

**Wells College**  
**Academic Advising and Success**  
**Assessment Plan-May 2015**

**I. Executive Summary**

Given that the Director of Academic Advising and Success began in late October 2013, and that much of the 2013-2014 year in Academic Advising was spent learning and putting processes in place, the focus of 2014-2015 was making significant changes in order to increase student success at Wells College. Electronic and personnel systems were solidified and will hopefully become routine. These systems, described below, are aimed at making sure that students can be clear about their requirements as well as the resources available to them when they begin to go off-course. The focus of 2015-2016 will be continuing to refine these systems and to ensure that both faculty and staff are aware of, and trained in, these systems. The office of Academic Advising and Success moved from the Learning Commons of the Library to Macmillan Hall in October 2014. This move has allowed the Director to be in better communication with the Registrar's office and has created more of a "one stop shop" for advising and registration.

**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.**

The Director reviews the assessment report monthly to ensure that goals are being met.

**III. Focus for next year**

The focus for 2015-2016 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. Continued attention to transfer student retention and support is important. A new course, SC 100 was created in order to help students more holistically acclimate to Wells College and the new course will replace SC 111, LW 100, and will incorporate some of the learning objectives of WLLS 122. The course instructors will be professional and student staff and so all of those people will need to be trained and will meet weekly to ensure that the pilot year of SC 100 is meeting the intended goals for new students. More training and workshops for faculty as well as continued training

on the use of the advising module will be a continued focus for 2015-2016 as well as continuing to ensure that the Globe page available for advisors is up to date and that advisors are trained on using that page.

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

**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 2015-2016 and 2014-2015.
- Continue to collect and utilize data regarding the number of academic petitions submitted.
- Track mid-semester warning grades and the outreach completed.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success spent summer 2014 creating the Jenzabar Institutional Requirements trees.
- Meet with all students on Semester Warning in place of previously used Learning Contracts.

#### **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.

#### **Update on Measureable Outcomes for 2014-2015:**

- A way to track first-generation college students was not created, continued to 2015-2016 in hopes of creating a mentor program for first-generation college students.
- An excel spreadsheet was created with the name, type, and reason for each petition. These data were given to the chair of ASAA to create the end of semester report

- The number of students placed on semester warning for Fall 2014 was 7 and for Fall 2015 was 4 which represents a nearly 43% decrease in students placed on semester warning. The number of students placed on each level of probation decreased by 1 student.
- All majors, minors, and the *Sustainable Community* curriculum have trees built. Two workshops were held to train faculty on the system. PDFs for how to access the system were made for both faculty and students.

**Measureable Outcomes (for 2015-2016):**

- Creation of a way to track first-generation students which will be in place by the fall semester. Creation of a mentor program for first-generation college students.
- Keep semester warning numbers steady, see a 10% decrease in students placed on Probation 1.
- Continued training on the advising module.
- Creation of a form for students to acknowledge that they have looked at their course needs and a form to submit changes to the registrar's office and the office of academic advising.

**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 allows both advisors and students to be able to track academic progress in a way that has previously only been possible using paper files. Continued 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:**

- SC 100 was created to replace SC 111, LW 100, and aspects of Learning Strategies to attempt to create a better system to acclimate students to Wells College in a holistic manner.
- AA&S continued 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 are updated yearly and available on the Globe for each major and minor.
- AA&S tabled in the dining hall and made flyers regarding the deadline for withdrawing from classes.
- 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 invited rising seniors to return to campus one day early in the fall for a half day event called Wells Wrap-up which allowed students to review their degree audit with a faculty member and hear from relevant offices across campus.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success meets with students to put together academic plans.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success and the Director of Experiential Learning and Career Services created a program for undeclared students.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success created a sheet for students to fill out and bring to their advising appointments which encouraged both prescriptive and developmental advising to take place.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success met in January with each student who looked to be in jeopardy of not graduating and explained all that needed to be done for academic success.

**Measurable Outcomes (2014-2015):**

- 24 faculty members (fall 2014) and 12 faculty members reported information at the 4 week mark regarding 23 students (spring 2015). The Director of Academic Advising and Success did outreach to some of the students while faculty did outreach for others.
- Mid-semester warning stats were compiled again and meetings were held with a member of the division of academic and student life and any student earning two of more mid-semester grades below a C-. See appendix.
- Students and faculty rely heavily on the major and minor sheets for advising as well as for admissions events.
- In Fall 2014 there were 56 petitions acted on by ASAA and the DAA&S and in Spring 2015 there were 84 petitions decided on by ASAA or the DAA&S.

### **Measurable Outcomes (2015-2016):**

- Increase the number of faculty submitting 4 week concerns by 20%.
- Present mid-semester grade data to faculty in order to increase understanding of the importance of submitting mid-semester grades.
- Work with ASAA to explore if all students should receive mid-semester grades as opposed to just first-semester students.
- Update all major and minor sheets to reflect the current curriculum.
- In Fall 2014 there were 56 petitions acted on by ASAA and the DAA&S and in Spring 2015 there were 84 petitions decided on by ASAA or the DAA&S.
- Eliminate the number of students who aren't clear why they aren't able to graduate.

**Assessment:** The small size of Wells College means that both students and parents expect hands-on support and the Office of Academic Advising continues to look for new ways to ensure that students don't fall through the cracks while still understanding the academic success is ultimately up to the student. Collaboration with other departments in Academic and Student Life helps to strengthen the understanding that there is a connection with learning both inside and outside of the classroom. While the advising module was rolled out in the fall, it wasn't until the spring that both advisors and students began to really use the system. Understandably, there is a learning curve and some frustration when things aren't correct, but the system is still less than a year old and so will likely be better received in the fall when all students will be using that system to track their academic progress in real time.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** Data regarding mid-semester warnings will be used to further tailor the outreach done for those students. A survey was distributed to all first-year and sophomore students about their perceptions of LW 100, SC 111, and WLLS 122. That information was used to inform the decision to delete LW 100 and SC 111 and to reimagine a WLLS 122 just for students on probation.

### **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 (2014-2015):**

- 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.

**Measurable Outcomes (2015-2016):**

- Creation of a schedule of all faculty development sessions to be handed out at Day for Faculty.
- Have at least 10 faculty members at each faculty development session.
- Creation of a magnet or other giveaway with all dates on it.

**Assessment:** Monthly faculty development sessions were held throughout both the fall and spring semesters. These sessions, known as Third Thursday Workshops, included topics such as advising, working with students with disabilities, career counseling, and instructional design. Attendance varied widely with the most people attending an advising workshop (36) and the least attending a workshop on career services (3). The Director of Academic Advising and Success chaired a subcommittee of ASAA which dealt with assessment. A survey was given to all students following their academic advising appointments and a similar survey was sent to all advisors. 117 students and 18 advisors filled out the survey.

**Utilizing Assessment Data:** The surveys collected from students and advisors will need to be analyzed to help the ASAA committee understand the holes in advisor training as well as bridge the gap, if it exists, between what students expect from their advisors and what advisors think students expect from them.

**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.
- The Director of Academic Advising and Success met with or called all incoming transfer students to set up schedules ahead of time.

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

- 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.

**Update on Measureable Outcomes for 2014-2015:** A transfer student focus group was not convened this semester, but for SC 111 the non-traditional age commuter students all met for SC 111 over lunch in the dining hall. This allowed them to get to know each other as well as have a course that was not tailored to a different population. We are going to be getting a few transfer students from the closing of Sweet Briar college in 2015-2016 and it will be important to remember their unique needs and not lump them in with all other transfer students.

**Measureable Outcomes (2015-2016):**

- Creation and implementation of a survey on non-residential transfer student needs.
- Student satisfaction will increase (This will be updated to include by how much when the survey is designed)

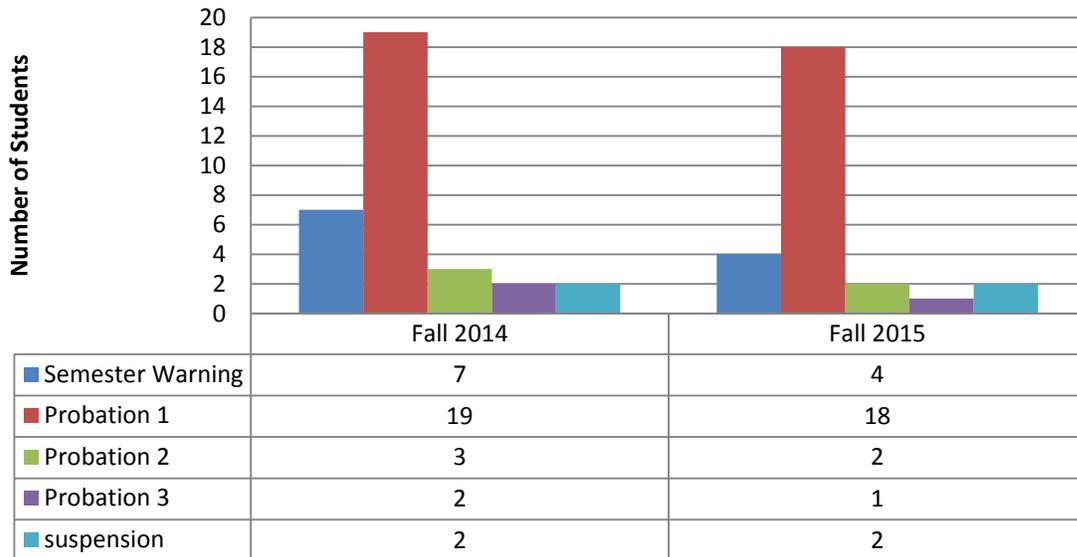
**Assessment:** A satisfaction survey will be given to all current and new transfer students in the fall semester to gauge their current satisfaction and ways to improve services for transfer students at Wells. The survey will be repeated in the spring to see if satisfaction has increased. Data from previous SC 111 transfer sections will be used to identify potential problems to include in the survey. 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 and 2016-2017 admissions and registration process for transfer students.

**Summary of Data used:**

1. **Fall to Fall sanction comparisons**
2. **¼ sheets with rules and regulations**
3. **Mid-semester grade data (Goal 2.2)**

## Academic Sanctions



### Academic Policies by the numbers

1 CML/LGI can be used toward major requirements.

2.0 the cumulative and major GPA required.

12 credits: the number of credits to be full-time.

15 credits: the average number of credits per semester to finish in 4 years (8 semesters)

45 credits of *any* discipline can count towards the 120 needed for graduation.

60 credits must be earned at Wells or in Wells affiliated programs.

120 credits must be earned to graduate!

Mid-semester Warning at-a-glance  
Fall 2011-Spring 2015

	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015
Headcount	497	464	532	486	534	495	530	497
Entries	305	289	354	278	312	241	307	234
# of students	174	175	185	167	182	151	183	156
% of total stu.	35%	37.7%	34.8%	34.4%	34.1%	30.5%	34.5%	31.4%
# of students on list both sems	N/A	104	N/A	103	N/A	45	N/A	92

Seniors	23	29	17	19	30	31	33	24
Juniors	32	34	39	37	23	31	41	37
Sophomores	47	55	45	43	58	40	38	25
First-years	70	55	83	66	64	48	70	69
Special students	2	2	1	2	3	1	1	2

Transfers	17	20	22	33	19	18	23	17
-----------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Semester Warning	22	40	21	35	20	32	16	30
First probation	22	14	17	9	19	13	12	8
Second probation	2	13	2	10	5	4	4	3
Third probation	2	0	3	3	1	2	2	1
Fourth probation	1	1	0	0	0	0	1 (AS)	0

Courses with 10+ warnings	n=6		n=5		n=11		n=5		n=9		n=4		n=6		n=2	
	BIOL 114	13*	BUS 201	13	BIOL 114L	15*	BIOL 126L	10	BIOL 119L	23*	BUS 230	10	BIOL 119L	14*	BIOL 114L	15*
	CHEM 107	12	CS 105	10	BIOL 119L	11*	BIOL 130L	11	CHEM 107L	17*	PHIL 114	10	BIOL 126L	18*	ECON 102	12
	POLS 155	12	ECON 102	11	CHEM 107	15	ECON 102	10	CHEM 213L	10	PSY 342	11	CHEM 107L	11*		
	PSY 101	10	MATH 151	11	ECON 101	13	POLS 155	10	CRIM 215	10	RELG 264	12	CHEM 213L	10*		
	SC 101	31*	SPAN 102	11*	HIST 101	12	PSY 101	10	MATH 109	14			SC 101	26*		
	SOC 151	11			MATH 109	10			MATH 111	10			SOC 151	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