Summary of Advising Tactic Work:

Starting in September of 2011, the advising tactic team was initially charged with developing advising guidelines for liberal arts majors students The team began meetings during the fall and team membership was expanded in the spring of 2012 to include representation from several applied science departments. Likewise, the scope of the tactic team was expanded beyond advising in the liberal arts to include students in the applied programs. The team discussed a range of issues pertaining to advising and sought input from a number of individuals with direct and indirect involvement in advising. The team’s evaluation revealed a number of key themes related to the structure, scope, and practice of advising. Those themes are described below in two categories: 1) strengths and 2) challenges and opportunities.

Strengths:

* Advisors have good relationships and effective communication channels with four-year institutions, particularly those institutions that receive the greatest number of Kirkwood students.
* An excellent knowledge of articulation and transfer requirements exists among advisors in the Advising and Transfer Center.
* There is a developing network of advisors including: department coordinators, advisors in the advising and transfer center, and select faculty who have an explicit desire to work collaboratively to improve service to students. This is best exemplified through ongoing efforts to improve orientation and registration programs and other advising events.
* A strong desire to improve advising across the college is evident in both the liberal arts and applied departments and there is a general desire to help students succeed among faculty and staff.

Challenges and Opportunities:

* There is no formal professional development program for academic advisors. This has resulted in inconsistent course placement, technology that is underutilized, and a lack of understanding of advising expectations.
* There is little coordination and communication between departments on advising-related issues and specific course requirements for programs and changes to curriculum, yet there is a desire to improve collaboration.
* No system-wide plan for advising students who are not part of a recognized cohort group exists, and there is a lack of clarity of the appropriate advisor assignments. Specific examples of this include:
  + Non-Cohort Students
  + Students interested in career options programs that have transitioned to associate in arts degree programs
  + Undecided Students
* There is an opportunity to develop programs that target prospective students who are undecided by leveraging existing career services and by developing academic plans (tracks) for these students. A coordinated effort to serve this population may increase enrollment and improve completion rates.
* There is no institutional definition of academic advising; no common set of expectations on the roles of academic advisors; and no articulated learning outcomes relative to advising.
* A wide variance in the ratios of advisors to students exists across the college. Some advisors loads are as high as 1 to 2000.
* The level of release time and advising loads of faculty advisors is not consistent within or between departments.
* There is a need to develop and enhance resources for advising on-line students.
* There is an opportunity to use existing technology to develop alternative delivery models in addition to the traditional face to face advising.

Recommendations:

1. Form an institution-wide Academic Advising Council charged to advise the vice presidents for academic affairs and student services on matters related to academic advising. The council should be tasked to improve communication and collaboration among faculty and staff who serve in advising roles and should provide a forum for employees to address their concerns about advising. Particular emphasis should be placed on developing consistency in advising practices among the liberal arts and applied programs with the ultimate goal of enhancing student success and the goals of the Learner Success Agenda. Additionally, the council should be charged to review and assess advising services and policies and assist in promoting professional development, evaluation and recognition of both professional and faculty advisors. (p.4-5)
2. Task the Advising Council to develop and implement advising plans for the following student sub-populations:
   * Students not accepted into the technical portion of a career program (p.6-7)
   * Undecided students (p.8)
   * Professional Development and Training for all academic advisors
   * ELA students transitioning to college credit coursework.
   * Students primarily taking online coursework.
   * Develop a plan to add more advisors in those areas where the advisor to student ratio exceeds the recommended ratio of advisor to student of 441 to 1 as suggested by the CAS standards of the National Academic Advising Association; with consideration for the many duties other than advising that an Academic Advisor possesses.

3. Task the Advising Council to develop an institutional professional development program for academic advisors under the leadership of the Academic Advising Council in collaboration with KCELT. (p.8)

1. Adopt the definition of academic advising and the performance expectations for academic advisors proposed by the Tactic Team (p. 9).
2. Discontinue “open” registration for new students in their first semesters, and require new students who are degree-seeking to attend mandatory orientation or advising sessions prior to registering for classes.

**Academic Advising Council (DRAFT)**

**Purpose**

The Kirkwood Academic Advising Council advises the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Services on matters related to academic advising. The council aims to improve communication and collaboration among faculty and staff who serve in advising roles for the college. Particular emphasis is placed on developing consistency in advising practices among the liberal arts and applied programs with the ultimate goal of enhancing student success and the goals of the Learner Success Agenda. Additionally, the council reviews and assesses advising services and policies and assists in promoting professional development, evaluation and recognition of both professional and faculty advisors.

**Goals and Objectives**

The Advising Council is a partnership of all academic departments and works closely with Admissions, Enrollment Services, the Dean of Students Office, academic departments, regional centers, and institutional leadership in order to meet its goals and objectives:

1. Provide a forum for consulting and collaborating on mutual advising goals and needs that actively involves advisors in both the applied and liberal arts programs.

2. Promote the continuing improvement of academic advising.

3. Support and facilitate the professional development of faculty and staff advisors.

4. Advocate excellence in college-wide academic advising through periodic review and assessment of advising practices.

5. Promote a culture of excellence in service to students by providing accurate information about college requirements and policies.

6. Advance academic advising as an educational function essential to student learning.

**Membership**

The Advising Council appointments will be made according to the table below. Preference in assignments will be given to faculty and staff who have an advising role in their departments or academic programs. Special consideration will be made to include a broad cross-section of representatives from across the college, including all academic departments that are interested in participating.

**Members Appointed by**

Advising & Transfer Center Advisor Coordinator of Advising & Transfer Center

Applied Department Representatives (5) Academic Deans

Career Academy Representative Vice President for Academic Affairs

Coordinator of the Advising & Transfer Center Dean of Students

Department member at-large (3-5) Vice-President for Academic Affairs

Iowa City Center Advisor Director of Student Services for the I.C. Center

Regional Center Representative Dean of Distance Learning

Examples of topics to be included in council:

* Professional Development Opportunities for Academic Advisors
* The impact of campus-wide policies on Academic Advising across academic disciplines
* Transferability of coursework to other institutions
* Advisement of students not formally accepted into technical programs (students on waitlists).

**Program Information Sheet: To be posted online either merged with current brochures or as a supplement to curriculum brochure. Example below would be for the program Entry-Level Firefighter A.A.S. Any changes to the plans would be done in conjunction with AS28 process.**

ENTRY-LEVEL FIREFIGHTER A.A.S.

HOME DEPARTMENT: **Industrial Technologies**

WEBSITE: <http://www.kirkwood.edu/industrialtech>

ENTRY SEMESTER: **Fall or Spring**

PROGRAM CONFERENCE REQUIRED (YES OR NO): **Yes**

DOES THIS PROGRAM FILL AND GO TO A WAIT LIST? **Not typically.**

* IF YES, WHEN? **n/a**

IS THE TERM “WAIT LIST” IRRELEVANT TO THIS PROGRAM? **No**

* If yes, next questions will have more details

SPECIFIC COMPASS/ACT SCORES REQUIRED FOR ENTRY (YES OR NO): **Yes**

* **COMPASS 32 Writing (ACT 15 English)**
* **COMPASS 71 Reading (ACT 16 Reading)**
* **Students with lower scores may take the necessary developmental courses to gain entry into the program.**

ADDITIONAL TEST SCORES REQUIRED FOR ENTRY (YES OR NO): **No**

CAMPUS(ES) AVAILABLE:

* **Main campus**
* **Iowa City (via ICN)**
* **Waterloo (via ICN and dual enrollment with Hawkeye Community College)**

ONLINE AVAILABLE (YES OR NO): **Yes (first year classes only)**

EVENING AVAILABLE (YES OR NO): **Yes (technical courses are evening only)**

PRE-REQUISITE COURSES REQUIRED FOR ENTRY (YES OR NO): **No**

BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIRED FOR ENTRY (YES OR NO): **No**

NON-CURRICULUM, NON-BOOK REQUIRED PROGRAM EXPENSES: **Minimal**

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (i.e. DRIVERS LICENSE, ETC.): **No**

MISCELLANEOUS IMPORTANT INFO: **Competition for jobs is fierce. Clean record is vital. Fire departments can access juvenile records during background check, as well.**

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES THAT MAY BE TAKEN PRIOR TO BEGINNING PROGRAM:

* **ENG-101 Elements of Writing or higher**
* **SPC-101 Fundamentals of Oral Communication**
* **MAT-102 Intermediate Algebra or higher**
* **BCA-189 Microcomputer Literacy (or CSC-110 Intro to Computers)**
* **PSY-111 Intro to Psychology**

**Students should note that taking general education requirements in advance of starting program may lead to future semesters without full-time credit hours.**

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**aclark@kirkwood.edu**

**Undecided Students:**

Many students are undecided when it comes to where they would like to transfer and what they would like to study at their four-year school. Related are students who know that they want a two-year degree in a particular field but are undecided between two or more related degrees. Our current advising system is set up to help students make these types of decisions between related programs. What our current system does not provide for is the truly undecided student; a student that really does not have any idea what they want to study and if they want a two-year or a four-year degree. The following suggestions were made:

* A better method of communicating across and between campuses of the many career decision-making workshops we have in place, as well as emphasizing the importance of College 101 in selecting majors, particularly for students who are undecided.
* Development of a list of first semester courses that are “universal” to all majors as well as a list of classes that would allow a student to “try on” a major, when major allows or as seats are available.

**Professional Development for Advisors:**

The committee recommends a training system for the duties of an advisor.  All advisors following training will be able to work with first time, full time students and be responsible and knowledgeable in the following areas:

* Student services available (including Learning Services, Counseling, Career Development, etc.);
* Academic programs offered at Kirkwood Community College;
* Degree requirements for academic programs;
* Prerequisites in place for courses and programs;
* Entering prerequisites if necessary;
* Basic knowledge of Financial aid policies and procedures;
* Transfer policies from KCC to four-year schools in the region & articulated four-year schools;
* Transfer policies to KCC from two-year or four-year schools in the region;
* Use of EagleNet for Students, EagleView Program Planner and Degree Audits;
* Kirkwood policies and procedures;
* Exploring career goals;
* Planning a course of study (and selecting courses);
* Interpreting test scores (AP, CLEP, ACT, and COMPASS);
* Interpreting transcripts - both evaluated, and those that are not yet evaluated; and
* Addressing personal concerns.

Training for advisors would be structured with measurable benchmarks, with a period of sitting in with current academic advisors to observe how to effectively communicate and build rapport with advisees. Under supervision, the advisor would eventually work with first-time, full-time students and gradually expand their clientele to include all returning and transferring students.

Mentoring involves identifying students beyond the first time, full time freshmen, and assigning them to a transfer interest. The mentor to these students would then act as a partner to the academic advisor and would also provide more “in depth” career preparation since he/she would have more expertise and familiarity in the interest area. For example, a student with Communications as an interest would be assigned to Rich Underwood, who could provide additional transfer information as well as guidance toward that career.

The roles of advising and mentoring are closely related and the committee agrees that there are certain situations where an advisor could also serve as a mentor; the committee maintains that both roles are extremely valuable to the student experience.