

# Academic Advising at Brandon University

**Office:** Student Services (McKenzie Building 102-105)

**Advising Appointments:** 204.727.9737

## Advisors

General Advisors for Bachelors programs in Arts, Science, Physical Education Studies, Fine Arts, and Environmental Science:

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## What is Academic Advising?

Advising is grounded in the teaching and learning objectives of higher education. Academic advisors at Brandon University work with students to develop an educational plan and to make meaning of their learning experiences. It is the process through which students consciously assess their goals, interests, and abilities to create and refine a formal learning strategy. The purpose of advising is to guide and support students in crafting a fulfilling education that complements their self-assessment.

By engaging in the advising process, students should become more autonomous, empowered, informed, and successful in their intellectual and professional pursuits. Students will be equipped to make decisions and solve problems specific to their academic progress.

## Academic Advising Fundamentals

Advisors at Brandon University have a variety of professional backgrounds and may use different approaches for advising. However, we agree on the following principles of academic advising.

- ▶ Advising is a teaching and learning process that has its own curriculum, pedagogy, and learning outcomes.
- ▶ Advising plays an important role in students' experience of university education.
- ▶ Advising is a collaborative process in which students' active participation is essential.
- ▶ Advising supports decisions for students whose purposes for post-secondary studies vary according to their self-assessment. Some examples include intellectual curiosity, engaged citizenship, career preparation, professional flexibility, economic mobility, and personal growth.

## Learning Outcomes

Students have several reasons for consulting an academic advisor. In general, though, academic advisors expect that students will learn how to:

- ▶ assess their interests, strengths, and goals to inform program, course, and career selection
- ▶ seek out opportunities and experiences that confirm or invalidate their long-term goals
- ▶ create an educational plan based on strengths, goals, interests, and values
- ▶ use information from diverse sources to support the decision-making process
- ▶ make meaning of their education and describe the purpose of their learning experiences
- ▶ articulate transferable skills (intellectual and practical competencies) acquired through formal and informal learning, including: how to problem solve, how to research, how to explain and communicate, and how to think critically.

## Advisor Responsibilities

Advisors at Brandon University will:

- ▶ discuss program and course options available to students at Brandon University
- ▶ help students develop an educational plan that fits each individual's goals, abilities, and values
- ▶ stay informed of regulations, policies, and procedures that affect how students progress through an academic program (degree requirements, appeal processes, course sequencing, academic standing, etc.)
- ▶ demonstrate how to use advising resources, including registration guides, academic calendar(s), and online registration system
- ▶ teach students how to check degree progress using the appropriate resource
- ▶ make referrals to others, when appropriate, throughout the advising process
- ▶ help students understand how GPA is calculated and how it affects academic standing
- ▶ ensure that all communication regarding the student's academic performance remains confidential.

## Student Responsibilities

As a student, you will:

- ▶ commit to being an active and engaged learner
- ▶ assume responsibility for your choices, studies, and program requirements
- ▶ assess your abilities, interests, values, and goals to understand how they intersect with educational pathways
- ▶ have an open mind about learning and implementing new strategies for academic success
- ▶ research volunteer, co-op, education, and employment opportunities that complement your studies and support your long-term goals
- ▶ have realistic expectations for your academic workload.

## Key Resources

Through academic advising, students should expect to gain a working knowledge of the following resources.

- ▶ [Academic Calendar](#)
- ▶ [Registration Guide](#)
- ▶ Completed Semester Slot Schedule
- ▶ Course Syllabi
- ▶ [Important Dates/Deadlines](#) (Add/Drop, Voluntary Withdrawal)
- ▶ Final Exam Schedule
- ▶ Degree Worksheets
- ▶ [Academic Policies](#)

## Statement on Indecision

“Research shows that students who enter college without a major, and take the time to explore their options, will graduate within the same time frame as students who enter with a major and then, on average, change majors twice” (Gordon).

## Meeting with Your Advisor

Students should meet with an academic advisor whenever they need help navigating the post-secondary system. You are required to see an academic advisor when you are registering for your first courses. Other times you might want to see an academic advisor include:

- ▶ when you are considering making a course change and you aren't sure how it will affect your eligibility to graduate
- ▶ when you need help determining entrance requirements for other programs
- ▶ when you want to take a course elsewhere and you want to know which courses transfer and how they fit within your Brandon University degree
- ▶ when you need to check your degree progress or your timeframe for graduation.

Before an advising appointment, you should:

- ▶ take a look at the current registration guide and the academic calendar
- ▶ jot down courses you think you will need for your degree, and courses that you are interested in
- ▶ consider what other commitments might be involved in your academic day (work, family, etc.)
- ▶ be prepared to discuss course options, address academic problems or concerns, make decisions about the upcoming semester, and explore major/minor options
- ▶ arrive on time for your advising appointment.

## Works Consulted

“Concept of Academic Advising.” *NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising*, 2006, [www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/Concept.aspx](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/Concept.aspx).

“The Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising.” *NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising*, 2005, [www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreValues.aspx](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Pillars/CoreValues.aspx).

Gordon, Virginia. *The Undecided College Student: An Academic and Career Advising Challenge*. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 2007.

Lowenstein, Mark. “General Education, Advising, and Integrative Learning.” *The Journal of General Education*, vol. 64, no. 2, 2015, pp. 117-130.