

Annotated Checklist

Advising is much more than helping students with registration.



Personal Wellness and Extra-Curricular Involvement

- The questions in this category may help you gauge the students' sense of belonging at Wabash. We know our retention numbers improve when students have at least one group they feel connected to on campus.
- Some advisors may, understandably, feel that asking about a student's family or other personal matters falls outside of the scope of advising. No advisor should feel coerced to open this door; however, we have heard from students over the years that a question like this indicates an advisor's care and concern for student's wellbeing. The students' answers may alert you to life matters that are adding worry or financial stress for the student. In these cases, you can perhaps make a referral to the Counseling Center, Financial Aid, or the Dean of Student's office.
- If your advisee has trouble engaging, encourage activities that might suit him. Once you know a student's interests, suggest any scheduled lunch talks and other lectures that relate to their interest, and that they might like.
- If the student is involved in athletics, you might consider touching base with the coach. If he's stopped playing a sport, ask him how that's affected his studies and himself overall.
- In a small school, both campus celebrations and tragedies can have an impact beyond the immediately-affected parties. Be mindful of events on campus and how they can affect students.
- Check how he looks. Does he look like he's been sleeping well? Has he obviously gained or lost weight since you last saw him? Is he taking care of his personal hygiene? Check how he's acting. Did this student used to seem enthusiastic but he's not now? Are you noticing any dramatic change in his personality or energy level?
- If you sense the student may need extra support, recommend resources on campus, including the Counseling Center. Career Services can assist when questions center around professional direction, networks, or interests.

Academic Progress

- The questions in this category should help you gauge how well the student knows the curriculum and what he is discovering about his own strengths and interests.
- If a student is involved in sports, coaches can be great allies in helping determine what might be getting in the way of a student's classroom success. Coaches can also be, at times, excellent motivators for academic engagement. Consider giving the student's coach a call and check in regularly.
- Outside of our own advising process, students offer one another a lot of "informal advising," suggestions about courses, professors, and career paths from peers. Some of this is beneficial, but explore with the student how many of his ideas are his own or another's. Explore whether the advice he is getting from peers or parents or others is tailored to him or has more of a "one size fits all" quality.
- Students often have a limited sense of where to find special topics courses, so you may need to remind them to look at the special topics courses and their descriptions offered each semester.

Academic Progress, cont.

- Keep in mind the CC/NC option for students who have earned fewer than 15 earned credits. Fewer students at the college exercise this option than would benefit (GPA-wise) from exercising this option. At the same time, we know GPA affects retention, and we may sometimes keep a student from digging himself a hole that he perceives is too deep to climb out of by the prudent use of the conversion-to-credit option. Of course, it is imperative that a student understands the limitations of the conversion-to-credit option for major and minor requirements, pre-requisites, and distribution requirements, and you may need to review these rules with him.
- If a student is falling behind, particularly in courses that he thought might be his major or minor field of study, explore why. Has he taken a variety of professors in that discipline? Has he been making full use of campus resources like Supplemental Instruction, the Writing Center, and the Quantitative Skills Center? Sometimes students come to realize that their gifts and passions lie elsewhere, but sometimes they may also persist in difficult coursework if they have the right support.
- Make sure a student knows about academic resources on campus. Those who are struggling may benefit from an appointment to talk about time management and study skills with the Director of the Academic Centers for Excellence or a regular appointment with the Associate Dean for Student Engagement and Success.
- As you talk about Supplemental Instruction, the Writing Center, or the Quantitative Skills Center, try to speak about these as spaces for peer collaboration and support rather than remediation. #StudySmarter
- Once students declare a major (or before), do they want to change advisors to someone in their major department? (Don't take it personally if they do.) This is accomplished through a form available in the Registrar's Office.

Travel-based Learning and Study Abroad

- One of the strategic goals of the College is that any student who would like an immersion experience can have access to one. Begin talking with your advisee early in his Wabash career about how he can include travel-based learning as part of his Wabash education.
- For students who did not grow up traveling—or whose family has never had many travel opportunities—it can be hard to imagine the value of travel-based learning. Even if students see the value, they may feel guilty signing up for an immersion course or a semester abroad before their parents or grandparents have had similar opportunities. Tread lightly, but encourage your student not to close the door on these Wabash opportunities. Sometimes he may be carving out a path for others to follow.
- **Make sure he's familiar with Immersion Courses.** You can find the full listing of the Immersion Courses on the [Registrar's Main website](#). Look for the heading "Immersion Courses" under the correct semester. Wabash's courses are unique in that they cost the student very little. In general, he is responsible for only the passport and a few hundred dollars for meals, so for under \$500, a student can have an amazing travel experience as part of his Wabash coursework. This is a great way for a student on a tight budget to obtain an experience abroad.
- **Semester Abroad is another type of travel-based learning.** If your advisee does decide to apply for a semester away, work with him closely to ensure that the courses he proposes to take abroad will indeed transfer back to Wabash and meet his graduation requirements. If you're not sure about all the requirements, please contact Dean Jon Jump for assistance. Unfortunately, we have had some students not go through the full pre-approval process or make changes to their courses once arriving overseas (and not get the new courses approved). This can create headaches for students and jeopardize their progress toward graduation.

Travel-based Learning and Study Abroad, cont.

- Many fewer students are familiar with the Dill Fund and the Rudolph Scholarship—both grants that allow students undertake travel-based study or research projects. These may be especially attractive to students who were otherwise unable to take advantage of a semester abroad.
- If a student would like to study abroad but believes he cannot do so because of his athletics schedule, make sure he's discussed this with his coach. Sometimes a coach will be flexible about a student's fall or spring schedule depending upon many factors.

Career Planning and Placement

- Career Planning is an important part of our advising mission; therefore, we'd like advisors to reiterate the importance of engaging with the Professional Development staff throughout the student's time at Wabash. Many students and their families are told throughout their recruiting and admissions process that part of the Wabash advantage is their access to our Career Services Center and our Alumni network. The Professional Development team has developed a Four-Year Plan for students, and this plan is posted around campus.
- One-on-one appointments are important for relationship building with the Professional Development team, and are a place to get important information about their services and events. Visit the Career Services [website](#) for more information.
- The Professional Development team requires all students to have an up-to-date approved resume on file with them at the start of each academic year. It's a good practice for students to update their resume from the prior year's accomplishments and experiences. It is also the case that students' ability to apply for WISE and Federal Work-study positions will be dependent upon having an up-to-date resume and Handshake profile.
- Mock Interviews are a great way to work on interview skills, make meaningful alumni/professional connections, and have career "a-ha" moments. The Professional Development team offers this experience to students. Please encourage your advisees to take advantage of this service.
- The Professional Development team offers a variety of employer, service program, and grad program information sessions, networking events, and other impactful events throughout the academic year. Please encourage your advisees to get engaged with them early and often. Career Services data indicates that students' participation in these events directly affects success rates in securing meaningful summer and post-grad opportunities.
- Summer Internships are a great way to explore potential careers. The Professional Development team can help a student secure internships and other experiential opportunities. Please encourage your advisees to explore internship opportunities throughout their time at Wabash.
- Check out the Dill Fund [website](#) to learn about opportunities to support a student's summer experience.
- If your advisee has interest in a pre-professional program, please encourage him to engage with a pre-professional advisor. More information about these programs can be found [here](#).
- Fellowships are merit-based awards for students that provide a variety of opportunities, your advisees might not be aware of all that is available to them. Please encourage them to have a conversation with our Fellowship Advisor and to look into fellowship opportunities. More information can be found [here](#).
- **Resources for Advisors:** Professional Development is happy to help you with class visits or special meetings with your advisees as a group. Topics can include a general Career Services orientation, a CliftonStrengths (personality assessment) team session, or address specific interests related to your course. We're happy to do a Career Services take-over for your classroom when you're away on college business, too.