



2023 - 2026 
Strategic Plan Report



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Executive Summary

National and local attention continues to highlight academic advising as a primary service by which the institution can improve holistic student support to improve a sense of belonging to the institution, offer a more seamless journey through degree completion, and provide tools for career preparedness (see APLU, EAB, UT System). Indeed, student academic success, connection to the institution, and engagement in both curricular and co-curricular activities are essential pieces to achieving The University of Texas at Arlington's (UTA) mission and are impacted by excellent academic advising efforts.

To fully benefit from the positive attributes of an effective academic advising service, it is equally important to recognize the need to intentionally build and maintain an enriching work environment for the academic advising community and to assess the work advisors do more fully through the lens of student retention and completion. In this vein, UTA launched a strategic planning effort in partnership with NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising to identify a winning roadmap to student and academic advisor success.

The advising strategic planning process was designed to accomplish the following:

1. Pursue proven and innovative academic advising strategies that will help UTA achieve retention and completion rates and equitable outcomes for all students who meet or exceed our aspirant peers.
2. Through needed enhancements, build an enriching work environment for the academic advisors.

Ultimately, the advising strategic plan offers a roadmap to collaboratively accomplish the Maverick Academic Advising Community vision and mission. The initial roadmap is outlined within this report beginning with a summary of the identified goals that support our Maverick Academic Advising Community core values, followed by background details of the strategic planning effort, and concluding with the identified outcomes, outputs, activities, and inputs necessary to accomplish the stated goals.

Identified Goals for Advising Strategic Plan That Support Our Core Values

1 Create standards of excellence for advising at UTA.
Commitment, Professionalism, & Belonging

2 Tailor academic advising services to increase retention and equitable outcomes.
Belonging & Commitment

3 Discover new efficiencies to increase student agency.
Equipping & Belonging

4 Employ technology to advance delivery of advising.
Professionalism, Commitment, & Equipping

5 Define the role of an academic advisor.
Professionalism

6 Implement strategies to reduce advisor attrition.
Professionalism & Commitment

7 Continue investing in professional development.
Equipping, Belonging, Professionalism, & Commitment

8 Focus on workforce readiness and career development in advising.
Professionalism & Commitment

9 Develop a plan to address continued enrollment growth.
Belonging & Commitment



Background of Strategic Planning

UTA has been actively enhancing academic advising over the past two years using campus feedback, data, and known best-practices to guide efforts. The following are notable accomplishments focusing on the assessed and expressed needs of the UTA community:

- 19 new academic advisor positions were funded and hired to improve access to advisors and reduce caseloads
- Two market adjustments were conducted coinciding with two merit raises increased academic advisor salaries
- Creation of a Professional Development Coordinator position, charged with improving and standardizing campuswide training and development for academic advising
- Deployment of a standard academic advising assessment survey (completed by students)
- Standardized job descriptions for AAI, II, and III were developed and deployed across campus
- Maverick Major Exploration Program was launched to help better serve students exploring their major options
- Vision, mission, core values, and responsibility statements drafted and finalized and located under Appendix A
- Improvements to MyMav including MavPlanner/MavScheduler and a new MyMav Drop Form process

Despite these important enhancements, UTA was missing a prioritized list of goals and actions necessary to make long-term improvements and are aligned with a shared vision and core values of the Maverick Academic Advising Community. Further, review of the following data suggestions there is more focused work to support the institutional pillar of student success:

- While important gains have been made over the last decade, retention rates for the first-time full-time students remains approximately 10-15% below aspirant peers.
- The National Survey of Students Engagement data for UTA (2018 and 2022) indicates UTA advising underperforming along multiple measures for first year (FY) and seniors (SR).
 - ◆ The 2018 NSSE data for FY students showed UTA advising underperforming compared to peers along all 11 categories. The most statistically significant were questions related to career preparedness resources and discussions around future planning (e.g., study abroad information).
- ◆ For SR in 2018, UTA underperformed along three categories. The most statistically significant gap was related to frequency of contact/access to an advisor and career preparedness resources and discussions around future planning (e.g., study abroad information).
 - Note: 2022 data shows that UTA either tightened the gap between peers or advanced beyond peers in several categories for academic advising. However, gaps remained in the areas of academic planning (goal setting), career readiness, and access.

- The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) describes academic advising as an essential contributor to the success and persistence of postsecondary students (Klepfer & Hull, 2012; Kot, 2014; O’Banion, 2016) and frames advising as a “crucial component of the college experience” encouraging “students to cultivate meaning in their lives, make significant decisions about their futures” and connecting them to important resources along the way (CAS, 2019). When examining all 12 parts of CAS for advising, there are key areas where advising enhancements are needed at UTA:
 - ◆ Program and services (need to explore model design that is more student-centric not department/college/“division-centric”; alignment; clear roles; learning outcomes; and student agency)
 - ◆ Assessment (prior to 2021, UTA did not have a standard way of assessing academic advising and using the data to inform practice)
 - ◆ Student learning, development, and success (identified student learning outcomes)
 - ◆ Knowledge of “who is my advisor” and access to advisor
 - ◆ Human resources (staffing and professional development, consistent entry of notes, workflow)
 - ◆ Leadership, management, and supervision (some colleges have designated leads whose sole role is to stay updated on the latest policies, processes, and best practices for advising and lead an academic advising team while other colleges have a departmental advising focus)

Considering the previously stated needs for enhancements, during the summer and fall 2021, the University Academic Advising Committee (UAAC)¹ began initial discussions and efforts towards building an intentional plan to enhance academic advising at UTA.

During Fall 2021, UTA contracted with NACADA (The Global Community for Academic Advising) to provide an advising program review and to help conduct a priming event with UAAC to begin the early stages of strategic planning. NACADA conducted the program review site visit on Oct. 27 and 28, 2021 (see Appendix B for agenda), returned the program review report two weeks later, and conducted an onsite strategic planning primer event on Dec. 13, 2021, attended by UAAC advising leads. They met with campus leadership, including deans and associate deans, and with over 100 stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Communication with campus stakeholders occurred throughout (see example located in Appendix C).

Strategic Planning Process

Following collaborative work with the academic deans, nine emergent themes were identified as goals that would guide the work of an appointed task force. The purpose of the task force was to provide a draft strategic plan for the campus community to review and offer feedback.

Members of the Strategic Planning Task Force were representatives appointed by an academic dean, vice president, or vice provost (see Appendix D and E for Membership). Appointed members first met on July 28, 2022, where the provost gave the following charge:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce final vision and mission statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present key priorities to campus stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review data points related to student success and academic advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop draft strategic plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize key priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize and launch strategic plan

July 2022, the assistant vice provost for academic advising, in partnership with the Office of the President, invited the academic advising community to a luncheon with UTA President Jennifer Cowley where the community participated in tabletop discussions regarding academic advising. Community feedback was sent to the Task Force as part of their review process (a summary of the feedback can be found in Appendix F).

Following the start of fall 2022, the Academic Advising Strategic Planning Task Force began meeting. One of the first tasks completed was the creation of a vision statement to serve as a “north star” guiding aspirational conversations. This was followed up by the editing of the current mission statement and core values. The provost, deans, associate deans, and UAAC reviewed and were given opportunities to provide input on the draft vision, mission, and core values statements. Feedback from community was incorporated into the final versions.

To level-set and be data-informed regarding recommendations for the strategic plan, the Task Force reviewed data related to academic advising and student success during the months of September and October. Once the data was reviewed, the Task Force conducted a SWOT analysis. Examples of the types of data points reviewed are listed below:

- NACADA UTA Advising Program Review Report
- Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) - advising program standards
- National Survey of Student Engagement - NSSE 2018/2022
- Retention and grad rates of aspirant peers
- UTA System Excellence in Advising Rubric
- Annual UAAC Advising Survey Report - 2021-22
- NACADA Nine Conditions of Advising Excellence

On Oct. 21, 2022, 105 members of the Maverick Advising Community met with the president and provost for a hosted luncheon in the College Park Center where the community received updates on the work of the Task Force (including the vision and mission statements). Additionally, at the luncheon, the participants interacted in a series of tabletop conversations related to important themes that emerged from conversations with the academic deans and the July gathering with the president (see Appendix G). Emerging from this gathering were the building blocks that helped craft the vision for change statements found within the Strategic Plan Logic Model (pages 9-28).

As part of gathering input to inform the strategic plan, two Task Force teams visited two institutions during fall 2022: Georgia State University (GSU) and the University of Central Florida (UCF). A summary of our findings are outlined in Appendix H.

The following pages 9-28 outline the Task Force recommendations. Each table represents one of the nine dean emergent themes/goals.



Strategic Plan Logic Model

Vision for Change, Outcomes,
Outputs, Activities, and Inputs

Goal 1:

Create standards of excellence for advising at UTA

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Commitment, Professionalism, &
Belonging)

Vision for Change Statement: Academic advisors will be seen by
the institution as professionals who contribute to the teaching and
learning purpose of the university.

Strategy 1: Assessment of Advising

Outcomes

- UTA will be able to assess the impact of academic advising services through the deployment of a robust and comprehensive **assessment strategy**. A key element of the strategy is a comprehensive advising standard of student care model by which to practice (“culture of caring”).
- The comprehensive assessment strategy will include:
 1. An enhanced student feedback survey (with improved learning outcomes) administered at least each long term.
 2. A QuestionPro survey (“advisor self-assessment”) designed to garner information from academic advisors focusing on constructs such as job involvement, goals, access to necessary resources, and institutional and supervisor support.
 3. Compliance training focused on core knowledge areas for advisors.
 4. 360 supplementary evaluation of advising leads.

Outputs

- By Spring 2024, the advising community will have developed a list of shared student learning outcomes for academic advising and identified the tools by which to measure them (e.g., metrics within survey; MyMav). Further, assessment of these learning outcomes will occur by Fall 2024.
- By Spring of 2025, 100% of academic advisors will have completed the advisor self-assessment. The self-assessment will occur annually in conjunction with the performance review.
- In concert with TCE, annual compliance training will occur by Fall 2025.
- Pilot advising supervisor 360 evaluation will be developed and launched by Fall 2025.

Activities

- A UAAC subcommittee of academic advisors will convene for one semester to research and develop recommended learning outcomes and identify the tools by which to assess them. Consultation with and review by CRTLE will be requested. Following CRTLE input, the list will be reviewed and approved by UAAC.
- **Enhance Current Student Feedback Survey:** one learning outcome should be written that encourages students to access their own information/progress and learn to make informed academic decisions.
- **Advisor Self-Assessment Tool:** advisor self-assessment tool will be researched, evaluated, and ready for use by 2024.
- **Compliance Training:** assessment tool to ensure advisor knowledge of university and local resources, policies, etc. Will be implemented by Spring 2024.
- **360 Evaluation for Advising Leads (includes AVPAA):** assessment subcommittee will create an evaluation tool for advising leads that will be completed by advisors and other peers/key stakeholders as part of annual evaluation process. Constructs assessed include leadership, communication, reliability, initiative, adaptability, and ability to foster collaboration. It will also include the degree to which the advising lead understands and promotes the Maverick Advising Community vision, mission, core values, and role of the advisor. The AVPAA will partner with TCI and the applicable college/school dean or unit VP to administer the evaluation tool.

Inputs

- Reconvene UAAC Assessment subcommittee to be made up of academic advisors from across campus with charge to create recommended student learning outcomes and tools to assess. Funds may be needed for working luncheon and advising town hall. Partner with CRTLE to help ensure sound creation of learning outcomes and survey tools. Partner with TCI related to supplementary evaluation tool creation and administration.

Strategy 2: Guiding Principles

Outcomes

- UTA will be intentional about the purpose and goals of advising through identified outcomes connected to guiding principles.
- College/School/Division level advising units will understand and promote the Maverick Advising Community **guiding principles** (academic advising mission, vision, core values, and standard of care model) to the UTA community.
- uta.edu/student-success/advising/about-advising

Outputs

- By Fall 2024, all colleges/units will display the advising mission, vision, core values, advisor responsibilities on their respective webpages and/or within their areas.

Activities

- Academic advisors will develop their own personal advising philosophy and goals.
- Each unit will have a responsible person (e.g., advisor lead) to ensure the advising vision, mission, core values, and advisor and student responsibilities are reflected across departments and majors.
- Assessed as part of the 360 Evaluation for advising leads. It will look at the degree to which the advising lead understands and promotes the Maverick Advising Community vision, mission, core values, and role of the advisor.
- Include the vision, mission, and core values in professional development trainings, periodic communications/discussions, and embed within annual advisor awards ceremony.

Inputs

- Identify lead responsible for ensuring the advising vision, mission, core values, and advisor and student responsibilities are reflected across departments and majors. Create 360 Advisor Lead Evaluation.

Strategy 3: Structure

Outcomes

- UTA will identify and deploy a **structure of advising** that will ensure a culture of caring; offer consistency of service delivery; strong coordination; standard hiring, training, and development practices; equitable caseloads; and effective communication channels that offer advisors the ability to provide regular feedback and solutions.

Outputs

- To fully benefit from the advisor's unique role in impacting student success, by Fall 2025, UTA leadership will assess the current academic advising structure and make decisions regarding how to update and enhance it.
- By Spring 2025, UTA will deploy a new more effective model of advising.

Activities

- President, provost, and deans collaborate with assistant vice provost for academic advising (with input from UAAC) will assess needed changes to structure; construct feedback loops for community to offer input; build communication plans; identify needed resources to deploy new structure of advising.
- Assessment of advising structure will focus on how to delivery consistency of the advising experience for ALL students, especially given UTA has been nationally recognized as being designated a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Asian American Native American Pacific-Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), and a top university for serving military students; and a Carnegie Classified R1 university with a social mobility minded mission.

Inputs

- New funds to ensure equitable staffing (caseloads) and consistent training occurs across campus.

Goal 2:

Tailor academic advising services to increase retention and equitable outcomes

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Belonging & Commitment)

Vision for Change Statement: The Maverick Academic Advising Community will offer tailored approaches to meet the unique academic needs of the student to help them achieve their educational goals.

Strategy 1: Advising Practice - Proactive Advising

Outcomes

- Academic advisors will have access to and will use data to provide proactive advising services for students in their caseloads.

Outputs

- By Spring 2025, 75% of academic advisors will have completed an advisor focused technology workshop and workshop on proactive advising. By Fall 2025, 90% of academic advisors will have completed an advisor focused technology workshop and workshop on proactive advising.

Activities

- Design professional development sessions to help advisors access the tools and skills necessary that will help them proactively identify students in need of holistic advising service. Sessions will be developed recognizing UTA as being designated HSI, AANAPISI, and a top university for serving military students; and a Carnegie Classified R1 university with a social mobility minded mission.

Inputs

- Will require partnership with University Analytics to implement an active learning workshop related to using Civitas Inspire for Advisors and SAS tools. Will also require building a new seminar on conducting proactive advising campaigns using data.

Strategy 2: Advising Practice - Holistic Advising

Outcomes

- As a Maverick Advising Community focused on delivering upon a “community that cares” promise to students and aligned with our shared values, define what it means to offer holistic advising.
- Use data to align resources to support students most in need of holistic support.

Outputs

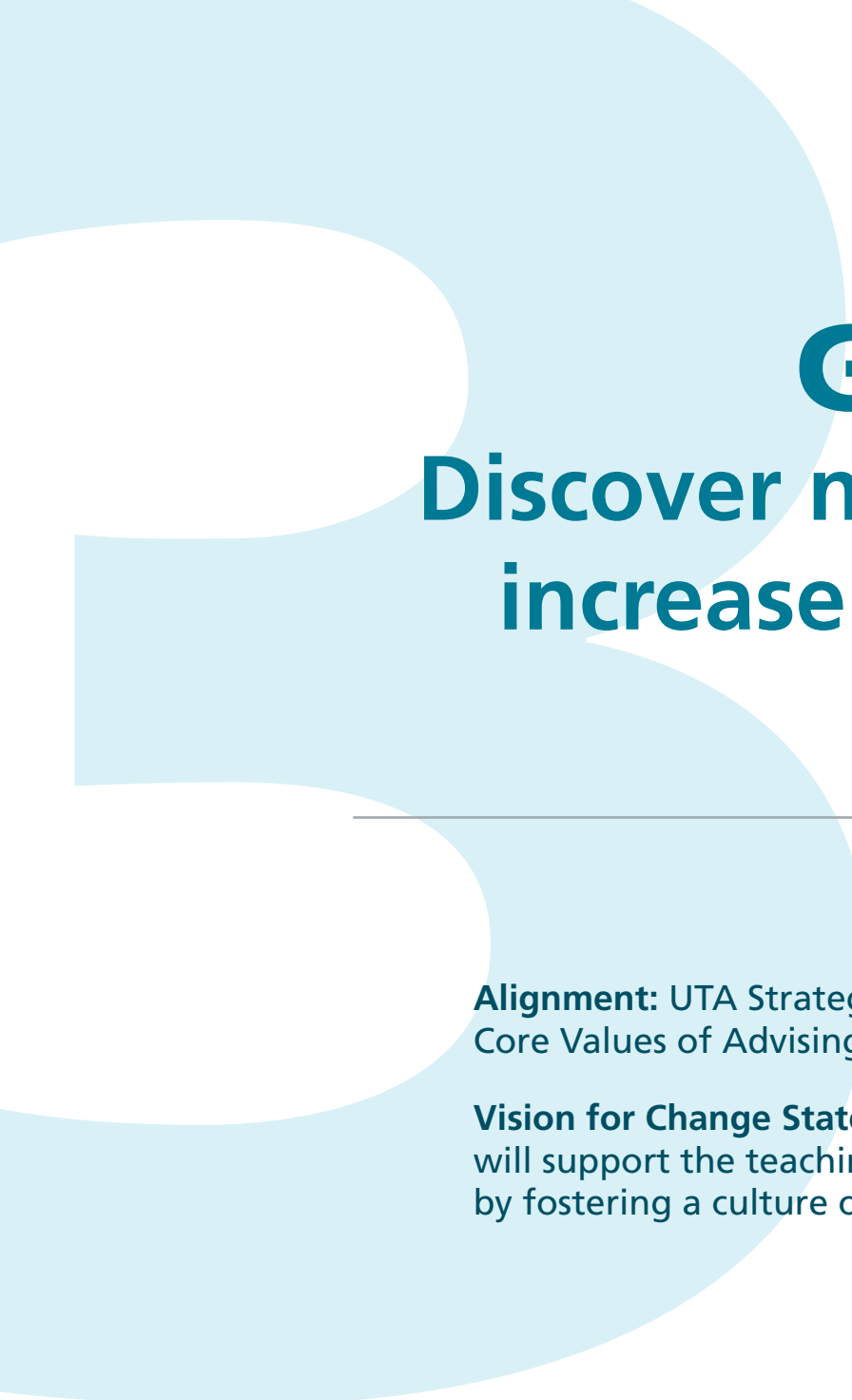
- By Spring 2025, create and launch a Culture of Care certificate that includes a section on holistic advising.
- By Spring 2025, each advising area will conduct at least one advisor outreach campaign targeted to support students most at risk of attrition.

Activities

- Equip academic advisors with the time, training, and developmental resources to use Civitas Inspire and SAS reports in a manner that will allow them to deliver holistic advising to improve student persistence and graduation.
- Create “culture of care” series with certificate of completion in holistic advising. Developed recognizing UTA as being designated as HSI and AANAPISI serving institutions, and a top university for serving military students; and a Carnegie Classified R1 university with a social mobility minded mission.
- Collaborate with academic coaches to help define a referral process and coordinate communication plans to reduce redundancy.

Inputs

- Deploy scarce resources in a manner that will allow advisors to offer holistic advising for students who desire and/or are in need.
- AVPAA, in partnership with professional development coordinator, offer holistic advising training, ideas for local campaigns, implementation strategies, tools necessary to implement, and offer certificate in holistic advising.
- Work with UTA Marketing and Multimedia producer to develop video modules to enhance advisor Canvas training on holistic advising.



Goal 3:

Discover new efficiencies to increase student agency

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (Student Success)
Core Values of Advising (Equipping & Belonging)

Vision for Change Statement: The Maverick Advising Community will support the teaching and learning mission of the institution by fostering a culture of student agency.

Strategy 1: New Student Onboarding

Outcomes

- New students will understand where to find their **degree requirements** in MyMav and how to research additional information and policy/procedures on UTA's website.
- Students will have more **agency** to self-enroll in courses with minimal intervention based on recommendations from advisor.

Outputs

- Upon completion of the advising survey, 85% of students will indicate knowledge of their degree requirements.
- Prior to the final workday in July, 90% of eligible students who attended FTIC NMO will be enrolled in coursework applicable to their degree. Prior to the final workday in July, 85% of eligible students who attended Transfer NMO will be enrolled in coursework applicable to their degree.

Activities

- Focus more new student onboarding efforts on the academic aspects, focusing on advising, registration and navigation of MyMav. Creation of learning outcomes and assessment activities associated to ensure new orientation format is meeting student needs.
- Involve the entire academic advising community in supporting FTIC orientations.

Inputs

- Regular convening of an orientation task force comprised of Student Affairs and academic advisors to implement enhancements to delivery of orientation.
- Creation of video tutorials and marketing campaign to reinforce use of product in a digestible and informative way.

Strategy 2: Continuing Student Planning

Outcomes

- Continuing students will have a working **knowledge of what it takes to get a degree**.
- Continuing students will use **MavPlanner and MavScheduler** to plan and register for courses.

Outputs

- Upon completion of advisor survey, 85% of students will know what their degree requirements are; and 90% will feel confident in using MavPlanner and MavScheduler, further creating confidence in their degree path and sense of belonging to the institution.
- By Spring 2025, advising areas will implement the Think 30 Campaign and at least one early registration effort. As a result, prior to the close of each regular term, 70% of eligible current students will be enrolled in coursework.

Activities

- By Fall 2024, align the following program and learning outcomes:
 1. Pre-orientation advising modules learning outcomes
 2. Orientation advising learning outcomes
 3. Advising post-orientation learning outcomes
- Assess advisor survey question regarding student confidence in knowing what it takes to get a degree and confidence in using MavPlanner/MavScheduler.
- By Spring 2025, advising areas will implement the Think 30 Campaign and at least one early registration effort. As a result, prior to the close of each regular term, 70% of eligible current students will be enrolled in coursework.

Inputs

- Hire a temporary 10-12 month position to help the advising community develop video's, graphics, and presentation template for new student orientation that will focus on what it takes to get a degree at UTA, use of EMM's, how to use Degree Map, MavPlanner, MavScheduler and ensure that Think 30 concepts all aligned with developed program and student learning outcomes.

Goal 4:

Employ technology to advance delivery of advising

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Professionalism, Commitment, & Equipping)

Vision for Change Statement: The Maverick Advising Community will use advancements in technology to maximize the impact of advising resources by delivering timely, accurate, and high-quality services.

Strategy 1: Access: Who is My Advisor?

Outcomes

- Creation of **advisor assignments** in MyMav so all students will know who their academic advisor (or advising team) is and how to contact them.

Outputs

- By Summer 2024, all (100%) students will have an assigned academic advisor in MyMav.

Activities

- Pilot MyMav advisor assignment with the UAC and CONHI in the Fall of 2023.
- Following successful pilot, assign one advisor to every student or to advising team (as needed) for campus.

Inputs

- No new funds needed. UAAC collaborate with OIT to assign academic advisor or advising unit to each student.

Strategy 2: Equipping Students with Degree Planning Tools

Outcomes

- Student facing tools, such as MavPlanner, will be supported by advising, continually assessed, and enhanced to ensure they are meeting the needs of our students.

Outputs

- By Spring 2026, upon completion of the advising survey, 85% of students will indicate knowledge of how to use MavPlanner and MavScheduler.
- First-year advisors will utilize MavPlanner to recommend courses for incoming Spring 2024 cohort.
- By Fall 2025, appoint MyMav Champions Leadership Council.

Activities

- Student feedback will be collected and reviewed by advising leads and MyMav Champions to understand enhancements the students require.
- Work with OIT and campus partners to explore upgrades and enhancements.
- Advising and MavPlanner project leads in partnership with the MyMav Champions Council will work with OIT and other campus partners to explore upgrades and enhancements.
- Training materials will be continuously updated to ensure students are informed of changes and updates to MavPlanner and MavScheduler.

Inputs

- Potential for new funds needed based on enhancements required to platforms.

Strategy 3: Equipping Advisors

Outcomes

- Ensure campuswide adoption and ongoing improvement of MyMav tools used by academic advisors.
- MyMav Champions will develop expertise with our campus Student Information System (PeopleSoft).
- MyMav Champions will share MyMav tools and expertise with their local advising constituents.

Outputs

- By Fall 2025, appoint MyMav Champions Leadership Council.
- By Fall 2025, launch MyMav Champions program.

Activities

- MyMav Champions Council involved in enhancements and maintenance for MyMav tools used by advisors.
- Training and development of MyMav Champions will occur as a group and then locally conducted by MyMav Champions.
- MyMav Champions will be one advising representative (AII or AIII) from each college/school and DSS.
- MyMav Champions will gain experience and recognition as a campus leader during the year and at annual awards recognition.

Inputs

- Need to secure permanent annual funds of \$700 (per MyMav Champion) to go towards advising professional development.
- Collaboration between UAAC, DSS, OIT, Registrar, colleges, and school.

Goal 5:

Define the role of an academic advisor for the student

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (Student Success)
Core Values of Advising (Professionalism)

Vision for Change Statement: The Maverick Advising Community will have understood roles, consistent job standards, and salary bands for undergraduate and graduate advisors across campus.

Strategy: Clear Communication of Advisor Role

Outcomes

- UTA will be intentional about the purpose and goals of academic advising.
- The academic advisor role will be clearly defined, and campus community will understand the **role of an academic advisor** and the role the student plays in an effective partnership.
- Academic advisors job descriptions will continue to be standardized across campus.

Outputs

- All (100%) of new incoming students will be informed about the advisor role and student responsibilities during new student orientation (e.g., will include review of “preparing for your advising appointment”).
- Campus messaging about role of advisors and accomplishments will occur annually.
- Cheat sheet/resource guide created and disseminated to key stakeholders: who to call, when to call, FAQs.
- Piggy-back on existing trainings, divisional retreats, and college meetings to provide advising updates.

Activities

- Create a “Preparing for Your Academic Advising Appointment” page on the website that would be housed with other resources for students to access. Website will also include advisor role and student responsibility page. Include knowledge of advisor role and student responsibility as learning outcome for advising session at orientation. CAPP has a website dedicated to preparing for advising meetings.
- Role should be expanded beyond supporting registration and include more holistic activities.
- Create “New Mavericks Advising” page(s) on website.

Inputs

- Funds to hire a multimedia producer to integrate industry standards/best practices into advising websites, messaging, and social media campaigns. Assign individual to help multimedia producer to create “Preparing for Your Academic Advising Appointment” page and “New Mavericks Advising” page on the website.

Goal 6:

Implement strategies to reduce academic advisor attrition

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Professionalism & Commitment)

Vision for Change Statement: UTA will foster a positive, supportive, and growth-oriented environment for academic advisors through a united Maverick Advising Community culture that significantly contributes to student success.

Strategy 1: Advisor Career Pathway Plan

Outcomes

- Academic advisors will have a clearly designed and consistent **career pathway** with opportunities for professional development and growth.

Outputs

- By Spring 2025, all academic advising units (100%) will utilize the standardized advising career pathway as developed in partnership with provost, deans, HR, UAAC, and UTAAA.
- Academic advisors will be required to complete all levels of MARK training as part of the career pathway. MARK training will include enhanced elements that emphasize a culture of caring.

Activities

- UAAC will develop a career pathway (e.g., career ladder) for academic advisors to grow in the profession. This will include standard job descriptions, starting salaries for each level, and a robust professional development plan with growth metrics.

Inputs

- Additional coordinator for professional development; creation of advising leadership institute and growing in the profession roadmap; offer training and leadership development workshops, webinars, and mentoring; provide a flexible and easy-to-access resource for advisor development; include UTAAA partnership.

Strategy 2: Competitive Salaries

Outcomes

- Academic advisors will have **competitive salaries** thus increasing advisor talent acquisition and retention therefore offering consistency with advisor/student relationships.

Outputs

- By Spring 2023, all advisor level salaries (AAI, II, and III) will be reflective of the DFW market value.

Activities

- Complete a comprehensive salary study every three years.

Inputs

- HR compensation, UAAC, AVPAA partnership to collaborate on the market value review.

Strategy 3: Update Advisor Job Status

Outcomes

- Academic advisor I, II, and III job title status will be changed to classified exempt.

Outputs

- By Summer 2023, AVPAE will work with TCE, Office of the Provost, and deans to begin review of formal request submitted by UAAC to change advisor status to exempt.
- If approved by provost, by Fall 2024, all academic advisor levels we be changed to classified exempt.

Activities

- Summer 2023, UAAC will produce a formal request for changing advisor job status which will include the legal rationale (based on FSLA standards); peer data; and benefits to the university and advisors.

Inputs

- No additional costs. Will require the AVPAA to prioritize on UAAC agenda and convene a small group of UAAC leads to conduct assessment and create proposal.

Goal 7:

Continue investing in professional development

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Equipping, Belonging, Professionalism, & Commitment)

Vision for Change Statement: All academic advisors will have access to high-quality professional development opportunities that will help them gain relevant competencies and challenge them to grow as leaders in the profession.

Strategy 1: Professional Development Plan

Outcomes

- UTA will have well planned and **comprehensive training framework** (e.g., professional development plan) for the following:
- New graduate and undergraduate academic advisors
- Continuing/experienced graduate and undergraduate academic advisors
- Leads/supervisors of academic advisors. The plan will emphasize creating and maintaining a culture of caring.

Outputs

- By Fall 2025, 100% seasoned advisors will have completed MARK training, levels 1-3.
- By Fall 2024, a rotating schedule for professional development travel funds will be created and communicated to the advising leads.
- By Spring 2024, 100% seasoned advisors will have completed MARK training, levels 1-3.
- By Fall 2025, 100% colleges/units will have an onboarding training program in Canvas in which standards of advising care will be covered (conceptual, informational, relational).

Activities

- AVPAA and professional development coordinator will develop and share the professional development strategy to UAAC and the larger community. Input from the advising community will be sought in the development of the strategy.
- Items to consider would include:
 1. Refresher on best-practices (including holistic and student development approaches to advising), technology training, and just-in-time training for critical skills.
 2. MARK Level III will be developed with seasoned advisors in mind emphasizing “growing in the profession”.
 3. Academic units will provide a team-building opportunity for academic advisors.
 4. “Welcome Back” fall gathering of advisors that is designed to emphasize the Maverick Advisor Community aspect and update advisors on any degree plan changes and other important changes advisors should be aware of.

Inputs

- New resources would include an additional coordinator for professional development; assistance from OIT on MyMav enhancements. Include campus partners for cross-training.

Strategy 2: Improved Communication

Outcomes

- The Maverick Advising Community will have access to training on **entering effective advising notes**.

Outputs

- By Spring 2025, 75% of all academic advisors will be entering advising notes in CAR after each appointment.
- By Fall 2025, 95% of all academic advisors will be entering advising notes in CAR after each appointment.

Activities

- All academic advising areas continue and increase their usage of institutional advising notes (located in CAR) to provide a continuity of service to students

who may switch majors, departments, and schools. Notes help support a caseload model for providing holistic support to students. As the transfer student population continues to increase it is important to keep a record of these student interactions as this population may continue to shift between majors as they adjust to their new institution. Enhance MARK Training to emphasize practice and expectations; assess activity of CAR notes by advisor. This strategy will align with our efforts towards creating a culture of caring and excellent communication.

Inputs

- No new financial resources needed. Include notes seminar in professional development plan as a reoccurring session. Add to the individuals who can facilitate the session.

Strategy 3: Certificate Program

Outcomes

- Provide higher education opportunities and resources devoted to enhancing **academic advisor growth**.

Outputs

- By Fall 2024, the AVPAE will inquire with Dept. of ELPS faculty about the possibility of a new certificate in Academic Advising.

Activities

- Collaboration with CoEd; exploration of resources available to offer certificate; market analysis.

Inputs

- Potential for new funds needed here for coordination and instruction.



Goal 8:

Focus on workforce readiness and career development in advising

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (Student Success)
Core Values of Advising (Professionalism & Commitment)

Vision for Change Statement: Academic advisors will play an intentional role in helping students with career readiness.

Strategy 1: Training and Development

Outcomes

- Academic advisors will gain timely and relevant career development and workforce readiness knowledge throughout the year.
- Advisors will apply knowledge with students to improve student engagement, sense of belonging, and improve career readiness of graduates.

Outputs

- By Spring 2025, the academic advising professional development coordinator and the Career Development Center will coordinate to identify topics to be discussed and create a schedule of programs and workshops for advisors.

Activities

- Professional development will include MARK trainings, presentations and workshops on how to have career coaching conversations, how to utilize available resources to assist students in their career development\ and workforce readiness, and other relevant and timely topics.

Inputs

- No new funds necessary. Will require collaboration to find available spaces for in-person trainings, and trainings can also be done virtually.

Strategy 2: Communities of Practice

Outcomes

- The University Academic Advising Committee (UAAC) and the Career Development Center will form a “community of practice”, as an opportunity for collaboration and discussion on best practices, issues and concerns, and cross-functional sharing of information related to career readiness.

Outputs

- By Fall 2025, the University Academic Advising Committee (UAAC) and the Career Development Center will form the “community of practice” and identify an appropriate cadence for these meetings (monthly, quarterly, etc.).

Activities

- Academic advisors and Career Development Center staff will meet regularly (TBD on cadence) to share best practices and topical issues for the purpose of promoting career readiness of UTA students.

Inputs

- Some new funds MAY be required if breakfast/luncheon-type meetings are included. Ongoing collaboration between Career Development Center, UAAC, and appointed constituents assisting with the “community of practice” efforts.

Strategy 3: Toolkit and Resources

Outcomes

- Academic advisors will have access to resources via the academic advising handbook Canvas course that will provide toolkits for career development conversations and other resources.

Outputs

- By Fall 2025, the “career readiness” resource toolkit will be created and added to academic advising handbook Canvas course.
- By Fall 2025, all academic advisors will receive a joint communication from Career Development Center and Division of Student Success emphasizing the new toolkit and how to use it.

Activities

- Creation of toolkit by Career Development Center. Professional development coordinator for academic advising add toolkit to current academic advising handbook Canvas course. Craft a joint communication from Career Development Center and Division of Student Success and send to all academic advisors using listserv.

Inputs

- No new funds are necessary, as all resources will be available virtually.



Goal 9:

Develop a plan to address continued enrollment growth

Alignment: UTA Strategic Plan (People & Culture)
Core Values of Advising (Belonging & Commitment)

Vision for Change Statement: The Maverick Advising Community will strive to maintain an advisor to student ratio of 350:1 (or lower).

Strategy: Effective Caseload Management

Outcomes

- Students will have improved access to an academic advisor through the development of smaller caseloads for academic advisors.

Outputs

- Given research has found a statistically significant negative relationship between size of advising caseloads and retention rates, by Spring 2026, the Maverick Advising Community student to advisor ratio will not exceed 350:1.

Activities

- AVPAA will maintain a working document in partnership with UAAC leads that will provide accurate caseloads for each college and each college advisor. Annual review of caseloads will occur. Reasonable caseload distribution will help increase student access to advisors and allow for more holistic advising to occur. Intentional distribution of funding to secure appropriate caseloads per advisor freeing them up to be more holistic in approach aligns with our campus designation as HSI and AANAPISI serving institutions, and a top university for serving military students; and a Carnegie Classified R1 university with a social mobility minded mission.

- Plan for caseloads of 310:1 or less to account for open positions to support UTAs commitment to caseloads not exceeding 350 students.
- Utilize paired cross training to support advising units and share knowledge.
- Offer career development for returning staff to work in another advising unit for a half day per week.
- Create advising specialist positions that are cross trained along multiple areas.
- Semesterly training for call center staff by advising leads.

Inputs

- New funds to hire additional advisors who will serve as generalists to help ensure we have no gaps when advisors leave the institution or take on new roles on campus. Creation of report or process to more accurately capture workload per advisor across the campus.

Strategic Planning Timeline

Summer

- Finalize and launch strategic plan

Fall

- Launch: Implement first phase of advising enhancements via strategic plan (short-term objectives — Fall 2023 to Spring 2024)
- Prepare for implementation for next phase of advising enhancements (middle- and long-term objectives)

2023



Appendix

Appendix A

UTA Academic Advising

Vision Statement: UTA academic advising equips every Maverick student to blaze their trail toward academic and personal success and career readiness.

Mission Statement: Academic Advisors at the University of Texas at Arlington guide students through exploration, identification, and pursuit of their educational, personal, and career goals. Advisors equip students to attain academic success and promote lifelong learning. Ultimately, academic advisors offer essential academic services that help students persist and graduate.

Core Values:

- **Professionalism**
Academic Advisors act in accordance with the values of the profession of advising for the greater good of students, colleagues, institutions, and higher education. Advisors value honesty, transparency, and accountability to the student, institution, and to the advising profession.
- **Commitment**
Academic Advisors value and are dedicated to excellence in all dimensions of student success. Advisors are committed to students, colleagues, institutions, and the profession through assessment, scholarly inquiry, lifelong learning, and professional development.
- **Belonging**
Academic Advisors respect, engage, and value a supportive culture for the campus and build positive relationships by understanding and appreciating students' views. Advisors strive to create and support environments that consider the needs and perspectives of students, institutions, and colleagues through openness and acceptance while treating students with sensitivity and fairness.
- **Equipping**
Academic Advisors motivate, encourage, and support students and the greater educational community to recognize their potential, meet challenges, and respect and express individuality. Advisors respond to and are accessible to them in ways that support, nurture and teach, and build relationships through empathetic listening and compassion for students, colleagues, and others.

*Information adapted from the NACADA Statement of Core Values.

Student Responsibilities (agency):

- Familiarize yourself with UT Arlington policies and procedures and the degree requirements and guidelines specific to your major. Detailed policies can be found in the UTA Catalog.
- Communicate respectfully, openly, and honestly with your Academic Advisor regarding topics related to your educational goals and academic performance. Seek advice and ask questions if you do not understand the information given during advising, need clarification regarding degree requirements, and/or need university resources to assist in academic success.
- Regularly schedule and keep academic advising appointments.
- Understand and accept that you are responsible for your own education and decisions.

Advisor Responsibility (commitment):

- Help prospective and incoming students successfully understand academic requirements related to degree or certification interest and offer services that will enable them to matriculate at UTA.
- Assist students to define and develop their goals through personal and professional development.
- Understand and effectively communicate UT Arlington and department policies and procedures in a timely and efficient manner.
- Guide students in making decisions regarding their degree path, registration, and timely graduation while leveraging technology to provide access and enable success for all students.
- Advocate for student success for all students.
- Provide a safe, respectful, and confidential environment where students can ask questions and share concerns. Advisors communicate in a positive manner that acknowledges the developmental nature of the student experience as well as the value that students hold for the university.

Appendix B

NACADA Program Review Schedule

Day 1 (Wednesday, October 27, 2021)

- **9 am - 9:50 am | Trinity 113**
Meeting with Provost, AVP for DSS, and AVP for Academic Advising
- **10 am - 10:50 am | Trinity 113**
Meeting with Academic Support, Testing, University Studies, First Year Courses
- **11 am - 12 pm | Arianna Carrillo, Tour Guide**
Campus Tour/Walk to University Center
- **12 pm - 1:30 pm | University Center**
Lunch with students in University Center
- **1:30 pm - 2 pm**
Walk back/break
- **2 pm - 2:45 pm | Trinity 113**
Meeting with OIT and University Analytics
- **3 pm - 4 pm | SEIR 298**
Academic Advising Community (Undergraduate and Graduate)
- **4:15 pm - 4:55 pm | SEIR 298**
Meeting with students

Day 2 (Thursday, October 28, 2021)

- **9 am - 9:50 am | Trinity Hall 104E**
Meeting with Student Affairs staff including Orientation, Career Services, Counseling, Conduct, Housing, Veterans, Multicultural Affairs
- **9:50 am - 10:30 am**
Break
- **10:30 am - 11:45 am | Trinity Hall 104E**
Meeting with University Academic Advising Committee
- **12 pm - 1:30 pm | Trinity Hall 104E**
Lunch with faculty representatives from College/School
- **1:30 pm - 2 pm**
Break
- **2 pm - 2:55 pm | Trinity Hall 104E**
Meeting with Enrollment Management staff including Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, Student Accounts
- **2:55 pm - 3:15 pm | SEIR 298**
Break/Wrap-up
- **3:15 pm - 4:45 pm | SEIR 298**
Exit Interview: AVPAA, UAAC Leads

Appendix C

NACADA Program Review Summary

High Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for shift in culture of advising to be focused on vision, mission, and learning outcomes of unit • Continuous assessment and improvement of advising • Look at CUPA-HR information and data for competitive wages for academic advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop advising and advisor assessment plan • Implement professional development program plan for all advisors • Develop central repository for advising information • Develop advisor career ladder • Provide specialized advising for at-risk student populations • Design advising curricula and pedagogy • Review course registration processes during student orientation program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write advising vision and mission statement and student learning outcomes • Clarify advising roles and responsibilities • Develop professional development program plan
Medium Impact		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve/standardize use of advising technology (i.e., CAR) • Review graduate student advising support services • Develop communications strategic plan • Training and development plans to incorporate Civitas data in advising workflow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase utilization of electronic advising notes across all advising areas
Low Impact			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop advising syllabus
	3-5 Years to Change	1-3 Years to Change	Immediate Change

Other recommendations noted in report:

- Assess current model and structure of academic advising and explore ways to make systemic change
- Advising approach should be designed to teach/advise students based on the learning outcomes
- Review and consider any technology or processes that fail to support students who have different levels of need (tailored approach)
- Continue to address technology or process issues that exist within departmental advising

Appendix D

Academic Advising Strategic Planning (Dean's Council 12/15/21)

2021 - 2022

Student academic success, connection to the institution, and engagement in both curricular and co-curricular activities are essential pieces to achieving UTA's mission and are impacted by excellent academic advising efforts. It is equally important to recognize the need to build and maintain an enriching work environment for the academic advising community and to link the work we do to student retention and completion. Thus, we are engaging in strategic planning with NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising in order to give us a winning roadmap to student and academic success.

Strategic Planning Kick-Off

As a primer to the strategic planning process, this fall we embarked on the following activities:

1. Intentionally examined our current practices through the lens of advising excellence conducted by a NACADA program review
2. Introduced and academic advising student feedback survey across campus
3. Added new professional development opportunities emphasizing advising excellence

NACADA will be sending Dr. Melinda Anderson and Dr. Terry Musser to facilitate the initial development of our strategic planning priorities through an interactive Dec. 13 kick-off event with advising leadership. Dr. Ashley Purgason and Dr. Aaron Brown will be meeting with the academic deans on Dec. 15 to gain additional leadership feedback on academic advising and the priorities they would like to see addressed in the strategic plan. The intent is to engage the broader academic advising community in a similar discussion during the spring semester.

Purpose of Strategic Planning

- Determine intended impact of advising, outcomes, activities, and resources needed
- Improved our ability to meet the assessed and expressed needs of students as it relates to academic advising
- Focus on deliberate strategies impacting student retention and completion rates

Examples of Possible Outcomes of Strategic Planning

- **Shared Vision:** Create and implement a unified vision for academic advising
- **Alignment of Practice:** Develop, implement, and assess shared goals
- **Intentional and Timely Training:** Improve current training opportunities to focus on holistic and proactive advising as well as decision making and career readiness tools
- **Identification of Needed Resources:** Review availability and adequacy of resources for the advising community

Overview of Strategic Planning Related Activities: Fall 2021

September

Advising Best-Practices
3 EAB Workshops

October 27/28

NACADA Program Review

October/November

Technology in Advising
3 Civitas Workshops

December 13 & 15

Strategic Planning Meetings
with Leadership

Appendix E

Task Force Membership

Members were chosen by the academic deans, division vice presidents, and vice provost.

Last Name	First Name	College/School/Division	Position Title
Barasch	Linda	CoE	Professor of Instruction
Brown	Aaron	DSS	Assistant Vice Provost (Chair)
Calhoun-Butts	Candice	CoNHI	Assistant Dean
Chojnacki	Rebeckah	Honors	Assistant Director
Dickens	Nikki	Student Affairs	Associate Director
Dominguez	Ami	Registrar - EM	Associate Registrar
Donaldson	Cheryl	CAPPA	Director
Elbert	Scott	CoB	Director
Green	Patrice	SoSW	Director
Hale	Greg	CoS	Assistant Dean
Hamzeh	Ryan	Division of Student Success	Director
Hernandez	Angel	University Advising Center	Director
Iqbal	Anam	Admissions - EM	Associate Director
Jones	Courtney	CoEd	Assistant Director
Macejak	John	CoLA	Academic Advisor
Mark-Agbai	Apryl	Financial Aid - EM	Director
Morgan	Erin	OIT	Assistant Vice President

Appendix F

UTA President's Listening Session: Table-Top Discussions

Attendance: 74 | Date: 7/21/22

Summary: The following table highlights the thoughts and views of academic advisors from the table-top discussions submitted by the group's facilitator.

What are three things we do well in academic advising at UTA?			
Flexible options for students: virtual, in-person, chat, and drop-ins available across the campus	Caring advisors who advocate for students	Professional development and network opportunities; advisors are well trained	Culture of teamwork within units of advising
Advisors are accessible and responsive	Advisors provide resources	Advisors help students understand degree progress	
What are three things that most often prevent us from delivering excellence in academic advising?			
Advisor attrition: Low salaries and burnout which impacts ability to provide excellent advising	Delayed processing of key information that slows down ability to properly advise students - ex. TSI, transcript evaluations	Seat and course availability to help students make good progress towards degree completion	Inconsistent policies and processes across campus; need more shared standards and better communication
Admitting students late and students procrastinating taking necessary steps to get enrolled	Technology - more automation to reduce the number of tasks advisors have on their plates; removal of TCP	Large caseloads: Volume of student appointments, emails, and other requests	Too much reactive advising and not enough proactive advising
Describe one opportunity that exists that will help the advising community better deliver on the promise of "Student Success"?			
Lower caseloads to improve ability for advisor to offer more holistic and proactive advising for students	Change academic advisor classification from non-exempt to exempt	Set and keep firm deadlines for admissions and enrollment into courses; will help improved retention of students	Improve career ladder for academic advisors; will help with attrition
Share campus communications (to students); house in one area	Create an annual policy review task force for advisors	Increase advisor salaries to be more competitive	Review holds; are we creating unnecessary bottlenecks?

Appendix G

UTA Academic Advising | President and Provost Luncheon Advisor Feedback

Attendance: 105 | **Date:** 10/21/22

Summary: What we heard at the July Listening Session centered around the following items and are connected specifically to the themes presented by the deans.

Cross-Walking Deans Themes with Advising Community July 2022 Feedback		
	Deans Emergent Themes	Related Advising Community Themes (July)
A	Implement strategies to reduce advisor attrition	Increase institutional commitment to enhancing the structure of advising; offer career ladder; improve compensation; and reduce burnout
B	Clearly define academic advisor role	Examine advisor classification (professional position embedded in the teaching and learning aspect of campus); lack of understanding of what advisors do across campus
C	Find new efficiencies to increase student agency	Improve student agency and course availability
D	Create standards of excellence for advising at UTA	Focus more on quality, the student experience, and create consistent standards of practice without compromising student-centric approach
E	Continue investing in professional development	Focus more on helping advisors grow in the profession and offer more networking opportunities to improve advisors' ability to support students
F	Using technology to advance deliver of advising	Discover efficiencies through adaptive and automated processes
G	Focus on workforce readiness and career development in advising	Discussing career interests and post-graduation plans are a challenge
H	Tailor advising services to increase retention and equitable outcomes	Inconsistent student experiences and guidance given (e.g., access, timeliness of responses); need to focus on quality; opportunity for more holistic advising
I	Develop a plan to address continued enrollment growth	Need for a strategic plan that includes resources connected to growth; better alignment between growth goals and retention expectations

Appendix H

Aspirant Peer Site Visits

Site Visit: Sample Highlights		
Topics	Georgia State University	University of Central Florida
Model of Advising	Mostly centralized; students work with a University Advising Center until they reach 90+ credits; then transition to colleges for focus on career and graduation; colleges have advising centers once students transition into college; advisors are all full-time staff (exempt); “community of care” approach	Decentralize model with central oversight; each college has an advising center/office with director and advisors reporting to director; advisors classified as professional exempt staff; UCF Cares Team/Care Units approach
Caseload	University Advising Center has 125 academic advisors; 8 assistant directors, a ratios of 1-300	Recently added 34 new advisor positions with model change but still have a very high caseload average
New Student Onboarding	Transcript evaluation occurs in advising; evaluation begins onces student is accepted into institution (they do not wait until the student accepts); one-day orientation - 40 advisors assisting with orientation	Orientation - advising community has a standard structure for their sessions with shared objectives
Technology	EAB Navigate, includes business workflow, notes, student planner, text nudges; Degree Works - web based (banner) system to track student requirements (similar to MAP) and includes a simple way to process subs: chatbot by AdmitHub assists with retention efforts and early alerts	EAB Navigate, WorkDay, Slate, TES, and Pegasus Path; focus on using technology to increase student agency; students can change major via PeopleSoft and have more autonomy over dropping courses; uniform messaging and easy access to forms; See quick links section
Data/ Assessment	Robust data and reporting system due to a full-time advising data coordinator position and centralized structure; able to pull comprehensive data and create accurate projections for enrollment, course seats, four- and six-year graduation rates; proactive advising for students considered most in need	Proactive outreach utilizing data, robust data dashboards using SAS (high impact designed courses, FTIC, SI, UGRD retention and completion) - they are transitioning to PowerBi
Professional Development and Growth	Well established career ladder; professional development emphasis	Team of three full-time staff advancing their robust professional development offerings; advising guide and advising standards available to all advisors to ensure advising is structured across camps; annual advising notice - compliance training



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