

2019-2024
VIRGINIA TECH
ACADEMIC ADVISING
STRATEGIC PLAN

Office of Academic
Advising Initiatives

Contents

Advising Matters at Virginia Tech	2
Advising Mission.....	3
Philosophy.....	3
Statement of University Responsibility	3
Statement of Student Responsibility.....	4
Statement of Advisor Responsibility	4
Goal #1–Develop advising resources that promote and support equity, inclusion, and diversity.	5
Goal #2–Establish inclusive best practices for recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse community of academic advisors.	6
Goal #3–Provide guidelines for effective case management.	7
Goal #4–Establish an academic advisor onboarding protocol.	8
Goal #5– Enhance existing professional development opportunities that are both accessible and relevant to academic advising.	9
Goal #6–Establish an advising framework that is informed by the values and beliefs of Virginia Tech.	10
Goal #7–Develop an effective advising communication plan.....	11
Goal #8–Incorporate appropriate advising technologies to complement, support, and enhance advising practices.....	12

Advising Matters at Virginia Tech

Faculty and staff across our colleges and campus offices collaborated to develop this strategic advising plan. Their voices live within this document.

The Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising established by NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising and The John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education were the inspiration for the strategic goals that follow. These goals direct preliminary steps for achieving our long-term future as an institution of distinction for holistic student advising, through the expansion and implementation of initiatives that enhance, promote, and support academic advisor growth, development, equity, and inclusion.

The 2019 - 2024 Academic Advising Strategic Plan connects to Virginia Tech's broader institutional strategic plan, The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries as well as our institution's Advising Mission, Philosophy, and Statements of Responsibility.



Advising Mission

Advising at Virginia Tech is a collaborative process between student and advisor, leading to the exchange of information that encourages the individual student to make responsible academic and career decisions.

Philosophy

Virginia Tech demonstrates a commitment to advising through recognizing and supporting the needs of students and advisors. Each undergraduate student at the University is provided with information and assistance, which aids the individual student in making responsible academic and career decisions. Each advisor is provided the necessary tools to respond to student needs and the opportunity to be recognized and rewarded for exemplary advising. Virginia Tech, in support of this philosophy, will provide student-focused advising and assist students in developing skills that lead them to take active responsibility for the advising process.

Statement of University Responsibility

Senior leaders will provide leadership by:

- Reviewing the advising process to assess the impact of the recommendations implemented;
- Providing information for students, advisors, parents, and other constituents that clearly explain responsibilities and expectations related to advising;
- Making information available about advising for all new faculty and appropriate staff;
- Collecting and disseminating information that contributes to effective advising;
- Assisting students in the clarification of academic and long term goals;
- Supporting initiatives to enhance the use of technology in advising;
- Providing support for a web-based interactive advising support system for students, advisors, parents, and other constituents; and
- Supporting a Virginia Tech plan that would effectively assess, recognize, and reward advising in the annual professional evaluation.

Statement of Student Responsibility

The student shares the responsibility for developing an advising partnership with the advisor. Over time, the partnership results in increased responsibility for the student. The student will:

- Communicating goals, needs, wants, and concerns to the advisor in a respectful and sincere manner;
- Keeping abreast of their own academic progress and requirements related to their academic program;
- Making, keeping, and being prepared for appointments with an advisor;
- Informing the advisor of changes in plans and/or circumstances that might impact academic performance;
- Knowing departmental procedures for changing advisors; and
- Bringing concerns regarding the quality of advising to the attention of the advisor.

Statement of Advisor Responsibility

The advisor shares the responsibility for developing an advising partnership with undergraduate students. This is achieved through the advisor:

- Communicating with students and delivering individualized and accurate information in a professional, sincere manner;
- Being informed of, and providing accurate information about current academic policies and procedures;
- Keeping appointments and being available for assistance;
- Providing appropriate referrals, contacts, and information;
- Doing appropriate follow-up with students; and
- Seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities for professional development

Goal #1–Develop advising resources that promote and support equity, inclusion, and diversity.

Strategies:

1. Enhance web-presence to promote and support equity, inclusion, and diversity at VT.
2. Develop a monthly advising newsletter to include a focus on equity, inclusion, and diversity.
3. Develop peer mentoring and shadowing programs for advisors.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Advisor Selection and Development
- Collaboration and Communication
- Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity
- Technology-Enabled Advising

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 1–Advance Regional, National, and Global Impact
 - Goal 3–Increase institutional impact and visibility.
- Priority 2–Elevate the Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) Difference
 - Goal 2–Increase cultural competency

Goal #2–Establish inclusive best practices for recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse community of academic advisors.

Strategies:

1. Develop a job description template to facilitate consistency.
2. Develop an advisor recruitment and hiring “toolbox,” which identifies resources that support a diverse applicant pool.
3. Establish an advisor career ladder to facilitate reward, promotion, and retention.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Institutional Commitment
- Advisor Selection and Development
- Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 2–Elevate the Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) Difference
 - Goal 1– Increase representational diversity
- Priority 3–Be a Destination for Talent
 - Goal 1– Attract, retain, and develop the talents of faculty and staff

Goal #3–Provide guidelines for effective case management.

Strategies:

1. Analyze existing caseloads and duties /responsibilities related to job descriptions.
2. Provide resources and strategies for effective case management.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Institutional Commitment
- Organization

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 4– Ensure Institutional Excellence
 - Goal 1– Continue to develop the physical campus and technology infrastructure
- Priority 4–Ensure Institutional Excellence
 - Goal 2– Develop comprehensive and transparent budget and financial models with diverse and sustainable revenue sources

Goal #4–Establish an academic advisor onboarding protocol.

Strategies:

1. Build upon the existing new advisor checklist for the University, and have each college establish their own.
2. Establish a policies and procedures manual for advisors.
3. Establish a yearly advisor professional development plan.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Institutional Commitment
- Advisor Selection and Development
- Collaboration and Communication

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 2–Elevate the Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) Difference,
 - Goal 3– Address critical societal issues impacting humanity and equity
- Priority 3–Be a Destination for Talent,
 - Goal 1– Attract, retain, and develop the talents of faculty and staff

Goal #5– Enhance existing professional development opportunities that are both accessible and relevant to academic advising.

Strategies:

1. Develop opportunities to strengthen advising practices.
2. Promote scholarly work related to academic advising.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Advisor Selection and Development

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 2–Elevate the Ut Prosim (That I May Serve) Difference,
 - Goal 2–Increase cultural competency
- Priority 3–Be a Destination for Talent,
 - Goal 1– Attract, retain, and develop the talents of faculty and staff

Goal #6–Establish an advising framework that is informed by the values and beliefs of Virginia Tech.

Strategies:

1. Establish an academic advising curriculum.
2. Articulate a pedagogy for delivering academic advising.
3. Develop student learning outcomes for advising encounters.
4. Develop assessment measures for advising effectiveness.
5. Update the existing mission statement of responsibility and definition of advising.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Learning
- Institutional Commitment

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 1–Advance Regional, National, and Global Impact
 - Goal 2– Increase teaching and learning excellence for a holistic education
- Priority 4–Ensure Institutional Excellence
 - Goal 1– Continue to develop the physical campus and technology infrastructure
 - Goal 2–Develop comprehensive and transparent budget and financial models with diverse and sustainable revenue sources
 - Goal 3–Develop and launch an adaptive, inclusive process for continuous strategic planning

Goal #7–Develop an effective advising communication plan.

Strategies:

1. Develop a plan for enhancing communication for all advising stakeholders
2. Develop a plan that offers timely and consistent information for students

Connection to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Collaboration and Communication

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 4–Ensure Institutional Excellence
 - Goal 1– Continue to develop the physical campus and technology infrastructure
 - Goal 3–Develop and launch an adaptive, inclusive process for continuous strategic planning

Goal #8–Incorporate appropriate advising technologies to complement, support, and enhance advising practices.

Strategies:

1. Use advising technology to enhance the advising experience.
2. Provide ongoing training for advising technologies.

Connections to the Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising

- Advisor Selection and Development
- Collaboration and Communication
- Technology-Enabled Advising

Connections to The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries

- Priority 1–Advance Regional, National, and Global Impact
 - Goal 3–Increase institutional impact and visibility.
- Priority 4–Ensure Institutional Excellence
 - Goal 1– Continue to develop the physical campus and technology infrastructure