps (Cont)

- Develop advising mission statements
- Address in RTP (for e.g., asking faculty advisors to assess the quality of their work in this role as part of the dossier) and program review (i.e., asking departments to assess the quality of advising they provide students as part of the program plan)