Hello Marshall Advisors!

In an effort to help us stay better connected, University College will be sending advising tips and relevant information on a regular basis. If faculty and/or staff would like to receive this information and are not currently on the advisor listserv, please contact Amber Bentley via email or call her at 6-7039. Please let her know of possible topics for future newsletters, as well.

The following articles have been excerpted with permission from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA).

**Advising Academically Underprepared Students**

*Marsha A. Miller, Kansas State University and Colleen Murray, Central Community College—Hastings Campus*

**Intrusive Advising Helps Students Become Resilient**

Experience shows that intrusive advising strategies can be especially useful when advising to build student resiliency. Intrusive advising strategies found to be helpful at the initial enrollment of an underprepared student include:

- Utilize appropriate assessment tools (e.g., ACT, ACCULACER, COMPASS, etc.) to determine student skills and abilities;
- Employ open-ended questioning techniques e.g., "What subjects did you enjoy studying in the past?" with follow-up questions such as "What methods did you find successful in studying this subject?"
- Identify student strengths as well as skill deficits;
- Be direct, emphatic, and prescriptive when designing a plan to overcome skills deficits (Ender & Wilkie, 2000);
- Recommend courses appropriate to students' current skill levels mixed with course options in areas of previous success;
- Match student learning style with the teaching style used in the course; use caution in recommending on-line classes or satellite classes;
- Help students determine the time of day that will best optimize learning e.g., determine if the student is a 'morning person';
- Help students set short and long-term goals and develop action plans to achieve their goals (Ender & Wilkie, 2000);
- Introduce student programs, resources and groups -- TRIO/SSS, Gear Up, writing and math centers, learning and study skills classes, college survival courses, Orientation, career development center, etc. -- that create support structures;
- Explain the importance of meeting deadlines and regular class attendance;
- If the student is eligible for financial assistance, encourage the student to obtain a work-study position on campus for a limited number of hours per week. Note: Research cited by Wilkie and Jones (1994) indicates campus employment is associated with higher retention.

**Apathy’s Antidote: Using Mindfulness to Improve Advisor Performance**

*Eirin Grimes and Chrissy Renfro, Laramie County Community College*

**Loving our jobs every day.** Addressing mindfulness is also a matter of professional development and decreasing the risk of burnout. “...(The) increased time demands [in academic advising] place a higher relevance on self-care” (Davis, 2008, p. 453). Symptoms of burnout can include negative feelings toward students, self-doubt, anger, guilt, inability to concentrate and feeling overwhelmed (Davis, 2008). During busy advising times it can be hard to take a few moments and focus our awareness on how we feel: Tired? Hungry? Stressed? It also can be difficult to address those needs. Another pillar of mindfulness practice is the idea of the *Beginner’s Mind* -- or cultivating a mind that is willing to see everything as if for the first time (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p 53). When we cultivate a Beginner’s Mind we set aside our preconceptions about the student/situation and approach each student with a fresh attitude and renewed focus.

**Try this:** While you breathe, focus your thoughts on why you went into this field in the first place. Most of us gravitated to advising because we like people and like helping them. When you bring yourself back to remembering the simple reasons you chose this profession, you can find feelings of contentedness.

*Read more*