Supervisor's User Guide for UGA New Advisor Training

The Office of Academic Advising Services at the University of Georgia encourages all new advisors to complete the [New Advisor Training Modules](#) covering advising policies, degree requirements, technology, majors/exploration, communication, and advising relationships. Supervisors play a critical role in contextualizing these modules and ensuring advisors are prepared for the realities of their specific college or student population. What follows are suggestions for best practices that supervisors can use throughout the training to make it more meaningful for the new hire.

Training Timing and Structure

Training should not be haphazard. As much as possible, developing a training schedule will ensure the new hire's time is being used effectively. A sample training schedule is included at the end of this document. In regards to the online modules:

- *Modules should be integrated with observations.* Develop a training calendar that integrates online modules with in-person sessions, shadowing, and check-ins.
- *Modules are best absorbed in manageable chunks.* Assign 1–2 modules per day rather than all at once. This prevents overload and allows time for reflection.
- *Modules need follow-up:* After each module, consider pairing the new hire with a current advisor who takes a special interest in that area to do a deeper dive into how your unit approaches the topic discussed in the module (e.g., shadowing a tech-savvy advisor after the Technology module).
- *Check-in after each module:* If not scheduling a full meeting as described above, at least do a quick check-in to make sure the advisor doesn't have additional questions, ideally before they begin the assessments.

Assessments

Within each module there are quick fact-checks to make sure the material is being absorbed at a basic level. However, each module also has a corresponding set of assessment questions meant to demonstrate understanding on a deeper level. These questions sometimes require integrating knowledge from multiple modules. There are many ways to use these assessments:

- *Answering in Writing:*
  - Pros: Advisors can take their time and research answers to be as complete as possible. In addition to assessing their knowledge of the modules, written answers assess their own research skills. Written assessments can be evaluated by the supervisor on their own time as well.

- o Cons: More time-intensive for both advisor and supervisor, as opposed to an oral discussion of the questions.
  - o If written answers are used, supervisors may suggest advisors answer some but not all of the questions.
- *Answering in Discussion:*
  - o Pros: Supervisors can see how advisors think on their feet and guide them in real time regarding how to address problems. Having a meeting to discuss the questions is also more time-effective for both advisor and supervisor. Generally speaking, advisors and supervisors can work through more of the assessments orally, as opposed to just choosing a couple to answer as one may do with written assessments.
  - o Cons: There is a risk of "leading" the advisor to the answer and not letting them do the work of figuring things out on their own.
- *Providing College-specific Questions*: The AACC Training Committee attempted to develop assessment questions addressing a variety of majors on campus. However, with 200+ majors, many supervisors commented their desire for more specific questions. To this end, the committee has developed a guide to creating assessment questions (see below). Supervisors may use the generic ones on the modules website, or may develop their own.

Building Engagement

- *Advisor Observations:* Universally, advisors cite observing other advisors as a key component in seeing how the material in the modules is relevant to day-to-day student interactions. Advisor observation encourages further questions, resulting in a broader knowledge base. Observations are absolutely key to training a new advisor. Some tips for advisor observations:
  - o Be sure to block off additional time during observations before and after the appointment, for prep and debrief.
  - o Target the observations based on the experienced advisor's strengths, and have the observer focus on those strengths in the observation. For instance, "This person is great at making the student feel comfortable..." or "This person knows A TON about the courses in the major."
  - o Slowly transition into the observer writing the advisor notes for the meeting, to get them used to what's important in an advising note (and relieve the experienced advisor of some responsibility).
  - o Slowly transition into switching roles, so the "observer" is doing the appointment and the experienced advisor is observing. (This is much easier than planning out experienced advisors to observe new hires' appointments.)

- o Even observing majors that the new hire will not advise is helpful! Especially to see how students in different majors have different needs.
- *Peer Teambuilding*: Encourage new advisors to meet coworkers early, and leave new and current advisors time to build a level of comfort that enables new advisors to feel comfortable asking questions without "feeling dumb."
- *Mentoring programs*: Pair new advisors with experienced mentors for ongoing guidance, as unit size allows. After a year, encourage new advisors to join the MAP program for mentoring outside of their own unit.

Ongoing Development

- *Certificate in Academic Advising:* Encourage all advisors to complete this certificate program within their first two years.
- *Notes and Forms/Degree Plans Review:* Find time to review notes and forms for the new hire's first week or two of appointments on their own. It'll be easier to stop bad habits before they become second nature.
- *Check-ins:* Schedule structured follow-ups (e.g., after 1 month, 2 months) to review progress and address challenges. These follow-ups may be increasingly spaced out the longer the advisor has been at their position.
- *Orientation Training*: Advising at orientation is qualitatively far different from advising during the Fall and Spring semesters. Furthermore, First-Year orientation appointments are qualitatively different from Transfer orientation appointments. All advisors should receive training specifically on both FY and Transfer orientation advising before their first orientation appointments.
- *Encouraging Long-term Learning:*
    - o Avoid encouraging a "certification mindset" – the idea that an advisor doesn't need to take classes once they have the basic certificate. This applies to both pursuing the Advanced Advising Certificate as well as just taking more classes that don't apply to any certificate.
    - o Encourage community engagement outside of PEP trainings, such as Lunch and Learns and Networking Committee events. Not all development involves formal training; talking with other advisors informally can be just as beneficial as taking PEP classes.
    - o Consider organizing trainings for your own office. Many other offices around campus (OSSA, SCO, Financial Aid, etc...) are happy to share information at a staff meeting.
    - o If funding is available, encourage participation in NACADA conferences or events. The Office of Academic Advising Services has a central advising fund advisors can apply for.

Sample Training Schedule

This training schedule assumes a non-UGA hire. UGA hires may not require all topics.

Before Advisor Starts

- Determine office location / clean and furnish office
- Schedule trainings (see below), taking into account departmental, etc… meetings the advisor may need to attend (add those first, work around them).
- Schedule introductory meeting with UGA's Director of Advising Services
- Add to Advise-Connect and other email groups as needed
- Add advisor's name to AACC advising survey
- Update directory information / websites

Week One

Date	Topic
Day 1	Office setup, tour UGA Onboarding (schedule onboarding session, leave time to get UGA card, set up parking, talk to HR about benefits, etc…) FERPA Quiz and request for SAGE \ Athena \ DW access Advising Office Policies
	Lunch \ Reflection
	Structure of Advising Overview of Advising Year Complete Intro & Policies Modules
Day 2	Basic UGA Degree Overview (Core\USG\UGA\College Requirements) Intro to Majors advised in Unit Bulletin\Major information Complete Requirements Module
	Observe Appointments and Appointment Prep
Day 3	Observe Appointments and Appointment Prep Complete Technology Module
	Lunch \ Reflection
	SAGE & Degreeworks (Basic Training) Technology & Organization Set up SAGE Calendar (staff meetings/important dates/advising appointments starting end of Week 3)
Day 4	Internal Resources & Websites External Websites AACC / Advising Community / PEP Classes Complete Majors & Exploration Module
	The Advising Appointment Observe Appointments

Day 5	Types of Students
	UGA Offices of use to advisors
	Lunch \ Reflection
	Observe Appointments

Week Two

Day 1	Connect & Complete \ Retention \ Etc...
	Transfer Services
	Complete Advising Relationship Module
	Lunch \ Reflection
	Observe Appointments
Day 2	Other College's @UGA \ Common Majors
	Observe Appointments
Day 3	Observe Appointments
	Lunch \ Reflection
	<Specific Major Training>
	<Specific Major Training>
Day 4	Observe \ Advise
	Lunch \ Reflection
	Observe \ Advise
Day 5	Complete Advising Communication Module
	Observe \ Advise

Week Three

Day 1	<Specific Major Training>
	Complete final Training Assessments
	Figuring out overlap and planning complex degree programs
	Advanced SAGE\Planner training
Day 2	Observe Appointments \ Be Observed
Day 3	Graduation Certification
	Observe Appointments \ Be Observed
Day 4	Advising Appointments (Observed)
Day 5	Advising Appointments (Observed)

Additional Ongoing Training Suggestions

- Schedule meetings with offices advisors interact with often (OSSA, SCO, Career Center, etc...)
- Schedule meetings with undergrad coordinators / department heads
- Schedule meetings with other student services staff (program or internship coordinators, prospective student staff, etc...)
- Suggest classes to observe

Guidance for Developing Advising Case Studies

The UGA Advisor Training Modules contain two types of case studies: smaller, module-based case studies and longer, comprehensive case studies. Both of these are currently in a document titled "Final Assessment Questions" (https://advising.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/all_assessment_questions_updated-1.pdf).

However, these case studies may not be ideal for your unit to use due to how requirements differ from major to major. This guide is meant to help you develop your own case studies for use in your units. The hope is for new advisors to be presented with case studies that are practical, recognizable, and directly applicable to day-to-day advising work.

Suggestions for Module-Based Assessment Case Studies

The module-based assessment case studies focus on questions that can be answered by referring directly back to the module:

- For the Policies, Requirements, and Technology modules' assessments, simply switching the major of the student and classes referred to should make the assessments more relevant to your unit.
- The Communication and Advising Relationship modules have assessment questions that do not refer to specific majors and should not need any alteration (although feel free to adjust if you wish).
- The Majors and Exploration module has long assessment questions with more complex case studies. Please see suggestions below to help you develop these case studies.

Suggestions for Final Assessment Case Studies

The final assessment case studies focus on complex scenarios. To address these scenarios, advisors need to analyze and integrate information from all of the modules. There are no "correct" answers to these scenarios; advisors need to consider student goals, academic progress, and/or outside constraints in order to provide advising feedback. These case studies are most useful when they:

- Begin with a familiar advising request or scenario
- Provide many small details and factors that could alter the advising response
- *Integrate complex student stories / questions from your team throughout the year, and using those as case studies for new advisors.*

The familiar advising scenarios should be familiar enough to all advising supervisors. When building out your case studies, use the existing case studies in the document above as examples. Consider adding the following details and factors advisors would need to take into account as they advise:

- Multiple majors / minors / certificates
- Year
- Common unit-specific scenarios
- How long student has been at UGA
- Stumbling block classes
- Possible major changes / unspecified
- Double Dawgs
- Double major vs. minor
- Background (family, upbringing, etc...)
- High demand major
- CPOS scenarios
- Special populations (rural, first gen, etc...)
- Pre-Professional goals (pre-med, pre-law, etc...)
- Tuition / financial concerns
- Accessibility & Testing concerns (mental and physical health)
- Building out (multiple?) four-year plans
- Concerns of graduation semester / graduating "on-time"

The more detail you can provide in these case studies, the more "true-to-life" they will be, and the more discussion you can have with your advisor about how the different factors may influence their advising.