

Overview of Undergraduate Advising in CASNR

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
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Introduction

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) has a rich heritage of individualized undergraduate student advising by faculty. While CASNR's traditional advising model has evolved to include very talented professional advisors, the commitment to personalized advising (academic as well as non-academic, personal as well as professional) remains a hallmark of the College.

"Some 72% of respondents strongly or somewhat agree that they have a great relationship with their advisor" (Defining the CASNR Brand, David and Associates, October 2012).

The success of the academic advising in the College is due, in part, to the value and recognition that we assign to the role of the advisor. The College has formally incorporated the advising responsibility into the academic appointment, which recognizes the time and effort invested in serving our students. One of the oldest college-wide recognition programs was established to honor an undergraduate advisor. The commitment to undergraduate advising has resulted in the highest average retention rate (freshman to sophomore) as well as the highest graduation rate at UNL.

"My advising experience was amazing. They went above and beyond to solve any problems that I had throughout my time in the program." (Senior Exit Survey, December 2013). Eighty-three percent of the students responding (96) to the Senior Exit Survey were satisfied (25) or highly satisfied (55) with their academic degree advisor.

Credit for Advising in the Academic Appointment

The Academic Appointment [The CASNR Academic Appointment Guidelines (June 12, 2013) CASNR Website] for a faculty member in CASNR includes undergraduate advising and advising student organizations.

The advising portion of the academic appointment calculation generates the credit hour equivalent (on a 32-credit hour base) for advising undergraduates. Co-advising is also considered in the calculation. Co-advising is entered as 0.5 advisee and the program will make the appropriate adjustments to 'X' in the algorithm.

Table 1. The relationship of number of undergraduate advisees to the credit hour equivalent (CHE).

Algorithm	Number of Advisees	Credit Hour Equivalent (CHE)
Undergraduate Advisees $Y = 5.0(1 - e^{-0.02X})$	5	0.476
	10	0.906
	15	1.296
	20	1.648
	25	1.967
	30	2.256
	35	2.517
	40	2.753
	45	2.967
	50	3.161

CASNR Recognition Programs for Advising

- Lawrence K. Crowe Undergraduate Adviser Award
 1. This annual award recognizes a faculty member who has made outstanding contributions in undergraduate advising.

- CASNR Week Celebration
 1. Undergraduate students in CASNR plan, organize, and deliver an annual event called CASNR Week.
 - a. 2014 was the 14th Annual CASNR Week Event
 - b. Completely organized by undergraduate students
 - c. One award of many is the Annual Superior Academic Advising Award
 - i. Students nominate their advisor through an application process focused on how this advisor has been as asset to her/his students, example of leadership, commitment to students, and qualities that set her/him apart from other advisors.

Overview of the academic advising system used in CASNR

1. Faculty advising (with a couple of academic units having professional advisers along with faculty advisers).
 - a. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisers before pre-registration each academic term.
 - i. For freshmen students in CASNR who are enrolled in departmental specific introductory courses, students are required to visit with their academic adviser as part of a course assignment. Students are introduced to their advisers, a relationship is developed, and work begins on the creation of a 4-year plan to guide students through their academic program.
 - ii. For upper-class students, they are encouraged to meet with their academic adviser each semester.
 1. Students who are pursuing multiple degrees within UNL, or within CASNR, will have co-advisers assigned to them. Each degree program adviser advises his/her student on the specific degree program requirements being pursued.
 2. Some CASNR academic units utilize professional advisers in their undergraduate degree programs. In these academic units, faculty cooperate with their undergraduate students in career advising.
 - iii. Students who go on academic probation have a hold placed on their registration that requires the student to meet with their academic adviser to create a “probation recovery program” designed to move them off academic probation. The hold is lifted once the plan is developed and posted in UNL’s MyPLAN system for reference and documentation.

2. Substitution/Waivers

The College utilizes the Substitution/Waiver process to allow advisers to individualize the degree program of each student.

3. Co-advising

Co-advising is available for students in A to B transfer programs with 2 and 4-year institutions and provides a CASNR adviser to work jointly with the faculty adviser at the host institution and the student. Co-advising also occurs for residential students seeking dual degrees.

4. Advising Plus

Advising Plus has been used by some units in the past to provide a cohort of students with a team of faculty advisers. Students (e.g. incoming freshman) would meet as a cohort with two or more faculty advisers to develop their 4-year plans and schedules.

5. Academic Recovery and the Advising Process

The following website details the steps and procedures our students and advisers need to follow so students can achieve good academic standing through the academic recovery process. Here is the website: <http://success.unl.edu/academic-probation-recovery-program>

6. Students are required to meet Bachelor of Science Candidacy Status
 - a. Achieve Senior Status (+89 credit hours)
 - b. Complete College Admission Requirements
 - c. CASNR Core in Mathematics and Statistic Completed
 - d. CASNR Core in Natural Sciences Completed
7. CASNR Ensuring Your Future Program
 - a. Ensuring Your Future is a comprehensive approach to preparing CASNR graduates for their first position working in their chosen field. Ensuring Your Future is the only program of its type at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and the only one of its type among our peer institutions.
 - b. CASNR does its part to get students ready for their career by:
 - i. Preparing students as a professional by providing a strong academic background in the sciences while helping you transform their interests, talents and passions into a lifelong career. CASNR offers unique and valuable experiences through undergraduate research, internships, work experiences and education abroad. Students in CASNR graduate prepared to make a difference in their chosen field—and the world.
 - ii. Preparing each student as a person and a leader through a wide range of organizations and experiences. Students can match their personal and professional interests with a wide variety of clubs, volunteer opportunities and community projects. Students develop skills in teamwork, planning, time management and collaboration that will serve them well in their career and in life.
 - iii. Preparing students for employment through CASNR’s collaboration with UNL Career Services. In fact, CASNR has a Career Services office on East Campus to assist with part-time employment, internships, and after-graduation employment throughout your career.
 - c. At CASNR, students are expected to take personal responsibility for their success in terms of academics, involvement, and gaining real-world experiences prior to graduation. We know that employers are looking for high-performing employees with skills in technology, collaboration, and human relations. Ensuring Your Future provides the opportunity to acquire and sharpen those skills while you are on campus.
 - d. Academic performance is one of the first benchmarks employers consider. By focusing on course work—and working closely with an advisor (Appendix 1) — students can ensure that their education is a good match for the type of career field they choose.
 - i. CASNR students are expected to meet with their assigned advisor at least once per each semester that they are enrolled.
 - ii. CASNR students are encouraged to graduate with a cumulative 3.0 GPA or higher to optimize their employment and/or graduate or professional school opportunities.
 - iii. In consultation with their advisor, students are encouraged to select elective courses that complement their personal or professional goals and/or declare an academic minor or certificate program prior to the deadline for submitting the application for graduation.

- iv. CASNR students are encouraged to successfully complete the Employment Seminar course (AGRI/NRES 388) and Job Survival course (AGRI 400).
 - v. CASNR students are required to complete the Bachelor of Science Candidacy by the end of their junior year.
8. Advising Workshops for CASNR Advisors
- a. CASNR hosts advising workshops for new and current advisors focusing on the tools used by faculty and staff at UNL to assist students in their academic programs.
 - b. CASNR reviews its Advising Outcomes (Appendix 1) with its faculty and staff to ensure all students' needs are being addressed

Non-academic Advising Support System

- i. CASNR operates their CASNR CARES Program for its undergraduate students.
 - 1. **C**aring **A**ttitudes and **R**espect for **E**very **S**tudent
 - 2. There is a primary point of contact in the college for students who encounter challenges, difficulties, problems, medical issues, and other considerations that might hinder their academic participation while in college.

ii. Career Advising

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) offers a wide range of unique opportunities from undergraduate research, entrepreneurship training, international experiences, and collaborative partnerships with public and private employers that offer internships and full-time positions to many of our students. The College guarantees that any CASNR graduate who completes the Ensuring Your Future program and actively seeks employment will receive at least one job offer to his or her academic program within the first six months after graduation.

In order to help students grow personally and professionally CASNR works together with UNL Career Services to provide information on careers related to food, energy, water, landscapes and people, student jobs, internships, and full-time employment. The CASNR Career Development and Corporate Relations Director (Career Specialist) is housed on East Campus to help students with career and professional development including resume and cover letter reviews, interview preparation, choosing or changing a career, and much more. CASNR offers an employment seminar and a job survival course, two unique courses that provide students the guidance and experience to successfully pursue their first position in their new career – and succeeding their first year.

Engaging, Energizing, Educational Experiences:

The following initiatives are new programs related to internship and full-time opportunities for students:

- Science with a Purpose – careers in everything from animals to plants, soil to climate, golf to business, mechanization to leadership, and food to forensic science.
- CASNR Career Fall Fair – last year CASNR hosted its largest career fair ever with 81 booths and over 520 students in attendance.
- Pre & Post Internship Workshops, faculty and representatives from industry and other employers are working together to develop these workshops. This effort is being sponsored by Dow AgroSciences
- Integrated Science Degree – NEW DEGREE Experts in industry are partnering with CASNR faculty to serve on student advisory teams ensuring students take the necessary coursework and internship experiences needed to work in the field.
- Minor in Farmers Cooperative Systems – NEW, sponsored by CHS, Inc. and the Nebraska Cooperatives Council
- Engler Entrepreneurship Program

Appendix 1

Advising Outcomes for Advisers and Undergraduate Students College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

In every department, there are multiple ways for students to connect with advising resources. In every advising unit, there are people who care deeply about these students and their professional development and success in life. The care of our students relies on the compassion, expertise, and familiarity with the resources of our advising community. In order to ensure the skills of our advising community, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) expects individuals in advising roles to know and be able to do the following to meaningfully engage students in advising situations:

Adviser – Practical Skills

1. Demonstrate and utilize the campus technologies, academic tools, and resources to support and enhance their ability to advise students and instruct students on their use.
 - a. MyRed – is the enrollment portal for students and staff. Faculty access to the Student Information System (SIS) is through MyRed.
 - i. [MyRed website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [UNL Help Desk](#) (2-3970)
 - b. My.UNL Academic Portal (Blackboard) – UNL uses Blackboard as our Learning Management System (LMS). A Blackboard course website is automatically created for every official course at UNL. Most instructors use Blackboard as part of their teaching processes and content management.
 - i. [Blackboard website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact - [UNL Help Desk](#) (2-3970)
 - c. MyPlan – MyPlan (My Personal Learning and Advising Network) provides a convenient way for students to communicate with faculty, advisers, and staff. Students can schedule with instructors and advisers as well as search through available campus resources.
 - i. [MyPlan website](#)
 - ii. Importance of documenting advising sessions in MyPlan. It is extremely important for each adviser to capture their recommendations in writing to ensure that both the adviser and advisee will have a clear understanding of advising session. MyPlan is an excellent resource for this purpose, but even an e-mail to the student as follow-up and archived by the adviser is essential. Not only will it prevent confusion, but it provides a written record for any adviser to use in helping a student if their adviser is unavailable (e.g. faculty development leave).
 - iii. Point of Contact – [Vanessa Roof](#) (2-3899)

- d. My Degree Audit – is a computer generated document outlining a student’s undergraduate academic progress. This records the student’s UNL coursework, transfer coursework, and courses in progress in order to determine a student’s progress toward degree completion.
 - i. [My Degree Audit website](#) – under Employee Apps in MyRed
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Gail Meyer](#) (2-9436)
2. Provide accurate, comprehensive, and consistent information when responding to individual student needs.
 - a. New Student Enrollment (NSE) Wiki – an adviser “wiki” that was developed primarily for NSE, but contains extensive information relevant to all advisers.
 - i. [NSE Wiki website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Katie Kerr](#) (2-3605)
3. Refer students to the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid prior to potential major or credit hour changes.
 - a. Scholarships and Financial Aid – Financial aid to undergraduate students typically involves grants, federal work-study, loans, and scholarships. To assist students, you may want to familiarize yourself with the scholarship and financial aid system at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
 - i. [Scholarships and Financial Aid website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Scholarships and Financial Aid](#) (2-2030)
4. Know, understand, and articulate knowledge of degree requirements, both current and historical.
 - a. Undergraduate Bulletin – At the University of Nebraska–Lincoln there are eight undergraduate colleges offering programs leading to the bachelor’s degree. They include the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the College of Architecture, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business Administration, the College of Education and Human Sciences, the College of Engineering, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, and the College of Journalism and Mass Communications. In addition, UNL students can earn bachelor’s degrees in several special programs offered on the UNL campus but administered by the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.
 - i. [Undergraduate Bulletin website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Karen Jackson](#) (2-7903) or [Dann Husmann](#) (2-7908)
 - b. Students can move up to newer undergraduate bulletins, but must meet the requirements of a specific bulletin to complete a degree program. Students are not allowed to pick and choose requirements in multiple bulletins.
 - c. Students can also run “what if” scenarios through My Degree Audit on multiple degree programs and multiple bulletins.
5. Maintain student records using applicable University tools.

- a. WebNow – is a repository of student records. It stores a variety of scanned documents including the student profile sheet, transcripts (high school and transfer), math placement exam results, New Student Enrollment (NSE) worksheets, and all substitution/waiver forms.
 - i. [WebNow website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Karen Jackson](#) (2-7903) or [Melissa Clanton](#) (2-4261)
- 6. Recognize and utilize advising opportunities throughout the undergraduate student career path.
 - a. Students look to advisers for career guidance, direction, and exploration. You should become familiar with Career Services at UNL, and Julie Obermeyer (Career Specialist) in the CASNR Dean’s Office.
 - i. [Career Services website](#)
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Julie Obermeyer](#) (2-8273) or [Kelli Smith](#) (2-3145)

Adviser – Development and Training

Participate in University, College, or Departmental training and programs related to advising and/or student development.

- a. UNL’s Advising Listserv
 - i. An email list that includes all UNL faculty and staff with an interest in advising.
 - ii. To subscribe – send an [email](#) (from the address you want to subscribe with) with the following in your email body:
SUB UNLADVISERS Your_first_name Your_last_name
Once your subscription has been accepted by the list owner you will receive emails posted to the list by other advisers from the email address unladvisers@listserv.unl.edu you may also post your own messages to the listserv by sending an email to the same address.
- b. Advising Group (Blackboard)
 - i. URL: <http://my.unl.edu>
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Heath Tuttle](#) (2-4267)
 - iii. An “advising group” (a Blackboard “Organization”) has been established in Blackboard for each major. The group is updated on a periodic basis in order to pull in newly declared majors and remove those whose major/minor plans have changed. All the tools and resources that Blackboard offers can then be used to engage your majors (send mail, announcements, posting of forms and resources, etc.). In particular, you can use the “Users and Groups” functionality to establish opt-in/opt-out groups to organize and target subgroups within your department.
- c. CASNR’s Student Advising Improvement Committee

- i. This committee is comprised of the past three year faculty winners of the Lawrence K. Crowe Outstanding Undergraduate Adviser Award.
 1. Responsible for planning and promoting the annual Faculty Advising Awards Luncheon at the start of each fall semester.
 2. Responsible for planning and promoting at least one student advising improvement seminar/activity during the academic year.
 3. Responsible for reviewing the applications for the Lawrence K. Crowe Outstanding Undergraduate Adviser Award each year.
 - ii. Point of Contact – [Dann Husmann](#) (2-7908)
 2. Create an ethical, safe, and welcoming environment through awareness of student support services, including the UNL Student Code of Conduct.
 - a. [UNL's Student Code of Conduct](#)
 - i. Faculty/Staff who advise undergraduate students must be familiar with UNL's Student Code of Conduct.
 - ii. University students are both citizens and members of the academic community. As members of the academic community, students are subject to the obligations which accrue to them by virtue of this membership.
 - iii. Point of Contact – [Dann Husmann](#) (2-7908) or [Matt Hecker](#) (2-2021)

Student Advising Outcomes Because advising is a collaborative exercise between adviser and student, it is important to recognize the student's role in their advising experience. Students will be exposed to role expectations early and during regular intervals in their academic career. CASNR expects students to know/be able to do the following as a result of engaging with advising:

Student - Practical Skills

1. Acknowledge the advising experience as a support system in shaping their education and career plans. Know who their adviser is, where they are located, how to contact them, what they do.
 - a. Know how to access the Directory at UNL
 - i. Includes adviser's name, title, campus address (including campus and building map), work phone number, email address, vCard, and QR Code.
 - ii. [UNL's Directory](#)
2. Interpret University, College, and departmental academic policies, procedures, and guidelines.
 - a. All policies and procedures can be found in your specific undergraduate bulletin. This includes university, college, and departmental policies and guidelines.
 - b. [Undergraduate Bulletin](#)

3. Demonstrate practical competence and utilize various technologies to navigate their academic career: [MyDegreeAudit](#), [MyPLAN](#), [Blackboard](#), [MyRED](#), [On Line Undergraduate Bulletin](#), [Registration and Records website](#).
4. Explain the campus opportunities and identify the appropriate institutional office for that opportunity (e.g., Global Studies, Undergraduate Research, Student Involvement, etc.)
 - a. [Global Studies](#) – Point of Contact – [Patrice McMahon](#) (2-2487)
 - b. [IANR Global Engagement](#) – Point of Contact – [Mark Doyle](#) (2-5960)
 - c. [CASNR International Programs](#) – Point of Contact – [Jon Kerrigan](#) (2-8397)
 - d. [CASNR Honors' Program](#) – Point of Contact – [Madhavan Soundararajan](#) (2-9802)
 - e. [UCARE Program](#) – Undergraduate Research at UNL
 - f. [Student Involvement](#) – Point of Contact – [Reshell Ray](#) (2-8156)
 - g. [Center for Civic Engagement](#) – Point of Contact – [Linda Moody](#) (2-3755)
5. Explain the campus resources and identify the appropriate institutional office for that resource (e.g. Math Resource Center, UNL Writing Center, Chemistry Resources Room, etc.)
 - a. [The Writing Center at UNL](#) – Point of Contact – [Writing Center](#) (2-8803)
 - b. [Math Resource Center](#) – Point of Contact – [Lori Mueller](#) (2-3731)
 - c. [Chemistry Resource Center](#) – Point of Contact – [Peg Bergmeyer](#) (2-3514)
 - d. [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) – Point of Contact – [Veva Cheney](#) (2-3787)
 - e. [Statistics Support](#) – Point of Contact – Numerous Tutors (2-2903)
 - f. [Biology Resource Room](#) – Point of Contact – Numerous Tutors (2-2720)
6. Explain impact of transferred course credit on degree program.
 - a. [Academic Transfer Information](#) – Point of Contact – [JoAnn Moseman](#) (2-9455)
 - b. [CASNR Dean's Office](#) – Point of Contact – [Karen Jackson](#) (2-7903)
7. Define and describe course sequences and prerequisites to construct a semester course schedule and long-term degree completion plan, as well as describe the requirements to earn their degree.
 - a. [NSE Wiki](#) – Point of Contact – [Dann Husmann](#) (2-7908) or [Karen Jackson](#) (2-7903)
 - b. Academic Adviser – [MyRed](#)

Student - Developmental Skills

1. Develop realistic self-appraisal.
 - a. [Career Services](#) – Point of Contact – [Chris Timm](#) (2-3145)
 - b. [CASNR Career Specialist](#) – Point of Contact – [Julie Obermeyer](#) (2-8273)
2. Develop self-reliance and decision-making skills.
 - a. [First Year Experience Program](#) – Point of Contact – [Heather Ockenfels](#) (2-1880)

3. Develop the role of the independent learner and understand that the student is ultimately responsible for the completion of her/his degree program.
 - a. [CASNR's Ensuring Your Future Program](#) – Point of Contact – CASNR Dean's Office (2-2201)