

# BOARD OF REGENTS BRIEFING PAPER

## *Handbook* Revision, Academic Advising and Counseling

### **BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

Academic advisement is critical to student success in ensuring that students have the information necessary to persist towards degree completion, yet current practices regarding who is required to participate in academic advising are inconsistent across NSHE. At some institutions, academic advising is not mandatory for all new students. At other institutions, it may be required for new first-year students, but not transfer students.

The proposed policy mandates advising for all first-time and continuing students at all teaching institutions. By ensuring students are seeing an advisor prior to matriculation and then periodically throughout their academic careers, institutions can better support students through selection of degree applicable courses, major exploration (when needed), and general, purpose-first career guidance. Mandatory advising promotes student success and safeguards students by keeping them on track for timely degree completion, and, if a student wants to change majors, this can be facilitated earlier in the process while minimizing loss of credits.

Further, the proposed policy mandates that institutions achieve a student-to-advisor ratio of no more than 350:1 by Academic Year 2023-24. This would give institutions five years to reach a ratio that allows advisors to better facilitate relationships with their students in the same way that smaller class sizes allow for faculty to better connect with their students.

### **SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Amend *Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 22* to mandate academic advising for all first-time, degree seeking students prior to the date of matriculation and periodic advising thereafter. Additionally, all institutions must achieve a student-to-advisor ratio of no more than 350:1 by Academic Year 2023-24.

### **IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

At the March 2019 Board of Regents meeting, Chancellor Thom Reilly shared information on [six student success strategies](#) that each institution within the System is acting upon. These six strategies are products of the January 2019 Student Success Summit in which the Board of Regents adopted several aggressive [student success goals](#) for each institution to achieve by 2025. Mandatory academic advising is one of the six student success strategies, and academic advisors play critical roles in student success.

With many students not enrolling in gateway math and English courses within the first academic year and a large portion of students seeking to transfer to a four-year institution after obtaining an associate degree, the need for academic advising is critical. Students do not always recognize the importance of academic advising until it is too late in their academic careers. This results in excess credit accumulation and costs the student not only in tuition and fee charges, but also in the opportunity cost of lost income.

### **CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:**

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)
- Success (Increase student success)
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

### **INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL**

Student success starts with a clear, purpose-first plan for progressing to graduation. Academic advisors assist students in developing degree or certificate plans and by delivering the necessary information to students in an understandable way. Mandatory academic advising and lower advising ratios help ensure all students begin on a track to graduation and are given the individualized attention needed to support their success.

**BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

- Mandatory academic advising promotes student success by helping to ensure timely degree completion and enrollment in degree-applicable courses; and
- Mandatory advising facilitates opportunities for students to track degree progress, understand the degree audit, commit to a transfer agreement, and make connections with professional staff on campus; and
- A low student-to-advisor ratio of 350:1 allows advisors to better facilitate relationships with their students.

**POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

The cost of mandatory advising for all first-time students may be prohibitive. The cost of increasing advising support to maintain a student-to-advisor ratio of 350:1 may also be prohibitive.

**ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

None have been presented

**RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR’S OFFICE:**

The Chancellor’s Office recommends support to ensure students enroll in degree applicable credits and maintain consistent progress towards earning a degree or certificate.

**COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Amends Current Board Policy: *Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 22*
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Fiscal Impact: Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_  
Explain: See attached fiscal note.

## Fiscal Note: Proposed Policy Revision - Mandatory Advising

The following fiscal note pertains to subsection 1 of the proposed policy.  
There is no fiscal note calculated for subsection 2 due to the four-year lead time to the effective date.

Institution	Current Mandatory Advising Practice (Y/N)			Current Advising Support						Additional Cost for Mandatory Advising	
	Are all new first-time students advised?	Are all continuing students advised?	Are faculty advisors currently utilized?	Current Advising Ratio*	Professional Advisors		Faculty Advisors			FTE	Annual Personnel Cost**
					#	FTE	#	FTE	FTE per Faculty Advisor		
CSN	N	N	N	652:1	45	45.0	-	-	-	11.0	\$ 756,360
GBC	N	N	Y	519:1	2	2.0	36	3.6	0.10	4.0	\$ 296,408
TMCC	Y	N	N <sup>^</sup>	1,127:1	10	10.0	50	10.0	0.20	10.0	\$ 150,000
WNC	Y	N	N	540:1	5	5.0	-	-	-	4.0	\$ 322,108
NSC	Y	Y	Y	340:1	8	8.0	44	4.4	0.10	5.0	\$ 265,000
UNLV	Y	N	Y	543:1	65	63.5	30	3.0	0.10	20.0	\$ 1,232,920
UNR	Y	N	Y	414:1	54	42.3	181	9.0	0.05	8.5	\$ 590,500
System-wide Total Additional Need:										62.5	\$ 3,613,296

\*Advising ratio should include all professional advising staff and non-professional advisors with advising responsibilities (ie. faculty advisors, classified staff)

\*\*Personnel cost should include salary and fringe benefits

<sup>^</sup> Faculty advisor implementation planned.

## Supplemental Notes: Mandatory Advising Cost Estimates (June 2019, ARSA Committee)

### Additional Notes for Mandatory Advising (Subsection 1)

<b>CSN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All FTIC degree-seeking students are required to attend an orientation face to face or on-line where they will receive advising prior to their initial enrollment.</li><li>• All CSN FTIC students at the 15/30/45 credit thresholds are required to see an academic advisor starting Fall 2019 which supports the recommendations made by NACADA, to include mandatory checkpoints</li><li>• All Continuing students at 15/30/45 credit accumulation will also be required to see an academic advisor.</li><li>• 11 additional academic advisors as of July 1, 2019 assumes CSN capacity funding. The 36 currently on payroll includes other areas of CSN: 5 academic advisors (Health Sciences), 1 academic advisor (athletics), 1 academic advisor (International), 1 academic advisor (Veterans).</li><li>• As of Fall 2018, CSN FTIC: 5,380, CSN Continuing: 23,984, Total: 29,364</li><li>• 5 additional academic advisors as of FY 2020, 4%.</li><li>• 4 additional academic advisors as of FY 2021, 4%.</li></ul>
<b>GBC</b>	By Fall 2020 GBC will have 2 FTE professional advisors. A college-wide advisement plan and advisement training is underway, and GBC is currently identifying advisement tools to provide consistency in advisement at all GBC locations. With many faculty unavailable during summer term, additional professional advisors needed to support first-time, degree-seeking students.
<b>TMCC</b>	Faculty advising is planned for future with 50 faculty at 30:1 ratio (1500 students total). First-time, degree-seeking students meet with an advisor once prior to initial enrollment. First-time, full-time students meet with an advisor three times.
<b>WNC</b>	WNC students that are first-time, degree-seeking, are currently required to meet with an advisor their first semester before they can enroll. All students are encouraged, called, and texted to continue meeting with an advisor after the first semester.
<b>NSC</b>	Current advising ratio is listed for professional advising, which provides support to students between 0 and 60 credits and is our highest ratio; we used headcount in place of FTE for all calculations because part-time students likely need the same amount of advising as full-time students; the additional cost is for 1 additional advisor by fall 2020 at \$53k (salary + benefits), assuming a 500 total student growth in headcount (non-dual credit).
<b>UNLV</b>	New students are required to meet with an academic advisor before enrolling in their first semester of courses at UNLV. First-time, degree-seeking undergraduate students at UNLV attend New Student Orientation, which includes a mandatory advising meeting where students receive a schedule for this first semester. Incoming transfer students are required to meet with their academic advising center prior to registration. Continuing students are required to meet with an academic advisor prior to changing majors. Additionally, some college advising centers require students on academic probation to attend academic advising appointments. Upper division students in a few programs (Geoscience and Physics) meet with faculty advisors, but this practice is not widespread. The additional cost for mandatory advising accounts for 20 new advising positions dedicated to first-year advising and programming.
<b>UNR</b>	Faculty rounded to 5% FTE based on average caseload

**POLICY PROPOSAL**  
**TITLE 4, CHAPTER 14, SECTION 22**  
**Academic Advising and Counseling**

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 22. *Academic* Advising[~~;~~] *and* Counseling[~~;~~ ~~and Other Student Services~~]

[~~1—Counselors and advisors should assist students in evaluating academic progress and the appropriateness of their educational objectives. Each institution shall provide current information on a continuing basis in each of the following areas: admission requirements, general education requirements, credit by examination, military credit, transfer status of courses, transfer agreements, major and minor fields of study, lower and upper division levels of study, upper division standing, and graduation requirements.~~]

[~~2—Counselors and academic advisors should be well informed about student services available at the State College and universities serving their transfers. Such services include financial assistance, including loans, scholarships, and employment, housing, counseling and guidance, developmental or basic skills programs, health services, and student activities.~~]

1. *Effective Fall 2020, upon initial enrollment all first-time degree or certificate seeking students shall be required to meet with an academic advisor or counselor prior to the date of matriculation. All continuing, degree or certificate seeking students shall be required to periodically meet with their academic advisor or counselor until degree completion.*
2. *By academic year 2023-24 all institutions shall maintain a student-to-advisor ratio of no greater than 350:1.*