

**Wells College**  
**Academic Advising and Success**  
**Assessment Plan-May 2014**

**I. Executive Summary**

Given that the Director of Academic Advising and Success began in late October, and that the position had been vacant for a year prior to that, much of the 2013-2014 year in Academic Advising was spent learning and putting the processes in place so that the focus of 2014-2015 can be making significant changes in order to increase student success at Wells College. To that end, much of the assessment done provides a framework for goals for the next academic year at Wells. Changes were made to mid-semester grade interventions, as well as to the tracking of major requirements. Mid-semester grades were lower than they have been in the last six semesters and the number of students ending the year with an academic sanction was lower than in previous years. Even with the staffing change, much was completed in the office this year, and will be the basis upon which next year is built.

**Mission Statement**

Academic Advising at Wells College supports the College's mission to educate students to think critically, reason wisely, and act humanely, to appreciate complexity and difference, to embrace new ways of knowing, and to be creative and ethical. Academic Advising at Wells College supports students in making: a successful transition to becoming a Wells College student, wise educational choices within the framework of academic requirements, and good use of the life and study skills assistance available on campus. Wells College academic advisors assist students in understanding themselves and their academic choices in a larger world context, provide students with accurate information about their academic program and campus support services as well as about off-campus opportunities for experiential learning (e.g., internships, study abroad, service), and guide students in thinking about their lives after graduation.

**II. Summary of Annual Assessment Review and Planning.**

Given the lack of previous Assessment Reports for the office and the fact that the Director was not in place at the beginning of the academic year, no formal assessment review and planning occurred, however, next year the Director will review the assessment report monthly to ensure that goals are being met.

**III. Focus for next year**

The focus for next year in the Office of Academic Advising and Success will be to continue to track students' progress and retention. Special focus will be paid to major GPA enforcement, academic planning for students with an academic sanction, degree audit changes, as well as continuing to provide academic planning and support to students. More attention will be given to transfer student retention as well as to the section of SC 111 which is designated for transfers. A second major focus of the office is Advisor training. Given the changes to advising that have happened at the College recently, the Director of Academic Advising and Success plans to hold monthly sessions for advisors with outside speakers at times on topics such as

Academic Writing, Developmental Advising, etc. The major project in Academic Advising and Success for Summer 2014 is to get all of the Institutional Requirement Trees built for Jenzabar so that the College can fully utilize the system to provide advisors and students better tools for academic planning. Much of the 2013-2014 academic year was spent building spreadsheets and collecting data so that more assessment can be done and so that data can be used for future planning and decision making.

#### **IV. Updated Assessment Plan**

NB: Given the nature of this office being an office of one person who began mid-year, the below assessment plan is a hybrid of a plan for the future and an assessment of work done during the 2013-2014 academic year.

#### **Goal 1: Collect data and build systems to provide a baseline for further assessment in the Office of Academic Advising and Success.**

**Objective 1:** The College will have data on first generation college student attrition.

**Objective 2:** The College will have the data to determine the number and patterns of academic petitions.

**Objective 3:** The College will have the data to determine if we are successful with mid-semester outreach efforts.

**Objective 4:** Advisors and students will be able to utilize the advising module in Jenzabar for academic planning.

#### **Academic Advising and Success Actions:**

- Track the attrition rate of first generation college students entering in 2013-2014.
- Collect data regarding the number of academic petitions submitted.
- Track mid-semester warning grades and the outreach completed.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success will spend the summer getting the Jenzabar Institutional Requirements trees to a place where they are useable by the fall semester.

#### **Measureable Outcomes (for 2014-2015):**

- Creation of a way to track first-generation students which will be in place by the fall semester.
- Creation of a system for tracking petitions, reasons for petitions, and the outcome of the petition.
- The number of students on semester warning will decrease by at least 10% and the number of students who improve their grade after warning meetings will increase by 10% for Fall 2014.
- All majors, minors, and the *Sustainable Community* curriculum will have a tree on Jenzabar by the start of Fall 2014.

**Assessment:** The Director of Academic Advising and Success will create the means to collect data and will work with other relevant offices to ensure that there is a uniform process for data collection regarding student retention, petitions, attrition, etc.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** The Director of Academic Advising and Success will use the data collected and the processes for collecting data to create reports regarding persistence, to make informed decisions regarding academic policies and procedures, as well as be able to help inform committees to do the same. The creation of the Institutional Requirement Trees will allow both advisors and students to be able to track academic progress in a way that has previously only been possible using paper files. Once that process is place, further training will need to be done for advisors and students about how to use the system and more assessment about the effectiveness will need to be put into place.

## **Goal 2: Increase Student Retention and Success Rates**

**Objective 1:** Students will have access to and knowledge of resources available to them, especially during high times of stress.

**Objective 2:** Students who are not achieving academic success will receive personal outreach.

**Objective 3:** Students will be able to track their own academic progress.

**Objective 4:** Students who are not successful in their chosen major will be able to determine so earlier and switch majors without long-lasting consequences.

**Objective 5:** Students will be aware of deadlines and policies regarding the academic program.

**Objective 6:** Students will be registered for the following semester's classes prior to leaving campus for the summer/January break.

**Objective 7:** Students who are planning to graduate will have an idea of remaining requirements by the start of the academic year.

## **Academic Advising and Success Actions:**

- The second section of SC 111 was moved to occur in the second seven weeks of the spring semester to coincide with advising and registration as well as transitioning to sophomore year.
- AA&S added an outreach at the four week mark to try to catch students before they received poor mid-semester grades.
- Mid-semester grade warning meetings were made more standardized with the addition of a sheet for the person meeting with the student to fill out which included their plan for improving their grades.
- Major and Minor sheets were made and published for each major and minor. The sheets are available in print and digital version for students and advisors.
- ASA considered and brought to the faculty a change to include the first year courses in the major GPA and to count all courses taken in the major.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success acted on most petitions that came in the second half of the spring semester. The information on petitions was tracked.

- The Director of Academic Advising and Success reached out to students who were unregistered at the end of each semester and inquired about their reasons for not registering.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success, along with other members of the Division of Academic and Student Life will plan a day in August for graduating seniors which allows them to review their degree audit, among other things.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success meets with students to put together academic plans.

**Measurable Outcomes (2013-2014):**

- 17 faculty members reported information at the 4 week mark regarding 23 students. The Director of Academic Advising and Success did outreach to some of the students while faculty did outreach for others.
- 151 students received mid-term warning grades of C- or below with 61 students having two or more grades of C- or below. The Director of Academic Advising and Success, the Dean of Students, the Coordinator of Student Achievement, and members of the athletics staff did outreach to each of those 61 students and filled out a sheet about the student's plans to increase their grades and recorded their goal grade for the course. (see below)
- Major and Minor sheets were uploaded to the globe and have been regularly downloaded. The range of number of times downloaded is 13-38.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success held 138 appointments with students in the spring semester (see below).
- There were 105 petitions in the spring semester, 95 of which were approved. In addition, there were 64 Independent Studies approved.

**Assessment:** AA&S will continue to put out a call for student concerns at the four week mark and will continue to track students who have mid-semester warnings. AA&S will advertise major and minor sheets more heavily to improve the number of downloads of those forms for both students and advisors. Having SC 111 in the spring semester seems to have allowed students to have an additional resource for registration and advising in their Peer Leaders.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** Data regarding mid-semester warnings will be used to further tailor the outreach done for those students. Information about the number of downloads of major and minor sheets will help inform which majors are being looked at more. The evaluations of SC 111 will tell whether that timing change is one that should remain. All of the assessment done and the data collected will be helpful in painting a holistic picture of what makes a student successful or unsuccessful at the College. The Director of Academic Advising and Success will track the students applying for Independent Studies in the fall and categorize those into reasons for needing an Independent Study in order to determine why there seems to be an increasing number of Independent Studies offered. Reaching out to unregistered students allowed a better picture of who was not planning to return the following semester and allows the college to make decisions regarding course enrollments.

### **Goal 3: Ensure that advisors are properly trained**

**Objective 1:** Advisors will have the tools to provide accurate and timely services to advisees.

**Objective 2:** Advisors will hear from experts in their field regarding relevant issues related to advising.

**Objective 3:** Advisors will have training in various methods of advising.

#### **Academic Advising and Success Actions:**

- Monthly sessions will be planned for faculty and staff on relevant topics.
- Guest speakers will be brought in to talk about certain topics (teaching writing, etc)
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success will create, with the help of ASAA, an advising syllabus for faculty and students.
- The advisor page of the Globe will be updated with relevant information for advisors.
- The Director of Advising and Success will present information about advising to faculty at key days such as New Faculty Orientation and Day of Faculty.
- The Director of Academic Advising will explore ways to ensure that faculty have relevant and pertinent dates available to them.

#### **Measurable Outcomes:**

- Increase faculty attendance at development sessions by 15%.
- Conduct a post survey to see if feelings of preparedness for advising rise.
- A decrease by 10% in petitions with the reason given that students were unable to find their advisor.

**Assessment:** AA&S will give a survey to advisors at the beginning of the year asking them what topics they would like to hear about during the semester. Attendance will be kept at future programs to which topics are of particular interest to faculty. Having a Director from the start of the year will hopefully help faculty know who to reach out to regarding questions about advising.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** Data concerning attendance and topics from the fall will be used to plan topics for the spring semester. The survey data will be used to make pertinent changes to the globe page, and the Director will work with ASAA to find out where, if any, holes exist in training.

**2013-2014 update:** Two faculty development sessions were held in the spring semester. The first, on working with students on the spectrum, was well attended by both faculty and staff with 33 people in attendance-14 faculty, 19 staff members (including the President). Two people from Academic Support Services at RIT came to speak on the subject and it was good to get faculty and staff on campus to begin thinking about working with students on the autism spectrum.

The second session was conducted by the Director of Academic Advising and Success on April 7 and was a prep session for advising week. 18 advisors attended the session and were introduced to the new Globe page, were given handouts with tips for advising broken down per year, and were shown samples of the major and minor sheets for feedback. Also at this session was a discussion of some of the academic policies that were found to be confusing during the 2013-2014 academic year.

#### **Goal 4: Increase Transfer student satisfaction**

**Objective 1:** Transfer Students will feel that they are a part of the Wells community.

**Objective 2:** Non-residential transfer students will be able to have an effective New Student Experience Course (SC 111)

**Objective 3:** Transfer students will persist at a higher rate than in previous years.

#### **Academic Advising and Success Actions:**

- The Director of Academic Advising and Success will convene a transfer student focus group at the beginning of the fall semester.
- New methods of offering the SC 111 program, including moodle and other online platforms will be explored.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success will formally and informally introduce non-residential transfer students will similar

#### **Measureable Outcomes:**

- Student satisfaction will increase (This will be updated to include by how much when the survey is designed)
- 100% success rate by non-residential transfer students in SC 111.

**Assessment:** A satisfaction survey will be given to all current and new transfer students in the fall semester to gauge their current satisfaction and ways to improve services for transfer students at Wells. The survey will be repeated in the spring to see if satisfaction has increased. Data from previous SC 111 transfer sections will be used to identify potential problems to include in the survey. Evaluations from the fall and spring SC 111 transfer sections will be analyzed to determine if efforts are working. Retention data regarding transfer students will be analyzed as well.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** The data gathered from the above assessment will be used in the planning of the 2015-2016 SC 111 transfer courses as well as incorporated into the admissions and registration process for transfer students.

**2013-2014 update:** The Director of Academic Advising and Success was assigned as the advisor to all incoming transfer students in Spring 2014. This was done in order to ensure that someone who is on campus would be available for advising during January and the summer, which is when transfer students typically register. Some students stay just a few weeks with the Director

as the advisor as they come in with a substantial number of credits and declare right away, others have stayed with the Director throughout the semester and will continue until they decide on a major. The Director created a template for an Independent Study of SC 111 that was given to two non-residential transfer students who were frustrated with the course. Moving forward, that template could form the basis of a model for other non-residential transfer students.

**Summary of Data used:**

- 1. Mid-semester grade data (Goal 2.2)**
- 2. Mid-semester grade warning follow-up form (Goal 2.2)**
- 3. Office Visits (Goal 2.1)**

Mid-semester Warning at-a-glance  
Fall 2011-Spring 2014

	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014
Headcount	497	464	532	486	534	495
Entries	305	289	354	278	312	241
# of students	174	175	185	167	178	151
% of total students	35%	37.7%	34.8%	34.4%	33.3%	30.5%
# of students on list both semesters	N/A	104	N/A	103	N/A	45

Seniors	23	29	17	19	30	31
Juniors	32	34	39	37	23	31
Sophomores	47	55	45	43	58	40
First-years	70	55	83	66	64	48
Special students	2	2	1	2	3	1

Transfers	17	20	22	33	19	18
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Semester Warning	22	40	21	35	20	32
First probation	22	14	17	9	19	13
Second probation	2	13	2	10	5	4
Third probation	2	0	3	3	1	2
Fourth probation	1	1	0	0	0	0

Courses with 10+	n=6		n=5		n=11		n=5		n=9		n=4	
	BIOL 114	13*	BUS 201	13	BIOL 114	15*	BIOL 126	10	BIOL 119	23*	BUS 230	10
	CHEM 107	12	CS 105	10	BIOL 119	11*	BIOL 130	11	CHEM 107	17*	PHIL 114	10
	POLS 155	12	ECON 102	11	CHEM 107	15	ECON 102	10	CHEM 213	10	PSY 342	11
	PSY 101	10	MATH 151	11	ECON 101	13	POLS 155	10	CRIM 215	10	RELG 264	12
	SC 101	31*	SPAN 102	11*	HIST 101	12	PSY 101	10	MATH 109	14		
	SOC 151	11			MATH 109	10			MATH 111	10		
					MATH 111	15			MATH 112	10		
					RELG 100	10			POLS 155	14		
					SC 101	35*			SC 101	31*		
					SOC 151	11						
					SPAN 101	10						

\*This course contains multiple sections

**Mid-semester grade warning follow-up form**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class year:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Major/intended major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-up meeting completed by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of follow-up meeting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mid-semester warning(s):**

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTES:**

**Have you met with the professor(s) of these classes? What was the outcome of those meetings?**

**What is causing the lower grades in these courses?**

**What grades would you to see in these courses by the end of the semester?**

**What college resources are you currently using? Which ones will you begin using that you haven't previously used?**

**I have met with a staff member regarding my mid-semester grades and understand that if my cumulative GPA falls below a 2.0 I will be placed on semester warning or probation depending on how many semesters my cumulative GPA is below a 2.0. I also understand that I could be considered for suspension from the college if the Committee on Academic Standing and Advising deems that I have failed to make satisfactory progress toward the degree.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>Student Visits-Spring 2014</u></b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>	<b><u>Nicole</u></b>
	<u>2/3/14 - 2/7/14</u>	10 students
	<u>2/10/14 - 02/14/14</u>	4 students
	<u>2/17/14 - 2/21/14</u>	7 students
	<u>2/24/14 - 2/28/14</u>	9 students
	<b><u>Month End Totals</u></b>	<b>30 Students</b>
	<u>3/3/14 - 3/7/14</u>	7 students
	<u>3/10/14 - 3/14/14</u>	Spring Break
	<u>3/17/14 - 3/21/14</u>	10 students
	<u>3/24/14 - 3/28/14</u>	26 students
	<u>3/31/2014</u>	1 students
	<b><u>Month End Totals</u></b>	<b>44 Students</b>
	4/1/14 - 4/4/14	22 Students (PL's interviews)
	4/7/14 - 4/11/14	7 students
	4/14/14 - 4/18/14	15 students
	4/21/14 - 4/25/14	15 students
	4/28/14 - 4/30/14	5 students
	<b><u>Month End Totals</u></b>	<b>64 students</b>
	5/1/14 - 5/2/14	1 student
	5/5/14 - 5/9/14	10 students
	5/12/14 - 5/16/14	5 students
	<b><u>Month End Totals</u></b>	<b>16 students</b>
	<b><u>Semester totals</u></b>	<b>154 students</b>