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C&I 496.16: First-Year Peer Advisors

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**FIRST-YEAR PEER ADVISORS
SYLLABUS & EVALUATION GUIDELINES
2002-2003**

Curriculum and Instruction 496 (section 16), override slip necessary to register

Class: Tuesdays, 4:10-5:00 p.m. (LA 334), or Wednesdays, 12:10-1:00 p.m. (LA 205)

Coordinator: Carol Bates

Assistant Coordinator: Paula Ryan

Student Supervisors: Amy Lyngstad, Amy Scott

Description & Goals

The Peer Advising Program is under the auspices of the Academic Advising Office within the University College at The University of Montana (UM). Peer advisors are students who have been recruited and trained to academically advise other UM students. The goals of the Peer Advising program are:

- To provide quality academic advising to students the University College advising pool, Freshman Business, Pre-Elementary Education, Pre-Psychology, Pre-Communication Studies, and Undergraduate Non-Degree Students;
- To provide advising assistance to students of all majors through a walk-in advising service; and
- To aid in the development of advisors' professional skills beneficial to individual growth and transferable to their work with advisees.

Credits & Grading

Peer Advisors will register for 2 credits in C&I 496 (section 16) during the 2002-03 year; either 1 credit each semester or both during any one semester.

If advisors register for C&I 496 credits Autumn Semester, grades will be issued as an "N" (ongoing grading system) and changed to a final grade at the end of Spring Semester 2003. ***Regardless*** of when you register for the credits, you attend classes both semesters and must meet all the necessary requirements.

Grades will be based on an evaluation system reflecting your participation, satisfactory progress, and completion of the following requirements:

• PEER CLASS ATTENDANCE	20%
• MAIL/MESSAGE CHECK-IN	5%
• EMAIL CHECKED & SENT	5%
• OFFICE HOURS	10%
• ADVISEE FILES	30%
• ADVISING SKILLS & PERFORMANCE	30%
TOTAL	100%

1. Peer Class Attendance (20%)

Purpose: To provide continued training and development of advising and professional skills.

- One excused absence per semester is allowed without deductions. Absences must be excused by your supervisor in advance of the date you will miss class. Make-up work for the missed class must be completed on time and turned in to your supervisor. Any unexcused absences will result in a deduction of points under class attendance.
- It is your responsibility to initial the sign-in sheet at every class.

2. Mail/Message Check-in (5%)

Purpose: To ensure regular communication between advisors, supervisors, and staff concerning policies, advising, and other relevant issues (i.e. students wanting to contact their advisor). The check-in sheet provides a record for grading purposes.

- Checking your mail **and signing** in **once** a week (on the message sign-in sheet) are mandatory for every week, including the first week of classes, finals week, and weeks with holidays. You may call in and have the receptionist check your mail and sign in for you **only** if unusual circumstances arise preventing you from coming into the office.
- Check the white bulletin boards for general information and updates.

3. Email Check-in (5%)

Purpose: To increase communication opportunities with supervisors and advisees.

- Every advisor must have an email account by the end of the first week of class.
- Advisors must form a distribution list of their assigned advisees.
- Email advisees with information in a timely manner, as determined by your supervisor.
- Checking your email **and** signing in **once** a week (on the email check-in sheet) are mandatory for every week of the semester. Email checks can be done in any computer lab, from home, or in the Advising Office. They can be done during an office hour if no advising appointments or walk-ins are scheduled.
- **Include** your supervisor's email address on your advisee email distribution list so she will receive the emails sent.

4. Assigned Office Hours and Check-in (10%)

Purpose: To provide a dependable schedule of your availability to see walk-ins, assist your advisees, update files and meet with staff. Office hours also provide an opportunity to check and send mail and email. The check-in sheet is a record of your office hour attendance, but allows for schedule changes and also supplies the receptionist with a consistent list of advisors available to see walk-ins.

- Attendance (and being on time) for your assigned office hour and sign-ins (on the office hour sign-in sheet) are mandatory every week except finals week. Failure to sign in will be reflected in your grade.
- Changes in your schedule due to unusual circumstances must be made in advance or approved by Carol. To make a change: 1) *cross your name off the assigned time and write your name in the time you will be coming in*; 2) *leave a message for your supervisor with the date you will miss, a brief explanation of the necessity for the change, and the*

make-up office hour time; and 3) notify the receptionist of the temporary change. [Failure to show up for an office hour and to contact supervisor and receptionist will also be deducted from your points under the professionalism section of Advising Skills and Performance.]

- Studying during your office hour is permitted if no walk-ins or assigned students are waiting, no extra tasks need to be completed, and all file work and email is up-to-date.
- If your office hour falls on a holiday, you are not required to make it up another day, but may do so if you feel it's necessary (for hours or work to do, etc.).

5. Files (30%)

Purpose: To furnish a permanent academic record for every student assigned to advisors. By maintaining neat and up-to-date files, advisors can accurately track student's academic progress as well as learn crucial record keeping skills.

- Every file must contain: attached grade slips (if applicable); a completed student record; a general education sheet; an advising sheet; and a contact sheet. Some files will contain: placement exams; transcripts or transfer evaluations; Four Bear contracts and four year plans. Files should be organized according to the "Checklist of Advising File Contents" posted on the bottom of the contact sheet.
- Because other departments and the students themselves can see the file, it is imperative that you do not include opinionated or speculative information on the student record.
- Your files must be kept in alphabetical order in the file cabinet and are not to be removed from the office (unless taken to a supervisor's office during evaluations).
- Space in front of your advisee files will be available for your Schedule of Classes, Resource Notebook, and UM Catalog.

6. Advising Skills & Performances (30%): Professional & General Advising Skills (15%) & Other (15%)

Purpose: To provide and promote expertise, awareness, and development of professionalism and general advising skills.

- "Professional and General Advising Skills" examines your performance in the following areas:
 - ✓ *Communication skills (body language, eye contact, and the ability to articulate ideas, and suggestions)*
 - ✓ *Listening skills*
 - ✓ *Appearance*
 - ✓ *Information accuracy and completeness*
 - ✓ *Timeliness (showing up on time for all appointments)*
 - ✓ *Knowledge of resources/referrals*
 - ✓ *Completion of training and exam review*
 - ✓ *Follow-through on suggestions for improvement*
- "Other" examines your performance in the following areas:
 - ✓ *Completing assigned tasks in a timely manner (i.e., availability forms, accountability forms, and tests submitted by deadlines)*

- ✓ *Attitude toward the program, your advisees, the staff, and other peers*
- ✓ *Enthusiasm*
- ✓ *Participation*
- ✓ *Effective communication with your supervisor (i.e., leaving messages)*

Additional Requirements

- Attend Spring and Fall training sessions
- Advise a caseload of 18-25 advisees during the 2002-03 academic year
- Provide advising to new and returning students during:
 - ✓ *Summer Orientations (recommended, but not required)*
 - ✓ *Late Registration, Autumn Semester 2002 and Spring Semester 2003 (recommended, but not required)*
 - ✓ *Priority Registration, Autumn Semester 2002 and Spring Semester 2003 (required)*
- Submit a completed semester accountability form at the end of Autumn and Spring semesters to your supervisor
- Take part in mid-term and final performance appraisals with your supervisor
- Conduct peer candidate interviews during Autumn Semester 2002

Required Readings

- UM Catalog
- UM Advisor's Handbook
- Fac Pac
- Informational and Resource Handouts distributed throughout the year