An Enhanced Academic Advisory System

Dennis Ng
Associate-Pro-Vice Chancellor
& University Dean of Students

Sep. 27, 2012

Background

- In Aug. 2005, AAPC approved the establishment of an Undergraduate Academic Advice Coordinator system at Department/Programme Level.

- During the regular review, the roles of Academic Advice Coordinators yielded long and repeated discussions and the modus operandi in the academic advisory system was commented to be rather loose.

- In Sep. 2008, QAC in its report commented that our extensive student support systems appear complex and multi-layered, and possibly lead to duplication in some cases. A road map of student support service was recommended.

- In Jan. 2009, SCTL recommended to form a Task Force to work on a proposal for providing simple guide to students on the support services provided by various units of the University, including pastoral support.

- A proposal on an enhanced advisory system was approved by the Senate in Dec. 2011.
The Enhanced Academic Advisory System

- To give guidance to students in academic matters as well as to provide support in other areas of all-round development, which forms part of the whole student support and pastoral care system.

- To cover both undergraduate and full-time postgraduate students.

- To be overseen by the Senate Committee on Teaching & Learning.

Level I Advisor

- To provide general advice on academic issues and information on other whole-person development opportunities to students.

Level II Advisor

- To provide additional academic support to students with academic problems.
- To endorse students on probation or extended probation for enrollment into appropriate courses in the next term.
- To refer problem cases to the appropriate units for other suitable assistance.

Faculty Committee on Academic Advising

- To be chaired by the Associate/Assistant Dean concerned, who will serve as the case manager for severe cases.
- To include all Level II advisors.
- To give advice on all aspects of academic advising and monitor the implementation of the academic advisory system in the Faculty.

Other Student Support Units

Roles and Responsibilities
Operational Procedures

Holistic Student Support Services

Faculties / Departments / Divisions – Academic Advice, Insecurity Facilitation & Learning Enrichment Activities

Colleges – Pastoral Care & Experiential Learning for Undergraduates

OSA / OAPA / OAL - Career Development, Incoming Student Services, Psychological Counselling, Student Activities, Scholarships, Exchange Programmes

Student Support Services

Academic support units - Library, Independent Learning Centre, Language Units, etc

Graduate School - General support and advice for postgraduate students

Student

Level I Advisor

Level II Advisor

Interview students on general supervision:
• Course selection
• Guidance on study
• Adaptation to University study
• Other issues on study

Interview students to help them:
• Better understand their academic strength and weakness
• Plan course schedules
• Set goals
• Use resources and support services at the University, etc.

Keep record of meeting date

Fill out brief meeting report

For academic issues, follow up and monitor progress if necessary

For other issues, refer to other services if necessary:
• College Dean of Students' Office
• Graduate School Office
• Office of Student Affairs
• Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
• Office of Academic Links
• University Health Service, etc.

With obvious academic problem*

With no academic problem

Refer waiver cases to Faculty Committee on Academic Advising, then Faculty Board and Senate APC, if appropriate

* Academic Problem: Students being placed on academic probation, or extended probation, or with GPA below a certain threshold (between 1.5 and 2.0)
Record Keeping

- Departments/Programmes are required to keep the meeting dates of students with Level I Advisors.
- Level II Advisors are required to fill out a meeting report, which must be kept in strict confidential.

CUSIS

- A platform for communication between students and advisors
- To allow students to access the information of their pre-assigned Level I Advisor
- To allow advisors to view the particulars of their advisees
A similar academic advising system shall be adopted for Pg students. Every full-time Pg student should be assigned a Level I Advisor. e.g. The thesis supervisor for RPg students The Programme Director for TPg students For each Division, a Level II Advisor should also be appointed by the Division Head to handle problem cases. Owing to the diversified nature of TPg programmes, Programme Directors can design their own advisory systems and submit their plans to the Faculty Committee on Academic Advising concerned for endorsement.

Support for Advisors

- Pamphlet/booklet of general information in academic/personal counselling
- Information of other whole-person development opportunities (e.g. student activities, non-local students' support, career consultation and internship facilitation, finance matters, student exchange, etc.)
- Counselling/sharing sessions, particularly for all Level II Advisors

Handbook on the Implementation of the Academic Advisory System can be obtained at the page of Useful Links in the OSA's homepage:
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/osa/link.htm
In the Handbook......

Important Questions to ask an Adviser:

1. What are the main duties involved in academic advising?
2. How do I interact with my academic advisor?
3. What resources are available to support academic advising?
4. How often should I meet with my academic advisor?
5. What are the benefits of regular meetings with an academic advisor?
6. How can I prepare for my meetings with an academic advisor?
7. What should I expect to happen during my meetings with an academic advisor?
8. How can I request to change my advisor?
9. What should I do if I am not satisfied with my advisor?
10. What types of academic advisors are available, and how do I choose one?

Handbook Annex 8

Implementation Schedule of Academic Advisory System in an Academic Year

**Undergraduate Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>To organize Level I and Level II Advisors</td>
<td>Programmes/Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>To inform students of the advising system and their advisors</td>
<td>Orientation Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To disseminate general information on academic/personal counselling</td>
<td>OSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To organize optional briefing sessions and training workshops for</td>
<td>OSA and other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level II Advisors (particularly Level II Advisors)</td>
<td>institutional units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit</td>
<td>Advisers to work with students</td>
<td>Programmes/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>To generate list of students with academic problems and with</td>
<td>Realisation and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level II Advisors to meet with students</td>
<td>Eductional Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHA-mented</td>
<td></td>
<td>Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>To generate list of students with academic problems and with</td>
<td>Realisation and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level II Advisors to meet with students</td>
<td>Eductional Sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHA-mented</td>
<td></td>
<td>Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Departments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Implementation Schedule of Academic Advisory System in an Academic Year

**Postgraduate Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Programmes Officers of Level I programme to submit a brief plan of</td>
<td>Programmes/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>academic advising system to the Faculty Committee on Academic</td>
<td>Departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advising if any</td>
<td>Orientation Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To issue students of the advising system and their advisors</td>
<td>OSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To disseminate general information on academic/personal counselling</td>
<td>OSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To organize optional briefing sessions and training workshops for</td>
<td>OSA and other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Level II Advisors (particularly Level II Advisors)</td>
<td>institutional units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit</td>
<td>Advisers to work with students</td>
<td>Programmes/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Departments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Remark:** The Faculty Committee on academic advising will meet at least twice or appropriate times during an academic year.