

Make That Connection ... Be Their Advocate

When new students are assigned to you as advisees, it is important to reach out to these new advisees early and make a connection. One Best Practice in Advising is to create a Canvas Advising Shell and invite all your advisees to join. Through the Canvas Advising Shell, you can push announcement, provide updates, links to forms, and resources. Whether it is by Canvas announcement, phone, email, letter, or postcard, this early communication is important in establishing the advisor/advisee relationship that can make a difference in your advisee's persistence and retention to graduation.

By connecting with advisees, advisors can quickly become that "significant other" the student can talk to, seek advice from when facing issues or problems, and share their success stories. By establishing this connection, advisors become a part of the student's support system which is important for students to succeed in their academic journey.

At the beginning of the semester, advisors should reach out to their advisees through the Canvas Advising Shell invite and by email, welcoming them to Missouri Western, and provide contact information to their advisees. This is easily done by using an Advising Syllabus which can be sent by email to their advisee and posted on your Canvas Advising Shell, listing the responsibilities of both the advisor and the advisee, and offering that open-door policy if they need assistance. Samples of Advising Syllabi are available on the "Advisor" tab under the Student Success & Academic Advising website.

Things to discuss with advisees:

- The importance of keeping their address and phone information up to date on Goldlink
- Encourage them to check their email daily - campus email is the official means of communicating information to students and important information is sent to students' email daily
- If reported through Early Intervention, reach out and offer assistance regarding the issue reported
- If reported through Financial Aid for non-attendance, talk to them about repercussions and find out why they are not attending their class(es); direct them to campus resources
- Discuss the importance of developing a degree plan to map out their courses through to graduation.
- Discuss ways you can be their advocate when they face obstacles and challenges along the way
- Reach out to them about events that are going on in your department or on campus that are related to their major
- If changes in their major program are coming up, make sure you inform them of these upcoming changes and how they could affect their academic progress
- Find out what activities they were interested in during high school and connect them with appropriate campus activities (if available)
- Discuss the importance of purchasing books and access codes for their classes; students sometimes don't feel the necessity to make these purchases and later results in the need to withdraw from the course or fail the course
 - See the *Financial Aid* handout in the Miscellaneous Info and Updates section for specifics about first-time borrowers and how they can receive book vouchers to purchase books
 - If aid is not available for books, discuss the importance of budgeting for books prior to the start of the semester; books range from \$400-\$1000 per semester
- The importance of developing a degree plan to map out their courses through to graduation
- The steps they need to take to be successful both in and out of the classroom

Advising is more than just handing out an Alternate PIN! The advisor/advisee relationship needs to be more than that. Advisors should help their advisees navigate through their academic journey, providing guidance and assistance along the way. By establishing a good relationship with your advisees, you can become that “significant other” they can turn to on campus—be their advocate.

Suggested time frame for contacting advisees:

Time of the semester	Topic
Prior to semester begins or beginning of semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Send “Welcome to Missouri Western” message with Advising Syllabus and your contact info --Remind them of add/drop period the first five days of classes – offer advising assistance if needed --Have them check their address and phone info to make sure it is updated --Remind them of the importance of purchasing their books, clickers, and access codes for their courses
Second or third week of classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Check in to see how their classes are doing --Invite them to stop by and visit with you and introduce themselves --If they come in, verify their address and phone number --If a residence hall student, check on how their living situation is going
Fourth week of classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Remind them when you will begin your advisement for priority registration for the following semester and how to make an appointment --Invite them to come work out their Graduation Plan
Anytime during semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --If you receive any emails from Student Success about Early Interventions on your advisees; reach out to them to offer assistance --Make them aware of any events or special programs that might be of interest to them or that are related to their major
Mid-semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Wish them luck on their midterm tests --Invite them to come visit with you if they are struggling in a class and are thinking about withdrawing --Remind them of the last date to withdraw and if they are receiving aid to go to the Financial Aid to discuss how withdrawing can jeopardize their future aid --Reach out to advisees with low mid-term grades to encourage them to use the CAS or other campus resources to help with their academic struggles
Eleventh week of classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Reminder that it is time to register and if they haven’t met with you to make an appointment and come see you to get advised and receive their Alternate PIN (if applicable) --Encourage them to meet with you to work out their degree plan
Before end of semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Send reminder to all who have not yet met with you for advisement to come see you prior to semester end and get advised to receive their Alternate PIN (if applicable)