Academic Affairs

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Faculty Advising Initiative

End-of-Project Report
Project Description
The primary goal of this project was to create an integrated professional and faculty advising system that includes an online faculty resource guide for advising and comprehensive online advising tutorials for faculty advisers.

Project Outcomes
● Increased faculty understanding of non-major graduation requirements (BA, BS, BFA, BM, and University Studies)
● Increased faculty competence in reading and understanding Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS)
● Increased faculty referrals of students to campus resources due to improved understanding of University resources
● Improved faculty and student satisfaction with overall advising experience

Project Lead
● Martha Dyson - Academic Adviser, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Project Team
● Martha Dyson - Academic Adviser, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
● Karen Kennedy - Academic Adviser/Intl Student Liaison, Advising and Career Services, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs
● Paloma Harrison - Academic Adviser, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Project Sponsor(s)
● Robert Mercer - Assistant Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
● Daniel Fortmiller - Interim Vice President, Enrollment Management & Student Affairs

Impact of Project
Through this project, a comprehensive set of advising resources have been created to increase faculty understanding of non-major graduation requirements. Making these resources available to faculty by way of the faculty advising website, online faculty advising guide, and the delivery of ongoing training sessions ensures that all faculty have access to the information they need to succeed as advisers.

Furthermore, these resources equip all faculty with the tools to provide students with accurate and consistent information. By ensuring that all departments have access to the same information on advising requirements, students are more likely to have a positive experience and continue seeing advisers after their first-year mandatory advising requirement has been met. The ongoing ripple effects of this holds great potential to dramatically improve student success and retention.

Project Deliverables
There are two key deliverables for this project:
1) The faculty advising website.
2) The comprehensive online faculty advising guide, available in both iBook and PDF formats.
Project Sustainability

Faculty Advising Guide and Website
CLAS Advising will maintain the faculty advising website and online faculty advising guide with input from the Director of ACS, Academic Advising Council, and Advising Leads from each school and college. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been created to further outline the roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder involved.

ADA Compliance for the Faculty Advising Guide (iBook module)
In keeping with Portland State University’s goal of equal educational opportunities for all students, Provost’s Challenge Project #88 - Faculty Advising Initiative will work toward the goal of 100% accessibility in the online faculty advising guide that was created as a key deliverable of this project.

Once the Office of Academic Innovation (OAI) has built its capacity to provide support for accessible design and accessibility conversion, OAI will work with CLAS Advising to review the online faculty advising guide and make any necessary revisions to ensure full ADA compliance. The faculty advising website will be updated to include the revised guide once full ADA compliance has been incorporated.

Lessons Learned
Building the faculty advising website ourselves proved to be a very insightful learning experience. We were able to draw on our own experiences as advisers when considering what information and resources would be most valuable for faculty. This allowed us to create content with faculty needs in mind.

Going through the process of locating the resources that faculty advisers frequently use on the PSU site demonstrated just how valuable having a dedicated space for these resources to live will be. Prior to this project, resources targeted specifically toward faculty needs were housed in various places across the PSU website and could not be found on a single site.

Identifying the resources to include, creating the content, and then having the flexibility to add it to the website ourselves was very efficient and eliminated the chance that things might get lost-in-translation when working with an external party.

Organization of Provost’s Challenge
The guidance we received from the project manager(s) was absolutely essential to the success of this project. They helped us to navigate challenges, stay on track, and figure out next steps in each stage of the process.

Collaborations with the Office of Academic Innovation
OAI’s guidance was instrumental in helping us to determine the best platform for our faculty advising guide. Since they provided us with a number of viable options from which to choose, we were able to settle on the iBooks format as the best medium for the information we needed to present in the guide. OAI then worked with us to create the guide and troubleshoot the various issues we encountered in its production.

OAI’s cutting edge technology also provided a great context for our faculty training sessions. They provided space, invitations, and hospitality for a number of events connected to our project and
assisted us in utilizing the technology they have available in their suite.