

Committee on Advising and Student Life (CASL)
Annual Report for the 2015-2016 Academic Year

The committee met seven times during the 2015-16 academic year. Committee members included faculty members Prof. Scott Barton, Prof. Laureen Elgert, Prof. Lauren Mathews, Prof. Sarah Olson, Prof. Huong Higgins, and Prof. Nima Rahbar. Other committee members included Maggie Becker (Director -Career Services & Professional Practice), Philip Clay (Dean of Students, ex-officio member), Paul Reilly (Director, Office of Academic Advising, ex officio member), Prof. Kris Wobbe (Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, ex officio member), Sarah Schultz (graduate student representative), Sam Flibbert (undergraduate representative August-December 2015), Carlie Alfaro (undergraduate representative August-December 2015), and Carolina Ramos (undergraduate representative January - August 2016).

Officers:

- Prof. Mathews served as chair from August – January
- Prof. Olson served February – May.
- Prof. Olson served as secretary from August – January
- Prof. Barton served as secretary February – May.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

1. Many CASL discussions were focused on survey data related to Academic Advising.
 - a. Paul Reilly presented Noel-Levitz survey data on student satisfaction of academic advisors. The survey data was available for the years 2010, 2012, and 2014. The satisfaction of academic advising has decreased and is below the average for other four-year national private institutions. Issues identified were accountability of faculty for advising.
 - b. CASL survey data where WPI faculty were asked how likely they would be to engaged in academic advising if it was not required was also presented by Paul Reilly. We identified that some faculty do not feel ready or trained for advising. We discussed programs or actions that could help prepare faculty to advise students.
2. The CASL charge was discussed and updated so that it was simplified and clear in its focus on academic advising, career advising, and student life.
3. CASL members met with Maureen Deiana from Marketing to discuss WPI's new website to launch in August 2016. New features will include a focus on the student experience and the site will be accessible from any device. We were focused on understanding how students will be able to find files (e.g. tracking sheets for majors).
4. The committee updated a concise resource guide for academic advising, which organizes links to important academic advising resources along with brief

explanations of each resource. The resource guide is available on the academic advising website and was presented at the February faculty meeting.

5. Kris Wobbe presented data on Insight Advising. Since many faculty had been participating for over 5 years, CASL decided that they should be recognized for their service. In coordination with Connie Aramento (Office of Academic Advising), awards were given for insight faculty advisors based on whether they had served for 5-9 years or 10+ years. A brief presentation was given at the May faculty meeting to highlight insight advising and to thank long term insight advisors.
6. Paul Reilly presented preliminary data for a recent survey of first year students related to their advising experiences. Over 54% students that responded met with their faculty advisor on Academic Advising day. We discussed whether general themes could be identified and Office of Academic Advising will continue to look at the data.

APPOINTMENTS

Prof. Nima Rahbar and Prof. Lauren Mathews volunteered to serve on the Trustees' Award for Outstanding Advising Committee for 2015-16 as the engineering and non-engineering faculty members, respectively. Samuel Flibbert also volunteered to be a representative on this committee.

REPORTS TO THE FACULTY

At the January faculty meeting, Prof. Laureen Elgert and Paul Reilly presented an updated Faculty Advising Resource Guide. This guide organizes links to important academic advising resources along with brief explanations of each resource.

At the May faculty meeting, Prof. Sarah Olson and Connie Aramento gave a short presentation on Insight Advising and recognized long serving Insight advisors.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE ACTION IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2016-2017

1. A continued discussion of advising models, with a focus of how they align with the strategic plan in terms of Major and a Mission and More in 4.

Professors Mohamed Eltabakh and Cagdas Onal will join the committee next academic year.