



## LEARNING CONDITION COMMITTEE REPORT May 2020

### Section 1: Executive Summary

Committee members gathered evidence of Utah Valley University's student learning outcomes and curricula for academic advising. The evidence collected by the committee shows some evidence of student learning outcomes and advising curriculum being utilized throughout the university, but there is not a systematic implementation of common learning outcomes and advising curricula across the institution.

Regarding the shared responsibility for student learning, survey results are mixed, with some students reporting learning well from their advisors and some advisors reporting they address student learning responsibilities in student appointments. Students are not consistently informed of their roles in the learning process, and the advising experience is not equitable for all UVU students.

While UVU has a robust advisor advising training program—its current focus is on developing the advisor, and the current advisor training does not reflect student learning outcomes for advising. Current advisor training is mapped to NACADA's core values and competencies, and the trainings do promote advising pedagogies. UVU's advisors are given opportunities to attend conferences where current pedagogies are taught.

Although UVU does assess student satisfaction with advising, UVU is not currently assessing advising in a manner that evaluates both the effectiveness of advisor training and the efficacy of student learning outcomes.

### Section 2: Learning Condition Committee Membership

NAME	POSITION	DEPARTMENT	COMMITTEE ROLE
<b>Andrea Calaway</b>	Director of Advising	School of the Arts	Chair
<b>Bryan Lacerda</b>	Academic Advisor	Woodbury School of Business	Co-chair
<b>Shandi Erickson</b>	Academic Advisor	College of Engineering and Technology	Member
<b>Kristi Nemelka</b>	Academic Advisor	Concurrent Enrollment	Member

<b>Reba Vest</b>	Academic Advisor	Concurrent Enrollment	Member
<b>Melissa Braithwaite</b>	Academic Advisor	College of Science	Member
<b>Charlie Curtis</b>	Counselor	First-year Advising Center	Member
<b>Frenely Liechty</b>	Assistant Director	TRIO Undergraduate Programs— Grants /Outreach	Member
<b>Dustin Shipp</b>	Assistant Professor	Physics	Member
<b>Tiffany Evans</b>	Senior Director— Completion	Academic Programs	Member
<b>Kelly Prue</b>	Academic Advisor	Woodbury School of Business	Member
<b>Wendy Athens</b>	Senior Director— Teaching and Learning	Academic Programs	Member

### **Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings**

#### Learning Outcomes:

Utah Valley University has created clearly articulated student learning outcomes— posted at [https://www.uvu.edu/aqa/essential\\_learning\\_outcomes/](https://www.uvu.edu/aqa/essential_learning_outcomes/) that are a comprehensive set of learning goals for the entire university, and UVU’s First-year Advising Center has defined student learning outcomes for UVU’s first-year students; however, academic advising within UVU’s schools and colleges lacks well-defined student learning outcomes. Although several of UVU’s schools and colleges have advising syllabi, the student learning outcomes are either vague or are not specifically listed, and they are not consistently presented to students. Some student responsibilities and advisor responsibilities are listed on UVU’s Advising website, <https://www.uvu.edu/advising/>, but students may not regularly be directed to this website, or they may not be aware of this website, and these lists of responsibilities have not been updated for quite some time. Overall, UVU has some aspects of learning outcomes built into advising but not an overarching learning plan for all students.

Because UVU’s student learning outcomes for advising have not been clearly and universally defined, students are not aware of them, and when comparing student and advisor survey results, we can see a discrepancy between students’ perceptions of advising vs. advisors’ perceptions of advising, and these perceptions also vary from student to student and advisor to advisor. Having clearly defined student learning outcomes for advising will allow for greater equity in advising experiences for all UVU students.

While most colleges/schools at UVU have advising syllabi in which some advising-related items are outlined, UVU does not have an overall curriculum for academic advising, other than what is used in the First-year Advising Center. In addition, several advisors and advising directors have reported their advising syllabi were outdated. Information in current advising syllabi is not presented and processed in a way students are fully aware these documents exist, and students do not have a solid view of what they need to learn from academic advising. Several similar questions in the EAA surveys were asked to both advisors and students, and it seems apparent that while advisors report talking with students about certain topics, students have not consistently indicated they have been taught about that topic. If students and advisors are made more aware of what needs to happen in an advising appointment—so both are aware of what is happening—students will be better able to acknowledge the type of help they are receiving. As well, publicizing advising curriculum will help students know what help is available to them so they will know exactly where to go for advising-related guidance. Lastly, articulating advising curriculum is not only valuable for students, but this is also important for new advisors, because the curriculum can serve as a guidepost and provide direction.

UVU's training program has traditionally included several advisor training sessions each year that teach about various advising pedagogies, and UVU's advisors also have opportunities to attend multiple conferences each year, where pedagogies are often taught. We would recommend that these opportunities be continued but with a greater emphasis on learning how to skillfully apply advising pedagogies and theories in an advising appointment and as they relate to student learning outcomes.

Other than after-appointment surveys for individual advisors, overall advising at UVU has not been routinely and systematically assessed since 2012. We recommend implementing a program that will routinely and systematically assess learning outcomes related to academic advising and refining advising policies and practices based upon assessment results. These results can also be used to inform external stakeholders and accrediting bodies.

#### Shared Responsibility—Context:

In looking at UVU's college/schools' advising syllabi, there is more mention of advisor responsibilities than student responsibilities, and our current advisor trainings and other communications are also more focused on advisor responsibility than student responsibility.

Developing an advising curriculum—outlining what each UVU student needs to know—will help advisors guarantee that all aspects of learning are covered while meeting with students, and this will help in providing students an equitable experience with advising, although care will need to be taken to ensure the advisor is assessing what each individual student truly needs and to be flexible according to the present student's needs.

In general, the advising body understands the sharing of responsibility for helping students succeed, but clearly defining the specific role of academic advisors on campus would help administration, faculty, and students to understand the role advisors play regarding responsibilities related to student learning.

Regarding the shared responsibility of the student and advisor for students' learning—survey results were mixed, with some students reporting their advisor dictates class schedules, while other students feel they learn well from their advisors. Some advisors are addressing student learning responsibilities while others are not. Some responsibilities for both advisors and students are listed on the Advising website, but there is no way to know whether students are accessing this information. Additionally, there is a range of singular experiences a student could have with each advisor—sometimes advisors are able to really teach a student, while other appointments with the same advisor can be prescriptive—many external factors can affect an advising appointment, including what the student brings to the appointment. Advising experiences for students can also vary based upon when the appointment occurs in the semester because of how much time is available at that point to give to each student.

Because UVU does not have clarity at this point on what students should learn from their advising experiences, UVU is not yet set up to provide a student learning centered training approach. While UVU's current advising training structure is robust and nationally recognized, we would recommend adjusting the training approach to greater encourage and support advisor development about student learning and provide advisors with more in-depth information about curricula and advising pedagogies.

#### Shared Responsibility—Commitment:

Many of UVU's advisors report being committed to advising as a professional responsibility, while students' views on this are mixed.

UVU's current advisor training incorporates elements of excellent advising, including NACADA's core values and core competences. Additionally, advisors at UVU have opportunities to stay current with theories through UVU's various advisor trainings and the opportunity to attend three conferences per year (the annual or regional NACADA conference, the Utah Advising Association Conference, and the annual UVU advising conference).

Because UVU's current advisor training program does not have clearly defined essential learning outcomes for academic advising, it is difficult to assess to what degree the overall training promotes and supports advisors working toward the fulfillment of those learning outcomes. As well, many of the advisor responsibilities are very behavioral/task oriented. While relationship responsibilities are more difficult to define, we recommend a greater focus on relationships and more definition on the shared responsibility between student and advisor.

Explaining students' roles in the academic advising relationship is currently dependent upon the methods of each individual advisor. We would recommend more consistency with this responsibility.

Some of UVU's advisors are involved with improving and understanding the unique needs of students' individual curricular pathways, while some advisors are not as involved with curriculum, and some programs allow more accommodation of individual students' needs than others. Understanding pedagogy approaches used by faculty, curricular sequences and barriers, and engagement in curricular discussions are items that can be addressed at the college/school level as part of UVU's academic advising curriculum.

#### Shared Responsibility—Expectations:

Given that communication about student responsibility in the academic advising relationship has been dependent upon the individual advisor's sharing this information or upon the student seeing it on UVU's Advising website, this relationship responsibility has not been universally defined, nor have intended learning outcomes related to students' academic advising interactions been clearly defined. Both should be clearly defined and made readily available to students.

According to student survey results, some students report they do engage dynamically with academic advisors to discuss individual goals, pathways, and academic plans, and some students do not feel they have had these types of discussions with academic advisors. Creating and following an advising curriculum and consistent training will help advisors to be more consistent with this practice.

#### **Section 4: Recommendations for Action**

These priorities are listed in functional order:

1. **Student Learning Outcomes:** Develop and vet university-level student learning outcomes every UVU student should learn from participation in academic advising. Allow colleges/schools to add college/school outcomes as needed.  
**High priority**  
Evidence: 1, 4, 14, 16, 20, 22, 24
2. **Role of Advisors:** Clearly define role of academic advisors and their responsibilities related to student learning and address specialty advisors and their unique roles in working with students. **High priority**  
Evidence: 1, 4, 16, 20
3. **Advising Curriculum:** Develop a general curriculum for academic advising, which can also be added to by colleges/schools and that is aligned to the articulated mission and student learning outcomes. **High priority**  
Evidence: 1, 4, 16, 20, 24, 25

4. **Communication Plan:** Provide consistent means to inform students of their own responsibilities for learning from academic advising, including posting the academic advising learning outcomes and advising curriculum online. We recommend differentiation in wording for students vs advisors, since this information will likely need to be articulated differently to students and advisors. **High priority**  
Evidence: 1, 2, 7, 9, 17, 18,19, 20, 24
5. **Update Advisor Training:** Shift the focus of UVU's advisor training program to be more student-focused, with emphasis on advisors more fully developing each student—by adding additional training to the already existing curriculum, with a greater emphasis on advising approaches, pedagogies, and theories, and an increased emphasis on how to skillfully apply these in advising interactions with students. Map advisor training to student learning outcomes and advising curriculum. In new advisor training, include making a formal commitment to advising as a professional responsibility and include a recommitment to advising in ongoing advisor certification. **High priority**  
Evidence: 5, 6, 15, 21, 24, 26, 27
6. **Train Advisors:** Train all advisors on the student learning outcomes, commit advisors to share these with students, and ensure all students are being taught based upon these learning outcomes. Ensure all new advisors successfully complete New Academic Advisor Certification in their first year and continuing advisors complete ongoing professional development (# AEU's per year). This will enable each student to have an equitable advising experience at UVU. **High priority**  
Evidence: 6, 14,15, 21, 26, 24
7. **Student Program Curriculum:** At the college/school/department level, ensure that advisors participate in curriculum discussions, understand faculty pedagogic approaches, and understand curricular sequences and barriers relative to the programs for which they advise. **High priority**  
Evidence: 3, 8
8. **Assessment of Advisor Training:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the delivery of the advising curriculum in building self-efficacy, technical competence, curriculum knowledge, sense of community, and advising strategies for advisors and evaluate the connections between the professional development of advisors and the student experience/outcomes. **High priority**  
Evidence: 16, 24
9. **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:** Develop a program that will routinely and systematically assess learning outcomes related to academic advising and refining advising policies and practices based upon assessment results. **High priority**  
Evidence: 16, 24

## Section 5: Sources of Evidence

DOC #	TITLE	AUTHOR	URL
1	FAC Advising Curriculum	FAC	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539936592">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539936592</a>
2	Student Learning & Expectations	Woodbury School of Business	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539714207">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539714207</a>
3	Engage in Curricular Discussion with Appropriate Unit		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953540126812">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953540126812</a>
4	Advising Strategic Plan		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539222155">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539222155</a>
5	Commit to Advising as a Professional Responsibility		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538192417">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538192417</a>
6	CPD Scheme for Academic Advisors	Office of University Advising	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953536207948">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953536207948</a>
7	CHPS Dept Advising Syllabus	College of Health & Public Service	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534555554">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534555554</a>
8	Curriculum Process		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534435418">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534435418</a>
9	CET Advising Syllabus	College of Engineering and Technology	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953533920348">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953533920348</a>
10	Activity Calendar for 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	Woodbury School of Business	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539731048">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539731048</a>
11	Activity Calendar for 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	Woodbury School of Business	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539531490">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539531490</a>
12	Activity Calendar for 4 <sup>th</sup> Year	Woodbury School of Business	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539123182">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539123182</a>
13	Activity Calendar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year	Woodbury School of Business	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538007706">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538007706</a>

<b>14</b>	Re: EAA Learning Committee		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539530970">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539530970</a>
<b>15</b>	Advising Competencies Mapped to New Advisor Training	Office of University Advising	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538307742">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953538307742</a>
<b>16</b>	UVU Vision and Mission Statement		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534886749">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534886749</a>
<b>17</b>	Student Responsibilities		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534012304">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953534012304</a>
<b>18</b>	SOE Advising Syllabus Working Copy	School of Education	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537998513">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537998513</a>
<b>19</b>	Re: Questions About Advising and Orientation		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537852482">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537852482</a>
<b>20</b>	Re: EAA Learning Committee		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953535515491">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953535515491</a>
<b>21</b>	Incorporate the Elements of Excellent Advising		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953536181548">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953536181548</a>
<b>22</b>	KPI Understand and Use the Intended Student Learning Outcomes		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539740167">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539740167</a>
<b>23</b>	KPI Explain to Students Their Role in the Academic Advising Relationship		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539361180">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953539361180</a>
<b>24</b>	Orange Team Reba		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537879553">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537879553</a>
<b>25</b>	Gateway Advising Curriculum		<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537512937">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953537512937</a>
<b>26</b>	NACADA Mapping to UVU Advising Competencies	Office of University Advising	<a href="https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953533898748">https://uvu.app.box.com/file/953533898748</a>
<b>27</b>	Conversation with Wade Oliver and Clint Moser		