

Committee on Academic Advising (CAA)

Annual Report 2017-2018

Members:

Mary Pat Bigley (SEPS, CAA co-chair), Jan Bishop (Physical Education and Human Performance), Lee Einhorn (English), Justine Gamache (SEST), Jacqueline Guzman (Business), Sylvia Halkin (Biology), Larry Hall (Admissions), Mary Horan (CLASS), Yvonne Kirby (Institutional Research and Assessment), Chester Labeledz (Management and Organization, CAA co-chair), Sadie Marjani (Biology), Caroline Marquez (Explore Central), Briana McGuckin (Library, CAA secretary), Kevin Oliva (Academic Center for Student Athletes), Janice Reska (Explore CCSU), Heather Rodriguez (Sociology), Bin (Brenda) Zhou (Engineering), and Jalal Butt (SGA).

Activities:

Advising Survey. At its first meeting of this academic year, the CAA took on the task of reviewing and rewriting its in-house academic advising survey, in response to a request from the Office of Institutional Research. We first discussed looking at surveys of comparable institutions, asking questions that would lead to improvements in practices at CCSU, considering survey questions directed not only at advisees but also at advisors, and, if developing learning outcomes, prioritizing professional development concerns for advisors. CAA decided to begin its editing effort using as a baseline instrument the exhaustive advising survey it conducted in 2012. Its fine-detail survey review and revisions extended from November 28, 2017 through January 31, 2018. CAA then submitted its final-revisions version to the Office of Institutional Research. OIR requested further changes, but CAA could not reconsider its instrument in time for survey administration in spring 2018.

“15 to Finish” initiative of the BOR. The CAA was asked to serve as the CCSU Steering Committee for this initiative. Review of the CSU system-provided materials indicated that this was an initiative geared towards community colleges. After consultation with the Provost, the CAA reported that CCSU has developed 4-year academic maps for its programs, and that these are in keeping with the spirit of “15 to Finish”.

The committee identified other possible goals for the academic year: making college viable for part-time students, and reaching ESL students, and following up on the currency of departments' academic maps. In Spring 2018, CAA heard from the Chair of Academic Affairs of the Student Government Association feedback he had received about advising from members of the student body. (See March 28, 2018 meeting minutes.) CAA also considered use of individual-level data available from the NSSE that might be useful to faculty advisors if distributed before registration.

Dialogue with President Toro. On December 12 the Committee met with President Toro. It provided her with an overview of the committee's creation, purpose, history, concerns and recent activities. She solicited CAA feedback on how well advising is working and what more to do going forward, and whether the advising experience is different/inconsistent for transfer students. She recognized being short-staffed in counseling and expressed a desire to invest in counselors to help ease students through various transitions.

Additional discussion included: giving prospective students access to the "what-if" analysis capability in DegreeWorks; making available "walk-in triage" for advising; updating the booklet "Helping Students in Distress" with an eye to aiding faculty who do not regularly advise; examining variations in sizes of advising loads and in consistency of faculty advising; and recognizing advising loads when promotion and tenure decisions are made.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Pat Bigley and Chester S. Labedz, Jr., co-chairs, for the committee