Faculty Advising Manual:
2014-2015

Building a bridge to a lifetime of success
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Faculty Advising Manual is to ensure that students receive appropriate and timely academic advice throughout their career in the College of Liberal and Applied Arts. This goal is accomplished through several resources designed to guide faculty advisors through the process:

- A model “checklist” is provided that outlines the information students should be informed about during each semester of their academic career. The checklist is a resource and guide, not a set of directions. Advisors are encouraged to sign and date the checklist after each advising session to establish a record documenting the information conveyed to the student. This form along with notes from the session should be included in the student’s folder.
- The checklist is accompanied with a guide that explains each information item in greater detail. This guide is updated annually to ensure material remains current and relevant.
- A Resource Reference is included that contains an overview of the services available to students at SFA. If a student expresses problems that are non-academic (e.g., financial, personal, medical), the advisor should not attempt to resolve the problem but should direct the student to the office that is professionally equipped to handle the situation.

Additional resources are included in the manual that may be of interest to advisors in assisting them to deliver a quality advising experience to every student, every time.

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College of Liberal and Applied Arts
Model Advisor Checklist and Record

Student Name:

Student ID:

Major:

This checklist is intended to serve as a model about the information (academic policies, degree requirements, graduation procedures) that should be conveyed to students during each semester of their academic career. It can also be used to document that a student has been informed of relevant and/or valuable information. The checklist is a resource and guide, not a set of directions.

Freshman Year

**Item to Discuss**

**First Semester (0-14 credit hours)**

Provide list of organizations in the major and value of involvement

Provide information on institutional policies and advisor reviewed each

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Standing Policy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeat Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Peat Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Composition Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide list of support resources

Inquire about adjustment problems and refers student to help if needed

Inform about the value of study abroad and provided list of programs

Suggest courses for upcoming semester

Advisor Name: Date:

**Second Semester (15-30 credit hours)**

Inquire about adjustment problems and referred student to help if needed

Review student’s educational plan on the following topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Curriculum</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Major and Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explain suspension and probation policies

Suggest courses for upcoming semester

Recommend student visit Career Services (Rusk, third floor)

Advisor Name: Date:
# College of Liberal and Applied Arts

## Model Advisor Checklist and Record

**Student Name:**

**Student ID:**

**Major:**

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## Sophomore Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Discuss</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Semester (31-44 credit hours)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquire about problems and refers student to help if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide with list of career opportunities in major. Advisor discusses student’s career ambitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform the student of the following policies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency Requirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition Rebate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide list of study abroad programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review status of student’s plan of study and degree requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remind students university policy makes them ultimately responsible for ensuring graduation requirements are fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest courses for upcoming semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisor Name:** [ ]  **Date:** [ ]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Second Semester (45-60 credit hours)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquires about problems and refers student to help if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure the student has officially declared the correct major at 45 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss upper-level course options in major that correlate with anticipated goals and objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss internship opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review teacher education requirements with the student, if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain a signed plan of study by the student at 60 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the student to complete the core curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review status of student’s plan of study and degree requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest courses for upcoming semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisor Name:** [ ]  **Date:** [ ]
College of Liberal and Applied Arts
Model Advisor Checklist and Record

Student Name:

Student ID:

Major:

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Junior Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Discuss</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Semester (61-74 credit hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquire about problems and refers student to help if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure student has a minor that is reflected in the system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide list of study abroad programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage student to take a resume to Career Services (Rusk, third floor) for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review teacher education requirements with the student, if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review status of student's plan of study and degree requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest courses for upcoming semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advisor Name: _______________________________ Date: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Discuss</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Semester (75-90 credit hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquire about adjustment problems and refers student to help if needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review status of student's plan of study and degree requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review teacher education requirements with the student, if appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remind students university policy makes them ultimately responsible for ensuring graduation requirements are fulfilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss entrance exams to graduate schools and overlap program (if applicable).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest courses for upcoming semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advisor Name: _______________________________ Date: __________
College of Liberal and Applied Arts
Model Advisor Checklist and Record

Student Name:

Student ID:

Major:

This checklist is intended to serve as a model about the information (academic policies, degree requirements, graduation procedures) that should be conveyed to students during each semester of their academic career. It can also be used to document that a student has been informed of relevant and/or valuable information. The checklist is a resource and guide, not a set of directions.

Senior Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Discuss</th>
<th>First Semester (91-105 credit hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquire about problems and refers student to help if needed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review options and procedures for applying to graduate school with the student, if applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide list of study abroad programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review status of student’s plan of study and degree requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage student to visit Career Services (Rusk, third floor) to discuss employment opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have student file for graduation during the semester before the term s/he plans to graduate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File an intent to graduate form through the student’s academic department and completes graduation checklist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest courses for upcoming semester</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advisor Name: Date:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item to Discuss</th>
<th>Second Semester (106 credit hours-graduation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inform student that proof of enrollment is required for any transfer credit 25 days prior to graduation. This proof must be presented to the to the Graduation Specialist in the college’s Office of Academic Advising. If not provided by the deadline, the student is automatically dropped from the graduation list.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a departmental exit survey, if applicable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advisor Name: Date:
Freshman Checklist

1. Inform the student about organizations available within the academic major and the benefits of involvement. Above all, students who get involved are more likely to be satisfied with their college experience and persist to graduation. Involvement also eases the transition from high school to college.

2. Inform the student of the following policies:
   - **Good Standing (Policy 6.4):** A student must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 to remain in good academic standing. A student is placed on academic probation after the first regular semester in which the cumulative GPA falls below 2.0. Students on academic probation whose semester GPA is 2.0 or higher will be allowed to continue on academic probation until the cumulative GPA is 2.0 or higher. Academic probation will continue until the student achieves good standing or is placed on academic suspension. A student on academic probation shall be placed on academic suspension if the student’s semester GPA falls below 2.0.
   - **Repeat Policy:** Students who make an “F” in a course can get credit only by repeating the course. Undergraduate students who want to repeat courses to improve their GPA at SFA must repeat those courses at SFA. For any course that is repeated at SFA, the grade earned in the most recent enrollment will be used to calculate the GPA. Credit hours for courses taken at other institutions to replace credit hours earned at SFA may be used to meet graduation credit-hour requirements, but not for GPA calculation. If an equivalent course is taken at another educational institution, the grade from that school does not replace the grade received from SFA. In order to receive replacement of a SFA grade, the course must be repeated at SFA.
   - **Three-Peat Rule:** Any course attempted three times (where either grade earned or dropped after 12th day) will require a student to pay $100 per credit hour for any future enrollment in the course. Courses attempted at any other Texas public college or university are considered. A few exceptions to the rule do exist.
   - **Drop Rule (Policy 6.10):** A withdrawal or course dropped by the official reporting date will not be recorded on a student's transcript. After the official reporting date, a drop or withdrawal will be noted as a "W" grade on the student’s official transcript. Undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses with a "W" grade. This number includes any course dropped at another Texas public institution but excludes full semester withdrawals and exceptions as defined in Texas law (Education Code section 51.907). After six withdrawals, the student will receive the grade awarded for each attempted course. The purpose of the policy is to encourage students to graduate as quickly as possible.
   - **English Composition Grades:** A student must receive a grade of “C” or better in English 131 to be admitted to English 132. Additionally, a student must receive a grade of "C” or better in English 132 to be admitted to any English 200 level course. A "C” or better in both composition courses is required to graduate.
   - **Holds:** A “hold” denies a student the opportunity to register for courses or adjust a course schedule. A hold can be placed on a student for a number of reasons, including the failure to pay library and parking fines, academic issues (such as not seeing an advisor prior to registration), or financial reasons (such as an unpaid loan). In order to have the hold removed, the student must contact the office or department that issued the hold and resolve the problem.

3. Inquire whether the student is experiencing any adjustment problems: homesickness, academic, financial, or relationship. If a positive answer is received, do not provide advice but reference the student to the appropriate campus office. See the Student Resource guide.

4. Inform the student about the importance of study abroad (i.e., a globalized world and job market) and the benefits of an overseas experience (grade point average tends to rise on return, more likely to graduate on time, more likely to locate employment quickly, and more likely to receive a higher starting salary).

5. Review the student’s educational plan.
• **Core Curriculum**: The core curriculum (42 hrs.) is a set of component areas all SFA students must complete. It is designed to provide students with a broad foundation in basic skills and knowledge. In Texas public universities, the core curriculum is divided into eight categories: communication, mathematics, science, culture (including language and philosophy), creative arts, American history, government, and social science. Students typically have course options within each category. Most of the core requirements are common to every major. In the categories where choices exist, an advisor will assist in selecting the appropriate course(s). Students may be able to apply credit achieved elsewhere to fulfill certain core courses, such as through Advanced Placement (AP) credit, dual credit, and an equivalent course completed at a community or other four-year institution.

• **College Requirements**: A student must also complete a set of courses (up to 12 credit hours). In the College of Liberal and Applied Arts, different sets of requirements exist depending on the degree a student is seeking to earn.

• **Academic Major**: A student must select an academic major as a field of study. A major is a student’s main field of study and is composed of at least 30 hours of credit but typically 36 hours. The College of Liberal and Applied Arts offers 19 majors. See the list of College Programs.

• **Academic Minor**: Most majors require completion of an academic minor. A minor is a student’s secondary field of study. It is less in-depth than a major and is composed of at least 18 semester hours. A minor should complement a student’s major and not simply expand it with more courses in the same field.

• **Degree**: To earn a degree at SFA, a minimum of 120 hours must be fulfilled. Most hours are specified (core curriculum, college requirements, major, minor), leaving only a limited number of opportunities for electives. A student should therefore select courses wisely with an eye to graduate in a timely fashion.

**Sophomore Checklist**

1. Provide the student with a list of career opportunities in the major. Discuss briefly the student’s career ambitions.

2. Remind the student that, under university policy, s/he is ultimately responsible for ensuring graduation requirements have been fulfilled.

3. Discuss upper-level course options in the major. Use the opportunity to guide the student toward course selections that correlate with anticipated future goals and objectives.

4. Inform the student of the following policies:
   - **Advanced Hours**: A student must complete forty-two or more semester hours of advanced work (courses numbered 300-499), at least 36 at SFA.
   - **Residence Requirement**: A minimum of 42 semester hours must be completed in residence at SFA. Online courses taken through SFA apply toward fulfilling this requirement.
   - **Transfer Hours**: A student can transfer no more than 66 hours (plus kinesiology 4 activity hours) from a community college. There are also specific residential requirements for majors and minors.
   - **GPA Requirements**: Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in their major courses, minor courses, and overall (cumulative) to graduate.
   - **Tuition Rebate**: Inform the student of the tuition rebate opportunity. Section 54.0065 of the Texas Education Code authorizes a tuition rebate of up to $1000 for certain undergraduates who have attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree under the General Bulletin under which they graduated. Hours attempted include transfer credits, course credit earned exclusively by examination, (except that, for the purpose of this program, only the number of semester credit hours earned exclusively by examination), courses dropped after the official census date, for-credit developmental courses, optional internship and cooperative education courses, and repeated courses. Courses dropped for the reasons that are determined by the institution to be beyond the control of the student shall not be counted. The student should be directed to the Admissions Office for detailed information due to the technicalities associated with the rebate program.

5. Ensure the student has officially declared the correct major at 45 hours.

6. Explain the benefits of performing an internship. According to research by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and America Public Media’s *Marketplace*, employers place more weight on experience—
particularly internships and employment during school—than on academic credentials (including GPA and major). This research concluded that internships are the most important credential for recent college graduates to have in a job search across all industry segments, especially when coupled with a five-year combined bachelor’s/master’s degree (The Chronicle of Higher Education and American Public Media’s Marketplace, (2012). “The Role of Higher Education in Career Development: Employer Perceptions," [http://chronicle.com/items/biz/pdf/Employers%20Survey.pdf](http://chronicle.com/items/biz/pdf/Employers%20Survey.pdf)).

7. Obtain a signed plan of study by the student at 60 hours.
8. Encourage the student to complete the core curriculum.

Junior Checklist

1. Make certain the student has a minor that is reflected in the system.
2. Have the student take a resume to the Career Services office.
3. Advise the student to declare a minor, if appropriate to the major.
4. Remind the student that, under university policy, s/he is ultimately responsible for ensuring graduation requirements have been fulfilled.
5. File intent to graduate form. The Registrar sets the deadline for accepting graduation requests for a given term (December, May, August). The student’s request to graduate triggers the graduation specialist in the College’s Academic Advising Office (AAO) to request the student’s Plan of Study from the student’s major department. The intent to graduate form is filled out in the department and sent to the Graduation Specialist in the AAO.
6. Discuss entrance exams to graduate schools and overlap program (if applicable).
7. Review teacher education requirements with the student, if appropriate.

Senior Checklist

1. Review options and procedures for applying to graduate school with the student.
2. Have the student file for graduation during the semester before s/he plans to graduate.
3. Require proof of enrollment for any transfer credit 25 days prior to graduation. Students will be automatically dropped from the graduation list if this proof is not provided to the Graduation Specialist by the deadline.
4. Have the student complete a departmental exit survey.
1. **Counseling Services** ([http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/))

Counseling Services assists SFA students in overcoming obstacles to their personal and academic goals. This service is accomplished through individual and group counseling for students. Counseling is a free service for all students at SFA. The counselor is the only individual who will have direct access to client files, including information discussed in sessions. Counseling records are not a part of a student's academic record. To schedule an appointment, the student may either visit Counseling Services on the 3rd floor of the Rusk Building or call **(936) 468-2401**. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Monday-Friday.

If a student requires assistance after hours or on a weekend, s/he should call University Police at (936) 468-2608 or the MHMR Crisis Line at (800) 392-8343. If the situation is life threatening, dial 911. An advisor should call Counseling Services while the student is in the office to arrange an emergency appointment when a situation is deemed critical. Counseling Services provides free QPR training (Question, Persuade, Refer) to help advisors in identifying signs of suicide and to learn strategies for encouraging students to seek care.

2. **Disability Services** ([http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/))

Following admission to SFA, services and accommodations from Disability Services require documentation of a disability. An application must be obtained from Disability Services, room 325 of the Human Services Building for academic accommodations (phone 936-468-3004). Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Monday-Friday. Housing accommodations must be requested from the Residence Life Department on the first floor of the Austin Building. Documentation guidelines are available on the website of Disability Services and require, at a minimum, a statement from a licensed professional that explains the disability. An Assessment Committee, either academic or housing, will review the documentation and recommend/deny accommodations. If approved, the student must complete a Semester Application with Disability Services each semester after registering for classes.

Certain hearing impaired and visually impaired students who are Texas residents are eligible for exemption from payment of tuition and some fees. Application for this exemption should be made to the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services. Students with State Certifications for Blindness or Deafness should file a copy of their certification with the Business Office to obtain tuition exemptions.

3. **Health Services** ([http://www.sfasu.edu/healthservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/healthservices/))

The University Health Services clinic is an outpatient medical facility offering preventive and medical services to all currently enrolled students. The staff of the clinic is comprised several licensed primary care providers as well as licensed nurses and laboratory personnel. Most services are provided at no charge to the student with the exception of immunizations and any unusual lab work. No services are available on weekends, holidays or after hours. Students in need of medical services during these times are urged to contact one of the local medical facilities. Pharmacy, x-ray, eye exams, dental services, and physical therapy are not provided. By state law, Health Services cannot treat a student under age of 18 without parental consent.

The clinic is located on the S.E. corner of Raguet and East College Streets. Hours of operation are 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Monday-Friday. Doctor appointments may be made from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and from 1 p.m.-4:30 p.m. **(936) 468-4008.** Students with health insurance should bring a copy of their insurance card during their first visit.

4. **Student Rights and Responsibilities Office** ([http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/](http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/))

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (315 Rusk Building, 936-468-2703) offers students with temporary limiting conditions help in locating services vital to their academic success. The Director of
Student Rights and Responsibilities works with a student to determine individual needs and then attempts to package assistance from available resources on campus.

Additionally, students missing classes for legitimate reasons other than University-sponsored trips may contact the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities and request an absence notification to be sent to their instructors. These notifications are not excuses. Students requesting an absence notification must provide their name, ID number, date(s) of the absence, reason for the absence, and a contact phone number. As per university policy 6.7, an instructor may determine the nature of satisfactory documentation.

5. Veterans Resource Center ([http://www.sfasu.edu/vrc/](http://www.sfasu.edu/vrc/))
The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) located on the 1st floor of the student center in the northeast corner. The VRC provides a space for veterans, dependents on military benefits and ROTC members to gather, socialize, and form relationships with other veterans. The VRC serves as a hub for veteran’s needs and programming efforts including connections with veteran faculty members and access to veterans’ resources provided by the university and outside agencies. There is also access to free printing for student veterans. The center is open M-F from 8a.m.-5p.m. Contact the VRC coordinator (936-468-6494) for more information.

Advisors should encourage students to arrange a visit with Career Services as early as possible. The office is located on the 3rd floor of the Rusk Building or call 936-468-3305 to schedule an appointment. Services include internship, part-time and full-time postings specifically for SFA students and alumni. Career-related workshops and information sessions are held each semester for students to learn more about professional development, a particular industry, organization, or employment opportunities. SFA alums can also continue to use the services from this office free of charge.

7. Academic Assistance Resource Center ([http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc](http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc))
The Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC), located on the first floor of Steen Library, provides peer-tutoring services for high-risk courses (Astronomy, Chemistry, Computer Science, English, German, Math, Music, Physics, Sign Language, and Writing). Walk-in tables for each subject area are available at specific hours ([http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/walk-in-tables/](http://library.sfasu.edu/aarc/walk-in-tables/)) while weekly tutoring appointments can be arranged ([https://mytutor.sfasu.edu/TracWeb40/](https://mytutor.sfasu.edu/TracWeb40/)). An online writing lab ([http://mytutor.sfasu.edu/owl/](http://mytutor.sfasu.edu/owl/)) will work with students experiencing grammar and related difficulties. The AARC Welcome Desk can be reached at (936) 468-4108 Monday-Thursday, 8a.m.-8p.m., Fridays from 8a.m.-5p.m., and Sundays from 4-8p.m.

8. Testing Services ([http://www.sfasu.edu/ccs/testing/](http://www.sfasu.edu/ccs/testing/))
Testing Services is located on the third floor of the Rusk Building and is where students can go to take placement exams such as the TSI Assessment test; admission exams for graduate school (i.e. GRE & LSAT), the nursing and elementary education programs as well as a large variety of certification test. Testing Services does not have access to individual student test TSI status and will need to contact Academic Advising Center for specific sections needed. The center is available M-F from 8am-5pm. Call (936) 468-3958 for more information.

9. Involvement Centers
The Involvement Centers are located in the lobby of Steen Residence Hall and the first floor of the Student Center. Students can call or email ahead of time to schedule an appointment or just walk-in between 9a.m.-6p.m. at our Steen Location. The Involvement Specialists on staff help find information for students concerning a wide variety of SFA and local topics. Students can also schedule a 30-minute advising appointment. During the advising session, students discuss time management and their personal goals and interests. The specialists design an involvement opportunity that is unique to each student based on the 200+ student organizations and the countless other engagement opportunities available at SFA and within the local community. Students are often directed to the support services on campus such as AARC, Career Services, etc. For more information or to contact a member of the Involvement team please email getinvolved@sfasu.edu or call us at (936) 468-1175 or (936) 468-6721.
10. Financial Assistance

Students experiencing financial concerns should be directed to the Financial Aid Office (Rusk Building, 936-468-2403). A number of conditions must be satisfied to qualify for federal, state, or institutional funds. The student must:

- be enrolled in an eligible degree-seeking or certificate programs at least half-time (6 credit hours)
- be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- have a valid Social Security Number
- be registered with Selective Service or be exempt if male
- be in good academic standing and maintain satisfactory academic progress toward completion of a degree or certificate
- not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal educational loan
- demonstrate a financial need, except for some loan programs
- have a high school diploma or GED.

Four basic forms of financial assistance exist: grants, loans, work study, and scholarships. Each has specific eligibility requirements. Students can apply for scholarships online at mySFA.

International students who are neither a citizen nor an eligible non-citizen do not qualify for federal student aid. In these cases, contact the Office of International Programs (OIP). Financial aid may be available for students who are planning to participate in a study abroad program sponsored by SFA; an appointment should be arranged with the Financial Aid Office to establish eligibility.

11. Office of International Programs (http://www.sfasu.edu/oip/index.asp)

The Office of International Programs (OIP) is located in the Dugas Liberal Arts Building in room 402 (phone: 936-468-6631). It offers support services to international students in order to maintain the intercultural and international dimensions of the University. The OIP office and its staff offer assistance regarding the following services: health insurance, I-20 information, visas and immigration services, Curricular Practical Training and Optional Practical training. It also assists with student transportation, housing issues, and scholarship information and awards.

International students must maintain a full course load (12 credit hours for undergraduates and 6 for graduate students) and cannot drop below full-time status for any reason. No minimum course load applies to summer semesters. International students cannot accept off-campus employment without official authorization from either OIP or US Customs and Immigration Services. Any change of address or academic major must be reported to OIP within ten days of the change, including moving from one residence hall room to another. OIP must also be notified if an international student will be unable to complete a degree within the framework allotted on the I-20. Such notification must be provided at least 30 days prior to the I-20 deadline. International students are required to maintain health insurance coverage at all times.


The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) is located in the Baker Pattillo Student Center in room 3.101 (936-468-1073). Its mission is to create networks of support for students that provide opportunities for meaningful cross-cultural interactions and learning experiences that promote respect for diversity. The office works with student organizations to host cultural celebrations and activities that are fun, educational and that work to enhance our students' abilities to succeed in a global community.

OMA hosts student organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Organization of Latin Americans (OLA), and Lumberjack Cultural Association (LCA). Its services include a computer lab, mediation resolution, and mentorship for first-year and transfer students.
College of Liberal and Applied Arts: Advising Office

STUDENT DEGREE PLAN MEMORANDUM

Name: ___________________________           ID# _____________________________

To ensure a timely gradation, it is the responsibility of the student to make certain each of the items below is completed as indicated. This form is to be signed when a student reaches 45 credit hours.

A. Academic Advisors

Academic advisors should be visited in the order outlined below:

1. Academic Major Advisor: The student and the academic advisor in the major should determine the total number of hours remaining to graduate and verify that the following requirements are met or will be met prior to graduation:
   - A grade of "C" or better was earned in both in ENG 131 & and 132.
   - A 2.0 GPA exists in the academic major, minor, and overall. The only exception is that students in Secondary Education must have a cumulative 2.75 GPA.
   - At least 42 hours of coursework was taken at SFA.
   - At least 42 hours of advanced coursework (300 & 400 level courses) is completed, with at least 36 of these hours taken at SFA.
   - No more than 66 hours (plus 4 hours of kinesiology) of transfer credit from a junior/community college are being counted toward degree requirements.
   - At least 120 successfully completed hours have been earned. If more than 150 hours have been attempted, an excessive hour fee may be assessed.
   - No more than 30 hours are being used toward a degree from the College of Business, a total that includes transfer hours.
   - All courses repeated to improve GPA have been taken at SFA. The grade earned in the most recent enrollment in a course is used to calculate the GPA. Please note that courses attempted 3 or more times are subject to a $100 per credit hour fee.

2. Academic Minor Advisor: The student and the minor advisor should determine the courses to complete the minor and verify that all minor requirements are fulfilled or will be fulfilled prior to graduation.

B. Student Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of students to familiarize themselves with their degree plan (i.e., the course of study that leads to graduation). The degree plan should be used as a guide in selecting courses each semester.

A degree plan is not official until signed by the individuals listed on the document. Once signed, degree plans are binding. If later advised to change any part of the degree plan, the student MUST file paperwork updating the plan. Students should apply for graduation in the Graduation Office (Rusk 201) the semester before they intend to graduate. This paperwork must be completed according to the deadlines below:

   The filing for May graduation must take place September 15 - November 15.
   The filing for August graduation must take place January 2 – March 2.
   The filing for December graduation must take place April 1-June 1.

C. Student Acknowledgement

I have read and understand all the requirements needed to receive a degree from SFASU. I agree to update my degree plan each semester. I agree to take a copy of my degree plan to all advising sessions. If changing my major or minor, I agree to apply for a new degree plan.

__________________________  ___________________________
Student Signature                      Date
College of Liberal and Applied Arts: GRADUATION CHECKLIST

Student’s name: ___________________________ ID# __________________

It is recommended that an academic advisor complete this form once a student files an Intent to Graduate form. This document should be retained in the advisor’s records on the student. Please place a check (✓) next to each item verifying the student has or will fulfill the specific requirement.

1. Credit Hour Requirements

Total the student’s credit hours by taking into consideration three factors:
- earned hours,
- credit hours currently enrolled in or will be taking at SFA,
- and credit hours to be transferred to SFA prior to graduation.

_Caution:_ all credit hours must be counted manually. Be alert for repeats not omitted on the online transcript, such as AP credits and transfer credits, since these hours are not excluded by the Banner system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Special Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 120 hours total hours</td>
<td></td>
<td>Check for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 advanced hours overall</td>
<td></td>
<td>If not, a petition must be approved for fewer advanced hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 advanced hours at SFA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 hours in residence at SFA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Online courses count as fulfilling in-residence status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-36 hours in the major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 18 major hours are advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 12 advanced major hours completed at SFA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 18 hours in minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 9 minor hours are advanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 6 advanced minor hours completed at SFA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No more than 7 hours double-dipped (i.e., used twice)</td>
<td></td>
<td>If not, a petition must be approved allowing extra double-dipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If junior college transfer hours exist ✹</td>
<td></td>
<td>No more than 66 credit hours (plus 4 hours in kinesiology) can transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only SFA courses are being used to calculate GPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. University and College Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Special Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A major and minor are officially declared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least a 2.0 GPA in major, minor, and cumulatively</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary Education must have at least a 2.75 GPA in minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collateral requirements in major fulfilled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collateral requirements in minor and/or double major fulfilled</td>
<td></td>
<td>No more than 30 hours in Business courses can be applied to minor, including transfer credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core curriculum fulfilled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College requirements fulfilled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin year is same on Plan of Study as in Banner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course substitutions listed on Plan of Study and in Banner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof of pending transfer credit received by Dean’s Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>If proof is not received, student is dropped from the graduation class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A grade of “C” or better achieved in ENG 131 and 132</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student is or will repeat any required course not yet completed successfully</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All grades of WH will be resolved prior to graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any course repeated for credit does not exceed the allowable hours for the course (e.g., If a course is 3 hours and can be repeated once, no more than 6 hours are counted in the Plan of Study)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For students in the 2010-2011 General Bulletin or an earlier Bulletin version, nine hours of writing enhanced courses are completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>This requirement does not apply to students to later versions of General Bulletin (2011-2012 or after) because the writing enhanced requirement is built into their major.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Values of Academic Advising
National Academic Advising Association

1) Advisors are responsible to the individuals they advise.
Academic advisors work to strengthen the importance, dignity, potential, and unique nature of each individual within the academic setting. Advisors’ work is guided by their beliefs that students:
- have diverse backgrounds that can include different ethnic, racial, domestic, and international communities; sexual orientations; ages; gender and gender identities; physical, emotional, and psychological abilities; political, religious, and educational beliefs
- hold their own beliefs and opinions
- responsible for their own behaviors and the outcomes of those behaviors
- can be successful based upon their individual goals and efforts
- have a desire to learn
- have learning needs that vary based upon individual skills, goals, responsibilities, and experiences
- use a variety of techniques and technologies to navigate their world.

In support of these beliefs, the cooperative efforts of all who advise include, but are not limited to, providing accurate and timely information, communicating in useful and efficient ways, maintaining regular office hours, and offering varied contact modes. Advising, as part of the educational process, involves helping students develop a realistic self-perception and successfully transition to the postsecondary institution. Advisors encourage, respect, and assist students in establishing their goals and objectives. Advisors seek to gain the trust of their students and strive to honor students’ expectations of academic advising and its importance in their lives.

2) Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process.
Effective advising requires a holistic approach. At many institutions, a network of people and resources is available to students. Advisors serve as mediators and facilitators who effectively use their specialized knowledge and experience for student benefit. Advisors recognize their limitations and make referrals to qualified persons when appropriate. To connect academic advising to students' lives, advisors actively seek resources and inform students of specialists who can further assess student needs and provide access to appropriate programs and services. Advisors help students integrate information so they can make well-informed academic decisions.

3) Advisors are responsible to their institutions.
Advisors nurture collegial relationships. They uphold the specific policies, procedures, and values of their departments and institutions. Advisors maintain clear lines of communication with those not directly involved in the advising process but who have responsibility and authority for decisions regarding academic advising at the institution. Advisors recognize their individual roles in the success of their institutions.

4) Advisors are responsible to higher education.
Academic advisors honor academic freedom. They realize that academic advising is not limited to any one theoretical perspective and that practice is informed by a variety of theories from the fields of social sciences, the humanities, and education. They are free to base their work with students on the most relevant theories and on optimal models for the delivery of academic advising programs. Advisors advocate for student educational achievement to the highest attainable standard, support student goals, and uphold the educational mission of the institution.

5) Advisors are responsible to their educational community.
Academic advisors interpret their institution's mission as well as its goals and values. They convey institutional information and characteristics of student success to the local, state, regional, national, and global communities that support the student body. Advisors are sensitive to the values and mores of the surrounding community. They are familiar with community programs and services that may provide students with additional educational opportunities and resources. Advisors may become models for students by participating in community activities.

6) Advisors are responsible for their professional practices and for themselves personally.
Advisors participate in professional development opportunities, establish appropriate relationships and boundaries with advisees, and create environments that promote physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Advisors maintain a healthy balance in their lives and articulate personal and professional needs when appropriate. They consider continued professional growth and development to be the responsibility of both themselves and their institutions.

Source: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-declaration.aspx
**Advisor Responsibilities**

An academic advisor should:

- Communicate the university’s curriculum, requirements, policies, and procedures
- Encourage and guide students to define and develop realistic educational goals
- Assist students with planning programs consistent with their abilities and interests
- Listen carefully to questions, concerns, and confusions
- Match students’ needs with available resources and make referrals
- Monitor students’ progress
- Discuss the relationship between academic preparation and the work world

**Advisee Responsibilities**

Student advisees should:

- Schedule regular appointments and make contact with advisor during each semester
- Become knowledgeable about college programs, policies, and procedures
- Accept responsibility for academic decisions and performance
- Prepare a list of questions or concerns before each advising visit
- Participate in the decision-making process
- Follow through on suggested actions, resources, or referrals
- Keep a personal record of academic progress
- Regularly check SFA email and MySFA
Advising Tips

1. Create a receptive, confidential relationship with the advisee. When students believe that the advisor is truly providing guidance that will benefit them, the students will be more accepting, appreciative, and often act upon the recommendations offered by the advisor.

2. Advising is listening! If students can talk with someone in whom they have confidence, who won’t laugh at their comments, ridicule their expressions, or be paternalistic or condescending, students may, within the discussion itself, discover various possibilities and perceive their situation from various perspectives. A good listener, being attentive and encouraging, may provide the student with a form of assistance that is truly helpful.

3. Be empathetic. Remember some of your own difficulties, frustrations, and complexities of college life and make an effort to reduce them for your advisee.

4. Establish the advantages and limitations of advising with each student. Explain how regular advising sessions can benefit the student. Be sure to ask the student if they have any questions.

5. Both the advisor and advisee have certain responsibilities. Discuss your expectations of the student as an advisee. A written list of those expectations would serve as a reminder to the student to prepare for his/her next meeting.

6. Clarify with your advisee that he/she understands your intended message. Ask the student to then describe back to you what he/she will do.

7. End-of-lecture summary has its counterpart in advising. During the advising session, and particularly at the end, summarize what transpired and the options that the student has. This is an opportunity for the student to respond to your advice.

8. Open-ended questions are a useful means of entering into a discussion. Students, particularly freshmen, may be intimidated by your faculty rank, and be hesitant to elaborate in their discussions with you.

9. You may have to inform a student that you are compelled to deny his/her request. When this must be done, be sure to specifically explain what you cannot do for the student and why.

10. Refer the student to a specific person and offer several alternatives. This handbook will provide you with a number of resources. If you are not sure where to refer a student, make a phone call to your department chair.

11. Take good notes on what was discussed and what your recommendations to the student were and file them in the student’s folder. This will serve as a reminder to you when you meet with the student in a follow up visit.

12. If an academic advisor is on sabbatical or is not able to meet with students due to other complications, the department chair should notify the advisees that their academic advisor is not available for the semester and the name of the interim advisor should be provided.

Guidelines for Advising Notes

1. Include notes that will help the student.
   “Student should remember to take Math placement exam before registration for Spring semester.”
   “Asked student to bring list of ten possible courses for next semester to our advising session.”

2. Include notes that will help future advisors understand the student or the advice you gave.
   “Encouraged student to enroll in MTH 130 because of interest in Elementary Education.”
   “Student took GST 170 out of interest even though he already has credit for PSY 121. Understands GST 170 will be elective.”

3. Include a list of courses approved, along with alternatives.
   “We agreed to 14 hours for Spring semester: MTH 135, PED 100, COM 115, PSY 121, PLS 101. Use HST 122 as alternative for PLS 101 and ANT 125 as alternative for PSY 121.”
   “Summer classes we discussed were BIO 102 and IDS 117 for six hours. Will take CHM 107 if BIO fills.”

4. Include notes that will facilitate the relationship with the student.
   “Encouraged student to make an appointment to come see me after mid-term grades are posted.”
   “Reminded student to make appointment well in advance of her registration date for Summer and Fall.”

5. Include possible consequences of not following advice given.
   “Discussed need to take MTH 103 during Spring semester so MTH 135 can be taken in Fall.”
   “Student wants to enroll in 18 hours. Cautioned regarding heavy academic load.”

6. Include referrals of a non-sensitive nature.
   “Encouraged student to see Dr. Catau about getting general education credit for some transfer courses.”
   “Encouraged student to make appointment with career counselor.”

7. Include comments that help you in future interactions with the student.
   “Student was well prepared for advising session. Had tentative schedule already worked out.”
   “Student has consistently expressed an interest in attending dental school at UMKC.”

8. Exclude subjective judgments about student, especially when negative.
   “Student is not motivated to succeed in classes this semester.”
   “Student struggling in all classes; I think he would have been better off at community college.”

9. Exclude referrals of a sensitive or personal nature. (May use personal notes.)
   “Recommended student seek psychological assistance through the Counseling Center on campus.”
   “Referred student to the Learning Diagnostic Clinic for testing. I suspect a learning disability.”

10. Exclude comments about instructors, especially when negative. (May use personal notes.)
    “Student is having a personality conflict with COM 115 instructor.”
    “Student is considering dropping HST 122 because of a problem with the professor.”

11. Exclude personal concerns of the student. (May use personal notes.)
    “Parents are going through a divorce this semester.”
    “Sister has cancer; student is having a very difficult time staying focused on academics.”

Source: Missouri State University, http://www.missouristate.edu/assets/advising/AdvisingNoteGuidelines.pdf

Reminder: Notes may be considered public records and thus are subject to open records requests.
FERPA Guidelines

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, commonly known as FERPA, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Students have specific, protected rights regarding the release of such records and FERPA requires that institutions adhere strictly to these guidelines. Therefore, it is imperative that the faculty and staff have a working knowledge of FERPA guidelines before releasing educational records.

Educational Records
FERPA gives students the following rights regarding educational records.

- The right to access educational records kept by the school.
- The right to demand educational records be disclosed only with student consent;
- The right to amend educational records;
- The right to file complaints against the school for disclosing educational records in violation of FERPA.

Students have a right to know about the purpose, content, and location of information kept as a part of their educational records. They also have a right to expect that information in their educational records will be kept confidential unless they give permission to the school to disclose such information. Therefore, it is important to understand how educational records are defined under FERPA. Educational records are defined by FERPA as:

Records that directly relate to a student and that are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

Educational records are directly related to the student and are either maintained by the school or by a party or organization acting on behalf of the school. Such records may include:

- Written documents; (including student advising folders)
- Computer media;
- Microfilm and microfiche;
- Video or audio tapes or CDs;
- Film;
- Photographs.

Any record that contains personally identifiable information that is directly related to the student is an educational record under FERPA. This information can also include records kept by the school in the form of student files, student system databases kept in storage devices such as servers, or recordings or broadcasts which may include student projects.

Records Not Considered As Educational Records
The following items are not considered educational records under FERPA:

- Private notes of individual staff or faculty; (NOT kept in student advising folders)
- Campus police records;
- Medical records;
- Statistical data compilations that contain no mention of personally identifiable information about any specific student.

Faculty notes, data compilation, and administrative records kept exclusively by the maker of the records that are not accessible or revealed to anyone else are not considered educational records and, therefore, fall outside of the FERPA disclosure guidelines. However, these records may be protected under other state or federal laws such as the doctor/patient privilege. As an attorney, I recommend that you check to make sure that you fully comply with these disclosure guidelines before disseminating any of this information.
Two Types of Educational Records
There are two types of educational records as defined under FERPA. Each type of educational record is afforded different disclosure protections. Therefore, it is important for faculty and staff to know the type of educational record that is being considered for disclosure.

Directory Information
Some information in a student's educational record is defined as directory information under FERPA. Under a strict reading of FERPA, the school may disclose this type of information without the written consent of the student. However, the student can exercise the option to restrict the release of directory information by submitting a formal request to the school to limit disclosure. Directory information may include:

- Name;
- Address;
- Phone number and email address;
- Dates of attendance;
- Degree(s) awarded;
- Enrollment status;
- Major field of study.

Though it is not specifically required by FERPA, institutions should always disclose to the student that such information is considered by the school to be directory information and, as such, may be disclosed to a third party upon request. Institutions should err on the side of caution and request, in writing, that the student allow the school to disclose directory information to third parties.

Non-directory Information
Non-directory information is any educational record not considered directory information. Non-directory information must not be released to anyone, including parents of the student, without the prior written consent of the student. Further, faculty and staff can access non-directory information only if they have a legitimate academic need to do so. Non-directory information may include:

- Social security numbers;
- Student identification number;
- Race, ethnicity, and/or nationality;
- Gender
- Transcripts; grade reports

Transcripts are non-directory information and, therefore, are protected educational records under FERPA. Students have a right to privacy regarding transcripts held by the school where third parties seek transcript copies. Institutions should require the students first submit a written request to have a transcript sent to any third party as the privilege of privacy of this information is held by the student under FERPA. As an attorney, I would advise that schools should never fax transcripts because this process cannot guarantee a completely secure transmission of the student's grades to third parties.

Prior Written Consent
In general, a student's prior written consent is always required before institutions can legitimately disclose non-directory information. Institutions may tailor a consent form to meet their unique academic needs. However, prior written consent must include the following elements:

- Specify the records to be disclosed;
- State the purpose of the disclosure;
- Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure is to be made;
- The date;
- The signature of the student whose record is to be disclosed;
- The signature of the custodian of the educational record.
Prior written consent is not required when disclosure is made directly to the student or to other school officials within the same institution where there is a legitimate educational interest. A legitimate educational interest may include enrollment or transfer matters, financial aid issues, or information requested by regional accrediting organizations.

Institutions do not need prior written consent to disclose non-directory information where the health and safety of the student is at issue, when complying with a judicial order or subpoena, or where, as a result of a crime of violence, a disciplinary hearing was conducted by the school, a final decision was recorded, and the alleged victim seeks disclosure. In order for institutions to be able to disseminate non-directory information in these instances, FERPA requires that institutions annually publish the policies and procedures that the institutions will follow in order to meet FERPA guidelines.

FERPA has strict guidelines regarding disclosing the educational records of dependent students. Though FERPA allows such disclosure, the act mandates that the institution first publish clearly delineated policies and procedure for the disclosure of these records. The institution must publish these guidelines annually in a format that is easily accessible to interested parties. As an attorney, I would recommend that both the dependent student and parents sign written disclosure agreements stating, at minimum, the following:

- The dependent student understands and allows parental access to these educational records;
- The dependent student and his/her parents have been given a copy of the institution's policies and procedures for the disclosure of students' records.

Most institutions charge their registrar's office with the responsibility to determine how their institutions will comply with FERPA disclosure requirements. Registrars commonly work with legal council in fashioning and publishing these guidelines. As advisors, it is advisable to check with your registrar's office if you have any questions or concerns before disclosing any student information to third parties.

**Conclusion**
The Family Education and Privacy Act was enacted by Congress to protect the privacy of student educational records. This privacy right is a right vested in the student. Generally:

- Institutions must have written permission from the student in order to release any information from a student's educational record.
- Institutions may disclose directory information in the student's educational record without the student's consent.
- It is good policy for the institution to notify the student about such disclosure and to seek the written permission of the student to allow disclosure of any educational records including directory information.
- Institutions should give the student ample opportunity to submit a written request that the school refrain from disclosing directory information about them.
- Institutions must not disclose non-directory information about students without their written consent except in very limited circumstances.
- Institutions should notify students about their rights under FERPA through annual publications.
- When in doubt, it is always advisable to err on the side of caution and to not release student educational records without first fully notifying the student about the disclosure.

Finally, the school should always seek a written consent from the student before disseminating educational records to third parties.

Source: [http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/FERPA-overview.aspx](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/FERPA-overview.aspx)