

Memorandum

To: Dr. Zulma Toro, President

From: **Dual Advising Workgroup**

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Date: October 30, 2019

Topic: Implementation of Dual Advising Model at CCSU

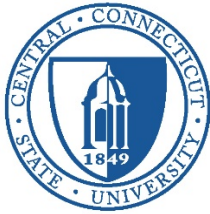
Dear Dr. Toro,

The Dual Advising Workgroup met several times throughout the months of September and October to review CCSU's current advising model in response to the recommendations that came out of the Retention Summit in August 2019. We were tasked with developing the framework for a Dual Advising Model to pilot in the Spring of 2020, and roll-out widely in the Fall of 2020, that would allow CCSU to better meet the needs of our students.

Prior to developing a model, the Workgroup felt it was important to interview institutions that were already successfully using a dual advising model. So, we interviewed Valdosta State University (selected because it has been identified as a peer institution), Eastern Connecticut State University (selected because it is part of the CT State University System), and the University of Rhode Island (selected because it is large state institution with a successful dual advising model) (See Appendix A: Interview Summaries). We also reached out to the University of Maine, but their dual advising model was limited to a small group of students, so did not pursue further conversation with them.

During our conversations, we sought answers to the following questions:

1. What does the Dual Advising reporting structure look like? To whom do the professional advisors report? To whom do the faculty advisors report?
2. How are advisors selected and assigned? What is the recommended load for a faculty advisor? For a professional advisor? What is the timing of these assignments?
3. How is the Dual Advising Model's performance tracked? What are the expectations and goals? What tools are used?
4. What are the responsibilities of each advisor? How often and when are advisors expected to reach out to and meet with students? What general topics should be covered in these exchanges and conversations?
5. What additional resources will we need to implement a successful and sustainable Dual Advising Model?
6. What role do other offices, groups and activities on campus play in the Dual Advising Model?



Recommendations:

I. Roles and Responsibilities

The Workgroup looked at the current roles of the professional and faculty advisors and noted that there is a lack of consistency from school to school. In some schools, the professional advisors only meet with students during their first semester or first year, and in others for two years or more before a faculty member becomes the sole advisor. In addition, there is a tremendous amount of overlap between faculty and professional advisor responsibilities. For example, both distribute the PIN to allow for registration, provide degree mapping and planning guidance, participate in academic intervention, and offer career counseling.

In order to better serve our students and define the roles of the advisors, and to ensure that the advisors are assigned manageable caseloads, we propose that each student be assigned **two advisors** for their entire undergraduate educational experience. However, one advisor will be assigned as the **primary** and one assigned as the **secondary** at any given time.

Furthermore, we recommend that both professional and faculty advisors participate in professional development activities that will build their advising skills. Beyond this, at the start of each academic year, new advisors should be required to participate in a training program run by the professional advising staff and faculty volunteers that have successfully advised students in the past.

A. Professional Advisors

a. Primary and Secondary Roles

The professional advisor will be the “primary advisor” during years one and two for new first year students and the “secondary advisor” beyond that. (For transfer students, professional advisors will be assigned as the primary advisor for those students transferring in with less than 60 credits. Professional advisors will be assigned as the secondary advisor for those with 60 credits or more.) We feel that this will also align with the students’ needs as they progress through their journey. As a new student, they will be learning how to register and will need guidance with regard to core courses, administrative responsibilities, etc. So, professional advisors will meet regularly with advisees during their first two years to assist them with these important tasks.

As the secondary advisor after years one and two, the professional advisor will be responsible for running bi-annual (end of each semester) reports to determine which of their secondary advisees is not making satisfactory academic progress or is showing warning signs of having a bad semester/year. They will communicate these findings to the (primary) faculty advisor.

There should be a common job description for professional advisors that defines the roles in a way that creates consistency between teams. (See Appendix D: Advising and Student Success Specialist Job Description)



b. Individualized Academic Plan

During a new student's first two years, or potentially less if a transfer student, the professional advisor will work with the student to plan their course schedule for each semester utilizing the general academic map for the student's chosen major.

At the close of the first two years, or 60 credits, we recommend the development of an **Individualized Academic Plan (IAP)** for each student with the professional advisor. The IAP will map out a student's final two years at CCSU with the goal of ensuring all students can complete their degree in four years. We understand that once a student transitions to a more regular meeting schedule with their faculty advisor some adjustments to the IAP may take place. Nevertheless, we believe it is an important step in ensuring that the student can see a map to graduating in two additional years to encourage stronger four-year graduation rates.

Once a student has completed their Individualized Academic Plan, their professional advisor will assign the faculty advisor as the primary advisor in Banner. We understand that another workgroup has been assigned the task of looking at Degree Works for degree mapping. At this time, we do not see the creation of the IAP as being reliant on the Degree Works software.

c. Caseload

During the development of the recommended structure, we looked at the size of the incoming freshmen and transfer classes for the Fall of 2019 as well as the sizes of the current school based advising teams. We also looked at NACADA's recommendations for realistic advisor caseloads. We determined that a caseload of 300 students per professional advisor was a realistic target.

Our 2019 incoming class and current number of professional advisors is:

College	Total First-Year Freshmen 2019FA	Total First Year Transfers 2019FA	Current # of Full-Time Professional Advisors	Current # of FYF and FYT Advisees per Advisor
Exploratory	175	47	2	111
CLASS	346	276	3	207
BUSN	249	182	2	216
SEPS	232	123	2	178
SEST	359	320	3	226
Grand Total	1361	948	12	192

Based on estimated retention rates, and a four-year advising model, at our current professional advisor levels we cannot adequately support our students in all of the schools. We understand that this pilot aims at serving incoming freshmen, however, our advising centers will need to serve the transfer population if we are going to meet our enrollment targets, so it is important to include them in the model.



We estimate that each professional advisor can serve approximately 200, 130 new freshmen and 70 new transfer, students each year (though the mix will vary by school). At this level, assuming an increase in retention from first to second year of 4.5% in the upcoming year (76.5%), and similar retention rates in the following years, by year 4 each professional advisor should have approximately 300 primary advisees. (See Appendix B: NACADA Advisor Load Recommendations)

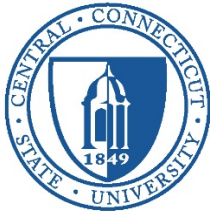
Prof Advisor Year 1	(Primary)	200	(Secondary)	0	Total	200
Prof Advisor Year 2	(Primary)	300	(Secondary)	56	Total	356
Prof Advisor Year 3	(Primary)	300	(Secondary)	172	Total	472
Prof Advisor Year 4*	(Primary)	300	(Secondary)	258	Total	558

This will necessitate the short-term hiring of roughly 4 additional advisors to meet student needs. The addition of the new advisors, one each in CLASS, BUSN, SEPS, and SEST, will allow the teams to stay within the recommended advisee loads while allowing some room for projected growth.

College	Goal Total First-Year Freshmen 2020FA	Goal Total First Year Transfers 2020FA	Recommended # of Full-Time Professional Advisors	Resulting # of FYF and FYT Advisees per Advisor
Exploratory	192	45	2	119
CLASS	379	275	4	164
BUSN	273	190	3	154
SEPS	254	125	3	126
SEST	392	320	4	178
Grand Total	1490	955	16	152

Though the advisors in SEPS do not appear to be beyond the 200 mark with first year students, they are close and actually advise a number of additional students not officially in their school. This is because Secondary Education students are advised in the school of their major. Nevertheless, these students also need to meet with advisors in SEPS to go over the Education requirements for their program. In addition, SEPS advisors work with students interested in reapplying to the Nursing program after having been referred to another major for failing to meet the admissions criteria. These student groups require in depth advising sessions, thus the recommendation for an additional advisor in SEPS.

Depending on future growth, the total number of professional advisors may need to be expanded over time to include an additional 4 advisors (See Appendix C: Advisor Load Analysis).



B. Faculty Advisors

a. Primary and Secondary Roles

The faculty advisor will be the “secondary advisor” during years one and two for new first year students, and the “primary advisor” beyond that. (For transfer students, faculty advisors will be assigned as the secondary advisor for those students transferring in with less than 60 credits. Faculty advisors will be assigned as the primary advisor for those with 60 credits or more.) As the secondary advisor, the faculty advisor will invite students to meet periodically throughout the first two years to offer academic and career guidance. They will also begin each semester with a faculty led “luncheon” where students may learn more about the advising model and their advisors.

As a seasoned student, juniors and seniors will be seeking career advice, information about major specific course content and concentration requirements, and guidance on graduate school possibilities. These conversations are better suited to a faculty advisor. In order to ensure students are more likely to seek out the proper advice from the proper advisor, assigning these primary and secondary roles will help guide them in the right direction at the right time.

b. New Faculty Advisor Roles

In addition to advising students who have selected a major, faculty will need to be assigned to those students still deciding on a major.

i. *School-Based Undeclared*

Each school will be tasked with assigning faculty members to the Exploratory students in their school. These faculty will serve primarily as secondary advisors (as most Exploratory students will have chosen a major by their third year). However, they may provide important guidance to students sure about the areas in which they are interested, but unsure what path to take.

ii. *Exploratory (No School Assigned)*

As with the school-based undecided groups, these are undecided students that could benefit from faculty guidance. However, the challenge with these students is that they may be trying to decide between two or more unrelated fields. Faculty assigned to this group should be willing to help students explore their options and connect with a variety of different interests.

c. Caseload

We recommend that each participating faculty member be assigned as primary advisor to approximately 25 students, for larger program perhaps slightly more. This, of course, will necessitate high participation from the faculty. To reach this number, each faculty advisor should expect to take on 8-10 new “secondary” advisees each year. These are the students that will become their primary advisees in a couple years.



Faculty Advisor Year 1	(Primary)	0	(Secondary)	20	Total	20
Faculty Advisor Year 2	(Primary)	4	(Secondary)	31	Total	35
Faculty Advisor Year 3	(Primary)	16	(Secondary)	31	Total	48
Faculty Advisor Year 4*	(Primary)	25	(Secondary)	31	Total	57

d. Recognizing Service

As part of this model, it will be important to better define at the individual school level how student advising will be recognized as a part of the service requirement for professors. At this time the criterion for evaluating and recommending full-time teaching faculty are:

1. Load credit activity including, but not limited to, teaching, serving as department chairperson or division director, research, or student supervision.
2. Creative activity, including but not limited to, research, study and publication.
3. Productive service to the department or university.
4. Professional activity, such as attendance at or participation in conferences, workshops and other professional activities.

Service is listed as the third most valued, and weighted, category for evaluation. Given that other factors weigh more heavily, and service is broadly defined, the committee recommends that advising be included in the service category and be formally recognized and valued as part of the evaluation process.

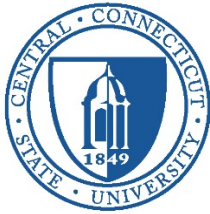
II. Structure

In order to ensure that we provide a mechanism for accountability in implementing and following through on the proposed new advising model, we recommend some adjustments to the reporting structure.

A. Faculty Advisors

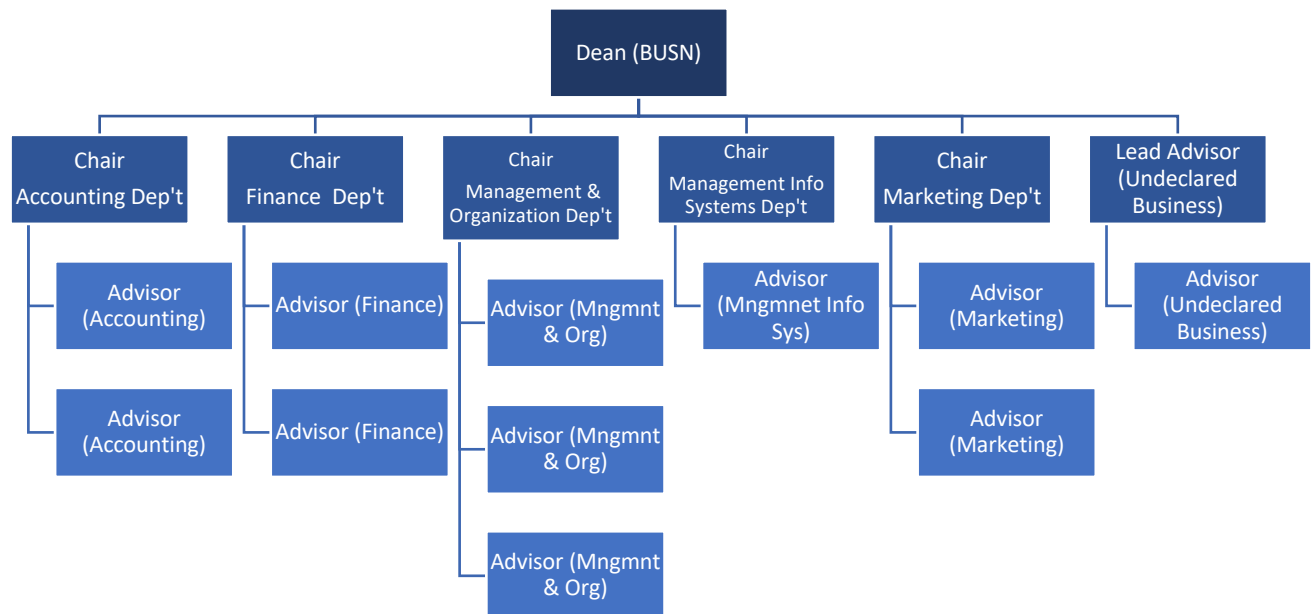
The reporting structure for faculty advisors will remain substantially the same. Faculty advisors will continue to report through their departments to the Dean of the school or college.

Nevertheless, the department chairs and ultimately the Deans will have a stronger sense of what each advisor is responsible for and should therefore be able to hold faculty advisors more accountable for student success. Faculty advisors will be expected to reach out to and meeting with students at various points thought out the year. (See Part III: Timeline)



In addition, it will be important for faculty advisors to update both the student record as well as the professional advisor when a student needs additional guidance or assistance. Faculty advisors will be given access to and training on BlueTrack for this purpose. (See Part IV: Communication)

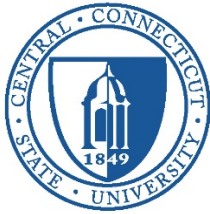
Example of a faculty advisor reporting structure:



B. Professional Advisors

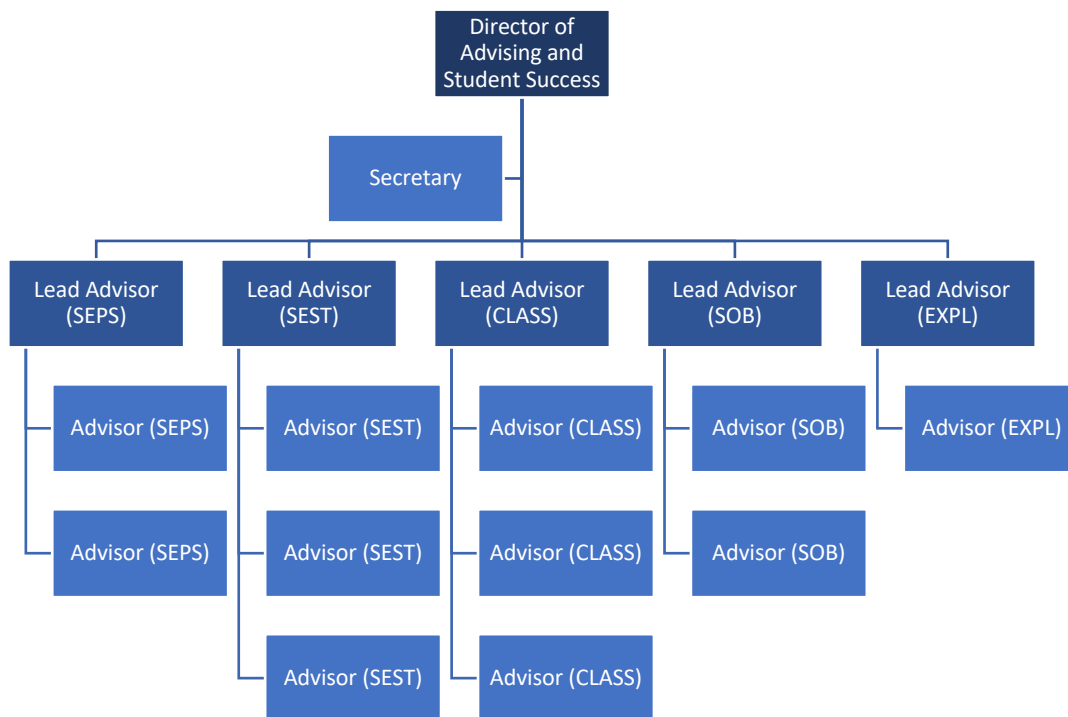
The Dual Advising Workgroup recommends that the reporting structure for professional advisors be altered to create more consistency between the different school-based offices, and to allow for more collaboration between the schools. Instead of each school-based advising office reporting to the Dean of the associated school, we recommend a new position titled Associate Vice President of Advising and Student Success be created to oversee all of the professional advisors in the various schools, including those serving Exploratory students in Explore Central (See Appendix E: Director of Advising and Student Success Job Description).

We further recommend that each school-based advising center be led by a **Lead Advisor** tasked with coordinating the day-to-day activities of the advising office. The Lead Advisor position may be a rotating position or may be assigned permanently to an individual trusted with the responsibility. Nevertheless, we think it is important to allow the professional advisors to remain housed within the schools that offer



the programs for which they advise. This will allow for continued, and expanded collaboration between the faculty advisors and the professional advisors as they work together to meet student needs.

The following is the *recommended* structure for the professional advising staff (this includes the recommended expansion of the teams):



III. Timeline (First-Year Students: Freshmen and Transfer)

Professional and faculty advisors will need to reach out to and connect with students regularly throughout the year to ensure student success. The following provides a general framework for that outreach but is by no means a comprehensive guide to student communication. We believe a truly successful model will grow and develop over time, and we encourage participating professional and faculty advisors in the various schools to meet annually with the AVP for Advising and Student Success to communicate successes and challenges.



A. March

1. Beginning in March, email invitations to summer orientation sessions will begin to be distributed to accepted/deposited students. These students will complete a brief registration pre-enrollment form in which they can choose an orientation date. This invitation will go out through the Office of New Student Programs working with the Office of Recruitment and Admissions.
2. The Office of Enrollment Management is working on developing a strategy utilizing the CRM to ensure the most updated lists of Orientation registrants are shared with the professional advising staff on a weekly basis.

B. April - Following Priority Registration for Continuing Students

1. Assignments of Professional Advisors Begin - advisees are assigned a professional advisor based on selected major and entered into Banner by their professional advisor. (As primary advisor – years 1+2. Secondary – years 2++)
2. Assignments of Faculty Advisors Begin -
 - a. For students who have selected a major – professional advisors will assign faculty advisors by major. For those majors with more than one advisor, the professional advisor will monitor the volume of students assigned to each and ensure even distribution. Professional advisors enter faculty advisor assignments into Banner. (As secondary advisor – Years 1+2. Primary – Years 2++)
 - b. For students who are Exploratory but chose a school – professional advisors will assign faculty advisors based on a list provided by the Dean of that school. These will be faculty interested in advising school based exploratory students.
 - c. For students who are truly Exploratory, each school will be asked to provide the names of faculty members that would be interested in providing guidance to this group. Professional Advisors will assign these faculty advisees and monitor volume to ensure even distribution.
3. Professional advisors begin creating schedules for new students registered for Orientation.
 - a. All schedules will have 15 credits, unless there is a course assigned that prevents 15 credits from being possible; ie: a 2-credit course that results in a 14-credit schedule.

C. June and July

- A. Orientation sessions run
- B. Day 1 of Orientation -
 - a. During the afternoon, students will meet with their professional advisors in groups to talk about their major(s), view their schedules for the first time and ask questions. Students may also revise their schedules during this time.



C. Day 2 of Orientation -

- a. Students attend a luncheon with their Dean, faculty advisors (those that can be present) and professional advisors. An introductory speech is provided by the Dean and a faculty advisor.
- b. Students learn how the Dual Advising model is meant to work and receive information about the responsibilities of each advisor.

D. August - Academic Semester Begins

1. Each academic department or school, should host an introductory luncheon that is coordinated with the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Convocation Ceremony (either before or after the Ceremony when students are already out-and-about.) This will give students and faculty a chance to break the ice and put a name with a face.
2. Faculty advisor's initial outreach to advisees by email. Letter should offer guidance, provide office hours, and encourage students to stop in to meet.
3. Professional advisor's "start of semester" email outreach with reminders: office location, services offered, and spring semester registration dates.

E. October

1. Faculty advisor check-in outreach to all advisees, start scheduling individual academic advising appointments and communicating registration (PIN) reminder to primary advisees.
 - a. Communicate potential issues and/or successes to professional advisor.
2. Professional Advisor outreach – start scheduling individual academic advising appointments and communicating registration (PIN) reminder to primary advisees.
 - a. Communicate potential issues and/or successes to faculty advisor.

F. January*

1. Each academic department or school should host a welcome back luncheon for continuing students. (New students should also be invited.) This will give students and faculty a chance to chat about fall semester success and challenges and talk about strategies for success moving forward.
2. Faculty advisor new semester email outreach to advisees. Offer continued guidance, provide office hours, etc.
3. Professional advisors run report to see how their advisees performed during the fall semester.
4. Professional advisor new semester outreach to advisees, offer support and guidance to students facing challenges, provide information on upcoming Career, Financial Aid, and Financial Literacy workshops and fairs, share reminders for registration requirements and dates.



G. March

1. Faculty advisor check-in outreach to all advisees, start scheduling individual academic advising appointments and communicating registration (PIN) reminder to primary advisees.
 - a. Communicate potential issues and/or successes to professional advisor.
2. Professional advisor outreach – start scheduling individual academic advising appointments and communicating registration (PIN) reminder to primary advisees. For students completing their second year (or 60 credits), professional advisors begin creating Individualized Academic Plans to share with students during the registration meeting. These plans will be further modified and developed during the meeting.
 - a. Communicate potential issues and/or successes to faculty advisor.
 - b. Assign those completing their second year to a faculty advisor in the primary role.

H. April

1. Faculty advisors will reach out to second year students transitioning to them as primary advisees and set up an end of semester meeting to review the Individualized Academic Plan and ensure the student is on the right path to graduation.

I. May

1. Professional advisors run two reports, and take the following actions:
 - a. Analysis of students, both primary and secondary advisees to check on academic progress. Reach out to primary advisees that are struggling. Share with faculty advisors those secondary advisees that are struggling.
 - b. Identify students that have not graduated but are not registered and reach out to offer guidance and assistance. Connect students to financial aid resources, or other resources necessary for getting the student registered.

J. June-July

1. Professional advisors continue outreach to unregistered students that have not graduated.

***For students beginning their studies at CCSU in the Spring (mainly transfers), Advisors will be assigned when they submit their confirmation deposit. Students will then be invited to the January department-based luncheon and will enter the above timeline.**



IV. Communication

A. Software and Technology

Professional and faculty advisors should utilize BlueTrack to keep records of student interactions. Professional advisors currently have access, but faculty will need to be given access and training so they may use the tool effectively. This training would be coordinated by the Professional advisors for the faculty in their respective schools. This training should occur once per year at the start of the semester and be required for all new faculty advisors when they are assigned advisees.

Professional and faculty advisors should also be sure to communicate at least twice a semester (mid-semester and at the end of the semester as outlined in the timeline) to inform each other of potential issues with students.

B. Change of Major

When a student requests a major change, they will be instructed to see their professional advisor, no matter how many credits they have completed. The professional advisor will coordinate a meeting with the professional advisor associated with the new degree program. The new professional advisor will determine the student's eligibility for the major change and will approve the change to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office will not process any change of majors without this approval.

The professional advisor of the student's new major will then update the students' primary and secondary advisors in Banner and will inform the appropriate faculty member of the student's addition to their caseload.

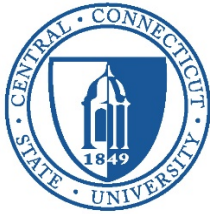
V. Additional Recommendations (Outside Scope of Workgroup)

As the Workgroup talked through the type(s) of support our students need, departments related to advising entered the discussion. Two of those departments are so closely linked to the work of the advisors, that we thought it was appropriate to include recommendations for inclusion in the new model: the Learning Center and Career Services.

A. The Learning Center, Tutoring and Academic Probation

We recommend that the professional advisors oversee students on academic probation. Under the current model those students work directly with the Learning Center and enroll in an academic intervention program.

Under the new model, though students would still participate in the intervention with the Learning Center, the student's participation would be carefully monitored by the professional advisor. We recommend that the Learning Center coaches report to the Director of the Learning Center but be



embedded in the School Based Advising Centers to allow for closer coordination between the two support services.

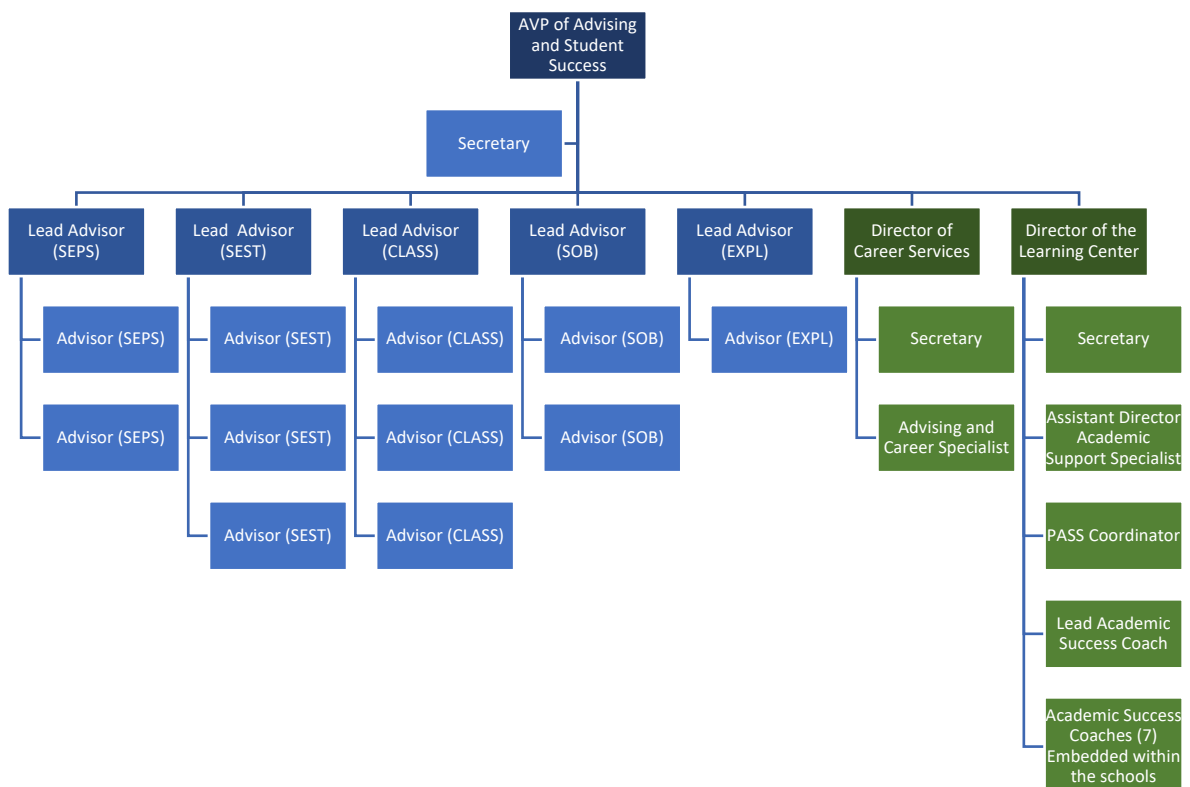
At the end of intersession, professional advisors would be expected to update faculty advisors on at-risk students' progress through the intervention program.

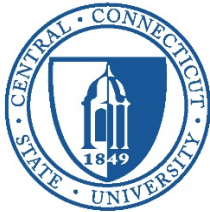
B. Career Services

Expansion of the role of the Associate Vice President for Advising and Student Success might also include the Office of Career Services. The Office of Career Services is currently a part of Explore Central which houses the professional advisors for the undeclared or Exploratory students. We recommend dividing these two separate functions, but continuing to include Career Services in the overall advising model.

Career Services staff members would work closely with both faculty and professional advisors to provide experiential learning opportunities and career advice and preparation to all students. The AVP for Advising and Student Success can assist the Director of Career Services in coordinating and streamlining career and job fair activities. As it stands now, several offices including Career Services and several of the schools host these types of fairs. Better coordination and collaboration might better serve the students and improve turn-out at the events, both on the employer side as well as the student side.

The following would be our recommended final structure:





C. Student Recognition

Providing recognition to those that are exceling should be an important part of the new model. Annual “Dean’s List” award ceremonies should be coordinated through the new Director of Advising and Student Success to provide an opportunity for professional and faculty advisors to come together in honor of those that are excelling.

A small award, such as a book scholarship, may be provided to recipients.

D. Removal of the PIN Requirement

Though we are in agreement that the removal of the PIN requirement at this time may not be a good idea, we think it is something to consider for the future.

The PIN requirement prevents students from registering for classes without speaking with an advisor first. This ensures that students do not register for the wrong classes and possibly delay graduation. Nevertheless, it is our hope that over time the development of the Individualized Academic Plans for students at the end of their second year will be successful enough that we can consider removing the PIN requirement for students once they have reached this milestone.

While the PIN would no longer be required to register, the faculty advisors would still be expected to reach out to students according to the timeline set forth above.

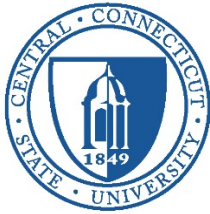
E. Professional Advisors: Opportunities for Advancement

We have recommended that the professional advising teams are led by a Lead Advisor in each school. However, should enrollment growth necessitate the expansion of the school based advising teams, we recommend considering developing the Lead Advisor roles into Assistant/Associate Director roles. At this level, advising caseloads would be reduced and/or eliminated to allow the Asst./Assoc. Director to better supervise the advising team and coordinate the activities of the advisors within the school. This is the model working successfully at Valdosta State University, and we see the benefit in considering its implementation here at CCSU.

F. Connection to the First Year Experience Courses

We understand that the First Year Experience courses are under review and development by the Faculty Senate. However, we recommend that these courses be developed with the inclusion of this advising model in mind. Allowing our faculty advisors to teach these courses and/or participate in them will allow them to better connect with the students in their advising groups.

It is often difficult to get students to engage with their advisor, whether it is professional or faculty, outside of the request for the PIN to register. Allowing faculty advisors to participate in the delivery of the First Year Experience courses allows them to build these relationships beyond the removal of the PIN.



G. Assessment

The best measures of the new model's performance are student satisfaction and retention and graduation rates. We understand that there are other committees tasked with looking at software solutions that might assist us in tracking student performance, registration, and/or retention, so we did not dig into this area too deeply. We also understand that the NSSE survey is a tool we already use to determine a student's satisfaction with CCSU's support services, including advising. It is our hope that these initiatives will assist us in assessing the effectiveness of the new advising model going forward.