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Academic advising: a study of the impact of academic advising on student satisfaction

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**ACADEMIC ADVISING: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC
ADVISING ON STUDENT SATISFACTION**

by
Stephanie R. Easterday

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Services, Administration, and Higher Education
College of Education

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For the degree of
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

at
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Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

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This work is dedicated to my parents, Bruce and Rae Ann, who have always told me I could do anything that I put my mind to. They have always been incredibly supportive and willing to lend an ear to listen or a shoulder to cry on. Without them, I might never have realized my full potential.

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Abstract

STEPHANIE R. EASTERDAY
ACADEMIC ADVISING: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC
ADVISING ON STUDENT SATISFACTION

2012/13

Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

Masters of Arts in Higher Education Administration

The purpose of this study was to determine if Rowan University undergraduate students are satisfied with the academic advising services being provided to them by the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE). The study investigated topics discussed between student and advisor, student's satisfaction with advising assistance, and student's impressions with their advisor.

The *Survey of Academic Advising*, developed by American College Testing (ACT), was distributed to Rowan undergraduate students advised by the CAAdE center during spring of 2013. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the completed data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software.

The study found that Rowan University undergraduate students reported discussing scheduling, registration, programs, and course changes with the advisors. Additionally, the study found that, overall, Rowan University undergraduate students are satisfied with the academic advising they are receiving and report favorable impressions of their advisors.

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Chapter I

Introduction

College is both an exciting and scary time for students. It is often the first time they are leaving home and embarking on a new adventure alone. There are many factors that contribute to a student's success in college. The student's personality, work ethic, and support system all impact how well a student performs. A support system can consist of many people including family, friends, faculty, professional staff, and administrators. Academic advisors are often one of the first professional staff members that a student meets on a college campus. This gives them a vital role in a student's college journey. This research study looks at the impact of academic advising on a student's satisfaction with their college experience.

Statement of the Problem

There are many factors that influence students' satisfaction with their college experience. Scholars have studied many of these factors from personality, socioeconomic status, and support systems. Many studies have concluded that academic advisors, whether faculty or professional, play a central role within the higher education system (Smith, 2004). It is the role of the academic advisor to help students navigate their academic path while creating meaningful relationships with the student (Kadar, 2001).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess how the students at Rowan University describe their interactions with their academic advisors in terms of scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes. Rowan University student's satisfaction in these four areas was also explored. Additionally, the impressions that selected students reported about their advisor in the areas of personal characteristics, advising skills, technical knowledge, rapport, and availability were investigated..

Significance of the Study

This study examined academic advising and the impact it may have on student satisfaction. The findings of this study may provide valuable information to higher education institutions on ways to make students feel more integrated within the college community. If students feel more integrated into the college community, they may feel more satisfied overall. This will lead them to continue their education at the institution, and help increase student retention.

Assumptions and Limitations

This study surveyed undergraduate students who were advised by CAAdE at Rowan University during the spring 2013 semester. Therefore its findings are limited to the population at Rowan University who used CAAdE services. Only students who were willing to take and return the survey participated in this study. It

was assumed that all students who participated in this study answered the questions honestly.

There were several limitations to this study. First, the sample was selected by convenience, meaning people willing to take the survey. This excludes that student body that was not willing to complete and return the survey. Sample size was another limitation. Sample size is an approximation and while this sample size is an accurate depiction of Rowan University, it would not be accurate of other universities.

This study was also limited by the data collection method and response rate. Due to an extremely low response rate after initially e-mailing the surveys, the remainder of the surveys were distributed face-to-face. The different methods of distribution may have affected student responses. Additionally, the final response rate of 42% was a limitation. Also, there is a chance of researcher bias, which can be a limitation to the study. Furthermore, since this survey only studied students at Rowan University, the results cannot be generalized to other universities.

Operational Definitions

1. Academic Advising: A series of intentional interactions with a curriculum and a set of student learning outcomes. Academic advising synthesizes and contextualizes students' educational experiences within the frameworks of their aspirations and abilities.

2. Developmental Advising: Process in which students and advisors share responsibility for the advising relationship created and the quality of advising received.
3. Faculty Academic Advisor: Faculty member, usually in the student's department, who serves as a mentor and aids students on their academic path.
4. Prescriptive Advising: Advising relationship that emphasizes the power of the advisor and limitations of the student. These advising interactions often consist of the advisor answering clear cut questions.
5. Professional Academic Advisor: A professional administrator who aids students on their academic path.
6. Students: Undergraduate college students, freshman to senior, at Rowan University who were advised by CAAdE during the spring 2013 semester.
7. Student Satisfaction in regards to Academic Advising: A student's happiness with the academic advising services provided to them as measured by ACT's *Survey of Academic Advising*.
8. Student Overall Satisfaction: A student's overall happiness with their college experience as measured by ACT's *Survey of Academic Advising*.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their interactions with academic advisors when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?
2. How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their satisfaction with academic advisor assistance when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?
3. What impressions of their advisors do selected students report in the areas of personal characteristics, advising skills, technical knowledge, rapport, and availability and scheduling?

Overview of the Study

Chapter II establishes a frame of reference for this research study. This section examines the impact of academic advising on student satisfaction. The possible impact of type of advising on student satisfaction is also discussed.

Chapter III describes the methodology and procedures used in this research study. This section describes the context of this study, the population and sample selection, the data collection instruments, process, and analysis.

Chapter IV discusses the findings or results of this study. This chapter addresses the research questions proposed at the start of this study. Narrative and statistical analysis are used to summarize the data from this study.

Chapter V summarizes and discusses that major findings of the study along with conclusions and recommendations for practice and further research

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Academic advising is an important and influential division of the higher education system. Research has shown that student connections with faculty, professional staff, administrators, and peers increase the likelihood of student success. Academic advisors are often one of the first, if not the first, administrators that students meet. Advisors should guide students in several areas from recommending courses, selecting courses, and choosing a major. Therefore, it is vital that each advisor be well versed in required courses, courses available, and student characteristics such as major and schedule.

It is the responsibility of the advisor to create a warm, welcoming environment where students feel comfortable opening up. If advisors make a connection with their advisees they will most likely be more willing to seek help when needed. That is why it is also very important to have an advisor who is willing to help when times get rough and willing to offer suggestions or solutions if a student is in academic trouble. When students know there is someone to turn to, they are often more likely to see that help and in turn more likely to succeed.

In this literature review, I explore student's perceptions of academic advising. Emphasis is placed on the benefits of student advising and the satisfaction

levels of students with the advising process. Moreover, literature is reviewed dealing with the type of advising used, such as a faculty member, professional advisor, or a peer advisor, to see if it made a difference in students' experience.

History of Academic Advising

Academic advising was not always common in higher education. At its inception with the founding of Harvard College in 1636 up until the late 1800s, all students in a given institution took the same courses. Their rigorous schedule was mapped out for them and there was little room for exploration (Kuhn, 2008). In the late 1800s the higher education system expanded, by offering an elective system. With this system came choices for the students. This new system was controversial and the individuals who wanted to preserve the classical education were weary of it. Some critics felt that an elective system would result in students obtaining a less focused education (Kuhn, 2008).

In order to address those worries, an academic advising process was created. Although advising was being defined during this time by schools like Harvard and Johns Hopkins, little attention was being paid to the success of the advising process. Therefore, even though advising had been created and defined, it was still unexamined. However, this all changed in the 1970s up until today (Kuhn, 2008). During this time, academic advising became more than advisors assisting students with course selection and registration; it became an examined activity. Advisors and advising departments began to examine how their advising was being conducted and how other institutions were conducting their advising. In the coming years the

National Academic Advising Association, an adjudicated journal, and national conferences were established to enhance the academic advising process (Kuhn, 2008).

Student Development Theory in General and in Relation to Academic Advising

Past research has indicated that events that may cause departure at one point in a student's career are similar to events that may cause departure at other points within their career as well. Tinto does not believe this is the case (Tinto, 1988). He believes that the factors that may cause departure during students first year of college are significantly different than the factors that may cause them to depart during their later years. Tinto developed his theory based on a passage of work by Arnold Van Gennep. After studying Van Gennep's work, Tinto found three stages or passages which students must complete in order to successfully obtain their degree. These stages are separation, transition, and incorporation (Tinto, 1988).

During the separation stage, students are required to disassociate themselves, to some degree, with past communities. This often includes their high school and hometown residence. This disassociation allows students to adopt the social and cultural norms of their institution. The separation process is stressful for almost all students, especially since college is often the first time students' move away from home to be "on their own." It is important to note that this aspect of Tinto's theory applies to traditional, residential college students. Non-traditional students often do not experience disassociation due to their varying circumstances while attending college (Tinto, 1988).

The second stage of an individual's college career is the transition stage or rather the in-between period. As students pass between the old and the new, they let go of old associations in hopes of adopting new ones (Tinto, 1988). During this stage, students may often feel lost since they no longer have a strong bond with the past and they have not yet made strong bonds within their new environment. Differences in individual coping skills and educational goals often affect how well a student does or does not handle this process (Tinto, 1988).

The final stage is the incorporation process. Here, the student becomes integrated or incorporated into the community of the institution. To achieve incorporation students must make social contacts with other students and faculty alike. These relationships will provide them with a sense of belongingness (Tinto, 1988). Unfortunately, since the college atmosphere is informal in many ways, students are often left to navigate institutional life on their own. How well students can manage this often indicates how successful students will be in earning a degree. Tinto believed that these processes could not only be linked to student retention, but also student development (Tinto, 1988).

As discussed above, Tinto found that student's transition to college and their ability to become incorporated into the community of the institution is extremely important. One of the things that allow students to achieve incorporation is by making connections with peers, faculty, and administrators alike. The advisor-advisee relationship is one of the major connections students can make within their college career. An advisor should be there for the students to help them navigate

their way through college. Not just by selecting courses but by being an advocate for their advisee's education. This relationship can have significant influence on the way students feel about their college experience as a whole. Students who are able to foster this advisor-advisee relationship may feel more satisfied with their advising experience and their college experience overall. Satisfied students are much more likely to be retained by the institution and return to school the following fall. This is why it is imperative that institutions, particularly academic advisors, recognize that students are in transition and make conscious efforts to build engaging connections with them.

In conjunction with Tinto, Schlossberg believed that a need existed to develop a framework that would facilitate an understanding of adults in transition and aid them in connecting with the help they needed to cope (Schlossberg, Waters, & Goodman, 1995). Schlossberg et al. defined transition as any event, or non-event that produces changes in relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles. They also noted that in order to understand the meaning that a transition has for an individual type, context, and impact of the transition must be considered. The type of transition refers to whether the transition was anticipated, unanticipated, or a nonevent. The context of the transition refers to an individual's relationship to the transition and the setting in which the transition takes place. The impact of the transition refers to how the said transition alters an individual's daily life (Schlossberg et al., 1995).

The transition process encompasses a person's reactions over time. Coping with transitions is influenced by ratio of assets and liabilities in regard to four sets

of factors. Schlossberg et al. developed a transition theory called the 4 S's which examined four major sets of factors that influence one's ability to cope with a transition: (a) situation (b) self (c) support (d) strategies. When examining the situation of a transition, one must consider several factors such as trigger, timing, control, role change, duration, previous experience, concurrent stress, and assessment (Schlossberg et al., 1995). The self in a transitional period refers to a person's personal and demographic characteristics as well as his/her psychological resources. In terms of support an individual has when experiencing a transition, it is beneficial to look at the types, functions, and measurement of support. In terms of coping strategies when a person is experiencing transition, there are three categories: modify situation, control meaning, and manage stress in aftermath. There are also four coping modes: info seeking, direct action, inhibition of action, intrapsychic behavior. All of these strategies and modes enable individuals to be able to handle transition in the way that best suits their personality (Schlossberg et al., 1995).

There is no question that students entering college are in transition. Schlossberg's transition theory aids the higher education world in understanding this process which is the first step in helping student's to navigate during this difficult time (Schlossberg et al., 1995). Support is a key component in student's making the transition from high school to college successfully. Academic advisors are a part of this support system. It is the job of the academic advisor to guide students on their academic paths. However, an academic advisor can be much more than that. Advisors can become mentors that help students through their transition to

college. Students who are able to build this connection may be more satisfied with their advising experience which can contribute to college satisfaction overall. This relationship can facilitate student success and retention which is the ultimate goal of any institution.

Types of Academic Advising

In general there are two types of academic advising, prescriptive and developmental. In prescriptive advising, the advisor tells the student what he or she should do and the students execute the advice. Some would describe this as the traditional advisor-advisee relationship. In this situation, it is assumed that if the student follows the advice of the advisor, no problems will arise (Barbuto, Story, Fritz, & Schinstock, 2011). This type of advising is hierarchical with the advisor in command of the knowledge and sessions. The advisee is passive and interactions are usually question and answer which are driven by the advisors interpretation of the student's academic direction. This type of advising is usually associated with professional academic advisors (Barbuto et al., 2011).

In contrast to the prescriptive model, the developmental model takes a much more informal approach. In this model, the advisor concentrates much more on building a relationship with his or her advisees. The advisor is not simply in control of the session, but rather allows the advisee to define the role of the advisor (Barbuto et al., 2011). This means that the advisor and the advisee determine who takes command of the sessions, who supplies the knowledge, and how said knowledge is applied. This type of advising is considered an ongoing relationship in

which the advisees are encouraged to share the responsibility in decision making (Barbuto et al., 2011). This type of advising is often associated with faculty advisors. The idea of faculty members as role models, mentors, and friends to students is the driving force behind this model (Barbuto et al., 2011).

Models of Academic Advising

Within the realm of academic advising, there are several different institutional models that have been developed. The first model is the faculty only model. Here, each student is assigned to a faculty member for all academic advising. The faculty member is usually in the student's major program. Some institutions practice the satellite model of academic advising. In this model, academic advising is maintained and controlled within various academic subjects (Swanson, 2006). Some people refer to this as the multiversity model. The next advising model is the self contained model. Within this structure, all student advising takes place in a centralized office. Usually the office is overseen by an administrator and is staffed by professional advisors. In this model there is little-to-no direct faculty interaction (Swanson, 2006).

Some institutions operate within a shared-supplementary model. In this model, faculty provide academic advising but is assisted by professionals in a supplementary office. Similar to the shared-supplementary model is the shared-split model. In the shared-split model, students are grouped for advising based on their academic progress (Swanson, 2006). There is also a shared-dual model. In this situation, students are assigned two advisors, one faculty member and one

professional advisor. The faculty member can guide students on issues dealing with curriculum and majors. The professional advisor can aid students with registration and general progress issues. Lastly, there is a total intake model. In this model, academic advising initially takes place in a center. Once students have met a certain criteria set by the school they are passed along to faculty advisors (Swanson, 2006).

Role of Advisors

The role of academic advisors can be broken down into four main clusters. The first three clusters involve helping students. Advisors are there to assist students with academic, social, and financial problems. They can also weigh in on career issues and academic paths. The last cluster refers to the administrative duties required of an advisor (Biggs, 1975). Academic advising can be an area of higher education where students can build a relationship. Advising is a role that allows an advisor to have frequent and consistent contact with a specific group of students. However, the role of an academic advisor extends much further than simply helping students select and register for courses. Advising offers multiple chances to build a relationship with students (Kadar, 2001). It provides students with an environment in which they can discuss personal and professional goals. They can also divulge any issues that they may be facing which are hindering their success. This relationship can contribute to student success in that the student feels a connection to the institution. When students feel a connection to someone at the institution, whether it be friends, faculty, or professional staff, they gain a sense of belongingness to the school. This initial sense of belongingness often leads students

to make other connections with the institution. Research has found that these connections contribute to both student success and student retention. The more students feel connected to the institution the more likely it is that they will continue their education and graduate (Kadar, 2001).

Quality of Advising

Quality advising is advising that contributes to student development. This type of advising is multidimensional and consists of five domains. These domains are integration, referral, information, individuation, and shared responsibility. The idea of integration refers to the student's goals, whether they be academic, career, or life, being integrated with each other and with the curriculum. The referral domain involves referring students to various campus resources for academic and non-academic problems (Allen & Smith, 2008). The information refers to the advisors knowledge about degree requirements and how the university works in regards to policies and procedures. Individuation explores the idea of advisors taking each student's individual characteristics into account. Lastly, shared responsibility refers to advisors encouraging students to assume responsibility for their education by helping them develop planning, problem solving, and decision making skills (Allen & Smith, 2008).

Student Satisfaction and Retention in Regards to Academic Advising

Both faculty and professional academic advisors have a large impact on a student's college experience. Enrollment decisions are influenced by student satisfaction which is created by the students, faculty, and staff of the university.

Some students use cost-benefit analysis to determine whether they should stay or leave an institution. Continuous assessment of whether a student's experiences outweigh the cost of those experiences. When students feel they are not receiving the benefits they want or that they are not a valued member of the institution, they may elect to leave. This is the exact thing that every institution is fighting against (Smith, 2004).

It is extremely important to institutions that they retain their students. In order to keep students satisfied, institutions must exert extra efforts to provide enriching educational experiences. This includes focusing on student learning, growth, and development. Advisors can be a resource or knowledge, a referral agent, and a personal mentor for students. The relationship and advisor builds with his or her advisees contributes to the student experience. Establishing a rapport and trust with students is a way advisors can help students become more integrated into the campus community. This integration has been shown to increase retention (Smith, 2004).

Relevant Study

Kathleen Shea Smith from The Florida State University conducted her doctoral dissertation on the perceptions of academic advising and freshman student retention. Smith used Tinto's model of student integration in support of her research analysis. In her investigation, a post-hoc methodology format was used. Several data sources were used including a student satisfaction survey, academic performance data, and student enrollment records (Smith, 2004).

After conducting her research and analyzing the results, Smith's study found several interesting results. First, students expressed the most satisfaction in areas such as level of ease when speaking to an advisor and availability of an advisor. Smith's findings also reported that there were significant differences in students' perceptions of academic advising based on advisor type (Smith, 2004). Additionally, three significant and positive correlations between academic advising and academic integration scales were found. All of these reported findings are consistent with the previous theories and research presented. Students who have advisors that are easy to talk to and available when needed report higher levels of satisfaction. As research states, satisfied students are much more likely to become integrated into the college campus, be retained by the institution, and persist throughout college. In contrast to previous research, Smith found no significant evidence that student perception of academic advising related to student retention or departure (Smith, 2004).

Summary of the Literature Review

In general, the literature states that academic advisors, whether faculty or professional, have a vital role within the higher education system. Research shows that satisfied students are more likely to continue their education and therefore be retained by the university. One key way to satisfy students is to make them feel as though they are an integral part of the institution's community. Academic advising is one area in which institutions can foster integration. The advisor-advisee relationship offers repeated and consistent contact with specific groups of students. This allows students to make significant bonds with their advisors, thus beginning

the integration process. When students make connections within the institution, they are more integrated within the institution and therefore, more satisfied with their college experience.

A gap in the literature exists concerning the association between student perception of academic advising and subsequent enrollment behavior at Rowan University. Additionally, it is unclear whether the type of academic advising a student receives at Rowan impacts their perception of said advising. It is therefore important to assess the students' perceptions of academic advising and its potential contributions to students' academic and social integration on campus.

Chapter III

Methodology

Context of the Study

This study was conducted at Rowan University which is located in Glassboro, New Jersey. The university enrolls approximately 12,000 students total. It is heavily comprised of undergraduate students, which make up 88% of the student population. Eighty two percent of the Rowan student population are in state residents from New Jersey. The majority of students come from Gloucester and Camden Counties, which are located close to the university in terms of distance. Seventy eight percent of the students are full time and the student body is split rather evenly between male and female students (Rowan University, 2012).

The university consists of eight academic colleges: business, communication and creative arts, education, engineering, humanities and social sciences, performing arts, science and mathematics, and biomedical sciences. Rowan university offers a wide variety of college courses and majors for students to choose from. The highest enrolled undergraduate majors for new freshmen are biological sciences, elementary education, law and justice, psychology, and radio/television/film (Rowan University, 2012). Each student, who meets course requirements, has access to any major they choose.

Rowan University utilizes both professional academic advisors and faculty academic advisors. The Center for Academic Advising and Exploation (CAAdE)

currently advises the following undergraduate students: all Exploratory Studies (undeclared) students, Biological Science (Freshmen & Sophomores), Computer Science (Freshmen & Sophomores), English (Freshmen), Psychology (Minors), and Spanish (through Spanish Reading & Conversation). Additionally, CAAdE assists students throughout the University who are seeking to transition from one college or major to another. All other students are under the advisement of faculty advisors in their respective department.

Population and Sample Selection

The target population for this study was all undergraduate students, freshmen to senior, at institutions of higher education in the United States. The available population was undergraduate students who were advised by the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration at Rowan University, in Glassboro, New Jersey, Gloucester County during the spring 2013 semester. The convenience sample was selected from a list of students who are advised by the professional academic advisors of the CAAdE office. All students who were willing to take the survey were included in the results. This study will had a population of 584 students based on CAAdE figures from the previous two semesters. Based on the population, the sample size was 378 students. The target response rate was 70% which is 264 students.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to assess student satisfaction in regards to academic advising was the *Survey of Academic Advising* (Appendix B). This instrument evaluates responses based on Likert scale to determine student satisfaction with academic

advising. During the 1970s, ESS and ACT developed surveys designed to measure impressions, goals, opinions, and attitudes of students related to academic advising. After reviewing current practices, ACT instruments and other literature, I chose to use the ESS ACT *Survey of Academic Advising* to collect the needed data to complete this study (Johnson-Dedeaux, 2011).

The survey consists of seven sections, each having multiple choice questions. Section I consists of background information which is used to collect demographic statistics on each student surveyed. Section II consists of general advising information items. Section III consists of students surveying academic advising needs. These responses are measured by a Lickert scale which ranged from have not discussed and no need to, have not discussed but should have, and have discussed. Also, these same statements were answered on a satisfaction scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied. Section IV consists of statements regarding students impressions of their advisors. These responses were measured on a Lickert scale with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Sections V, VI, and VII consists of items addressing any additional advising information that may be necessary to the survey. After reviewing the survey sections and research questions, I determined that sections I, III, and IV were the most relevant to the study. The responses to all of the items in these three sections were completed by the students. Once complete they were sent back to me, who then evaluated, categorized, and compared the responses.

According to ACT (2007), the instrument is valid, and reliable. Validity and reliability are assured with all ESS instruments because of how each instrument was

created. All ESS instruments were developed in 11 comprehensive steps. The instrument construction began with ESS representatives performing a review of literature and of similar survey instruments. After that was completed, preliminary items and scales were prepared. Once the item and scale preparations were completed, ESS representatives conducted an internal review of items for clarity. Once content and clarity were established, the draft instrument was created. Prior to the creation of the pilot instrument, experts and college officials, reviewed the draft instrument. Once completed, the pilot instrument was evaluated and completed by a sample of students. After the pilot data analysis was completed, the final ESS survey instrument was created (ACT, 2007).

The ACT instrument has been shown to produce valid and reliable results. Every ESS survey instrument goes through a comprehensive review process before it is released to the public for use. ESS demonstrates great care with every survey that is created (ACT, 2007). Following approval of the IRB Application (Appendix A) from the IRB review board, a pilot test of the *Academic Advising Survey* was conducted. Three recent college graduates were given the *Academic Advising Survey* to determine its reliability and validity. None of the recent college graduates reported any problems understanding or answering the questions, and none of them took more than 15 minutes to complete the survey. Additionally, the Cronbach Alpha was calculated using SPSS computer software. These calculations resulted in a .896 regarding topics discussed with advisor, a .968 regarding satisfaction with advisor's assistance, and a .987 regarding impressions of advisor respectively, indicating the instrument to be internally consistent.

Data Collection

Following approval of the IRB Application (Appendix A) from the Institutional Review Board, students were asked to respond to the items on the survey of academic advising which included demographic information and satisfaction questions in regards to advising services. The surveys were distributed and the responses were collected via e-mail during the data collection period. Unfortunately at the end of the data collection period only 30 completed surveys had been collected. Due to this very low response rate a back up plan was devised. Paper surveys were then distributed to students who visited the CAAde center during the registration period. Additionally, several classes who are taken by CAAde advised students were visited and surveys were distributed and collected during the allotted time.

After the data were collected the responses were entered into the computer form of the survey and submitted for calculations of responses. All responses were entered by me exactly as they were reported on the paper survey. Due to the fact that e-mail addresses were attached to the e-mailed responses and that the paper surveys were distributed face-to-face, all information will remain confidential throughout the studying. No students were identified in connection with their responses. All information was maintained within a confidential database secured with a password. Hard copies of the data were stored in a locked desk drawer. The key was kept with me in a confidential location. At the end of the three year completion for record keeping of the study, paper based data, such as surveys, will be shredded. Any data stored on USB devices and in computer files will be electronically remove by deletion software.

Data Analysis

The independent variable in this study is academic advising services provided by the CAAAdE office. Information for these variables were reported through the *Survey of Academic Advising*. The dependent variables were student interactions, satisfaction, and impressions in regards to academic advising. Variations in student satisfaction based on academic advising services received were explored using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Data were analyzed using frequency tables. Descriptive statistics (frequency distribution, percentages, and measures of central tendency and dispersion) were used to examine the data in regards to the research questions.

Chapter IV

Findings

Profile of the Sample

The subjects of this study were Rowan undergraduate students who were advised by CAAAdE during the spring 2013 semester and were willing to complete the academic advising survey. Of the 378 academic advising surveys distributed, 157 completed surveys were returned, yielding a return rate of 42%. All students were undergraduates ranging from freshmen to senior.

Table 4.1 contains demographic data on the age, race, year in college, primary purpose of attendance, gender, marital status, enrollment status, previous institution attended, employment, grade point average (GPA), and residence of the participants in the study. The students ages varied from 18 to 39, more than half (66%) of them were 18 and 19. Of the students surveyed, 64% of them were Caucasian or White. More than half of the respondents were freshmen and 87% of the participants reported being at this institution to earn a bachelor's degree. The majority of students surveyed were female and all of the participants reported being unmarried. Ninety eight percent of the students reported being full time students and 80% came to Rowan University right out of high school. Fifty one percent of participants reported working zero hours per week (or occasional jobs) and the majority of students live on campus in residence halls.

Table 4.1

Demographics of Sample (N=157)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|----------|----------|
| Age | | |
| 18 | 48 | 30.6 |
| 19 | 56 | 35.7 |
| 20 | 26 | 16.6 |
| 21 | 17 | 10.8 |
| 22 | 5 | 3.2 |
| 23-25 | 4 | 2.5 |
| 26-29 | 0 | 0 |
| 30-39 | 1 | 0.6 |
| 40-61 | 0 | 0 |
| 62 and over | 0 | 0 |
| Racial Ethnic Group | | |
| African American or Black | 21 | 13.4 |
| Native American (Indian, Alaskan, Hawaiian) | 0 | 0 |
| Caucasian or White | 100 | 63.7 |
| Mexican American, Mexican Origin | 0 | 0 |
| Asian American, Oriental, Pacific Islander | 8 | 5.1 |
| Puerto Rican, Cuban, Other Latino or Hispanic | 22 | 14 |
| Other | 3 | 1.9 |
| I prefer not to respond | 3 | 1.9 |
| Current Class Level | | |
| Freshmen | 80 | 51 |
| Sophomore | 50 | 31.8 |
| Junior | 20 | 12.7 |
| Senior | 7 | 4.5 |
| Purpose at this Institution | | |
| No definite purpose in mind | 4 | 2.5 |
| For self-improvement or personal satisfaction | 2 | 1.3 |
| To take a few job related or job required courses | 2 | 1.3 |
| To transfer to another college | 6 | 3.8 |
| To obtain an associate's degree | 6 | 3.8 |
| To obtain a bachelor's degree | 137 | 87.3 |

Table 4.1 (Continued)

| <i>Demographics of Sample (N=157)</i> | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------|----------|
| <i>Variable</i> | | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Gender | | | |
| | Male | 69 | 43.9 |
| | Female | 88 | 56.1 |
| Marital Status | | | |
| | Unmarried (Including single, divorced, widowed) | 157 | 100 |
| | Married | 0 | 0 |
| | Separated | 0 | 0 |
| | Prefer not to respond | 0 | 0 |
| Current Enrollment Status | | | |
| | Full Time Student | 153 | 97.5 |
| | Part Time Student | 4 | 2.5 |
| Previous Institution | | | |
| | High School | 126 | 80.3 |
| | Vocational/Technical school | 2 | 1.3 |
| | 2 Year Community/Junior College | 21 | 13.4 |
| | 4 year College or University | 8 | 5.1 |
| Hours Worked Per Week | | | |
| | 0 or only occasional jobs | 80 | 51 |
| | 1 to 10 | 30 | 19.1 |
| | 11 to 20 | 20 | 12.7 |
| | 21 to 30 | 16 | 10.2 |
| | 31 to 40 | 11 | 7 |
| | Over 40 | 0 | 0 |

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Demographics of Sample (N=157)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Overall College GPA | | |
| A- to A | 29 | 18.5 |
| B to A- | 49 | 31.2 |
| B- to B | 31 | 19.7 |
| C to B- | 28 | 17.8 |
| C- to C | 15 | 9.6 |
| D to C- | 1 | 0.6 |
| Below D | 0 | 0 |
| Have not established a GPA | 4 | 2.5 |
| Does not apply | 0 | 0 |
| Current College Residence | | |
| Residence hall | 96 | 61.1 |
| Fraternity or sorority house | 1 | 0.6 |
| College married student housing | 0 | 0 |
| Off campus room or apartment | 10 | 6.4 |
| Home of parents or relatives | 39 | 24.8 |
| Own home | 7 | 4.5 |
| Other | 3 | 1.9 |

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their interactions with academic advisors when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?

Table 4.2 contains information describing the interactions between Rowan students and their advisors in terms of scheduling, registration, and financial aid. When asked if students had discussed scheduling and registration procedures with their advisor, 75% reported that the topic had been discussed. In terms of obtaining course credit nontraditionally and obtaining financial aid, the majority of students reported not having discussed these topics with their advisor and that they did not need to discuss them with their advisor.

Table 4.2

Topics Discussed with Advisor: Scheduling, Registration, and Financial Aid

Scale: Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To=1, Have Not Discussed But Should Have=2, Have Discussed=3

| Variable | Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To | | Have Not Discussed But Should Have | | Have Discussed | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Scheduling/Registration procedures <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.70, <i>SD</i> =.561 Missing=1 | 8 | 5.1 | 31 | 19.9 | 117 | 75 |
| Obtaining course credit through non-traditional means <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =1.86, <i>SD</i> =.861 Missing=1 | 70 | 44.9 | 38 | 24.4 | 48 | 30.8 |
| Obtaining financial aid <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.71, <i>SD</i> =.870 Missing=0 | 88 | 56.1 | 26 | 16.6 | 43 | 27.4 |

Table 4.3 contains information describing the interactions between Rowan students and their advisors in terms of personal and academic problems. For each question asked in this section, the majority of Rowan students reported not having discussed the topic with their advisor and not needing to discuss it with them. In regards to improving their study skills and obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance more than 50% of the students reported not discussing or needing to discuss the topic with their advisors.

Table 4.3

Topics Discussed with Advisor: Personal and Academic Problems

Scale: Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To=1, Have Not Discussed But Should Have=2, Have Discussed=3

| Variable | Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To | | Have Not Discussed But Should Have | | Have Discussed | |
|---|-------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Coping with academic difficulties <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.83, <i>SD</i> =.856 Missing=0 | 73 | 46.5 | 38 | 24.2 | 46 | 29.3 |
| Improving my study skills & habits <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.64, <i>SD</i> =.801 Missing=0 | 88 | 56.1 | 37 | 23.6 | 32 | 20.4 |
| Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.64, <i>SD</i> =.841 Missing=0 | 94 | 59.9 | 26 | 16.6 | 37 | 23.6 |
| Matching my learning style to particular courses/course sections/instructors <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.62, <i>SD</i> =.788 Missing=0 | 89 | 56.7 | 38 | 24.2 | 30 | 19.1 |
| Dealing with personal problems <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.47, <i>SD</i> =1.174 Missing=0 | 117 | 74.5 | 18 | 11.5 | 22 | 14 |

Table 4.4 contains information describing the interactions between Rowan students and their advisors in terms of career planning and their future. In terms of clarifying life and career goals and identifying career areas that fit student's current skills, abilities, and interests the responses were fairly evenly spread across the board from not having discussed to having discussed the topics with their advisor. In regards to clarifying life and career goals, 36.5% of students reported having not discussed these items with their advisor and not needing to, 29.5% of students reported not having discussed these topics with their advisor but should have, and 34% of students reported having discussed these topics with their advisor. In regards to identifying career areas that fit student's current skills, abilities, and interests, 34.6% of students reported not having discussed these topics with the advisor and not needing to, 33.3% of students reported not having discussed these topics with their advisors but should have, and 31.8% of students reported having discussed these items with the advisor.

Table 4.4

Topics Discussed with Advisor: Career Planning/Future

Scale: Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To=1, Have Not Discussed But Should Have=2, Have Discussed=3

| Variable | Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To | | Have Not Discussed But Should Have | | Have Discussed | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Clarifying my life & career goals <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =1.97, <i>SD</i> =.842 Missing=1 | 57 | 36.5 | 46 | 29.5 | 53 | 34 |

Table 4.4 (Continued)

Topics Discussed with Advisor: Career Planning/Future

Scale: Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To=1, Have Not Discussed But Should Have=2, Have Discussed=3

| Variable | Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To | | Have Not Discussed But Should Have | | Have Discussed | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Identifying career areas that fit my current skills, abilities, & interests <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =1.97, <i>SD</i> =.819 Missing=1 | 54 | 34.6 | 52 | 33.3 | 50 | 31.8 |
| Continuing my education after college <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =1.72, <i>SD</i> =.767 Missing=1 | 73 | 46.8 | 53 | 34 | 30 | 19.2 |
| Finding a job after college/job placement <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.69, <i>SD</i> =.740 Missing=0 | 74 | 47.1 | 57 | 36.3 | 26 | 16.6 |
| Obtaining employment on campus <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.57, <i>SD</i> =.770 Missing=0 | 95 | 60.5 | 35 | 22.3 | 27 | 17.2 |

Table 4.5 contains information describing the interactions between Rowan students and their advisors in terms of program and course changes. When asked whether student's had discussed their academic progress, dropping and adding courses, and selecting or changing their major, the majority of students reported having discussed these topics with their advisors. In this section, 75.8% of students reported not having discussed withdrawing or transferring from this institution and not needing to discuss this topic. Additionally, 66.2% of students reported having discussed their academic progress

with the advisors and 66.9% of students reported discussing the selection or change in their major.

Table 4.5

Topics Discussed with Advisor: Program and Course Changes

Scale: Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To=1, Have Not Discussed But Should Have=2, Have Discussed=3

| Variable | Have Not Discussed & Do Not Need To | | Have Not Discussed But Should Have | | Have Discussed | |
|--|-------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| My academic progress <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.53, <i>SD</i> =.721 Missing=0 | 21 | 13.4 | 32 | 20.4 | 104 | 66.2 |
| Selecting/Changing my major <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.51, <i>SD</i> =.756 Missing=0 | 25 | 15.9 | 27 | 17.2 | 105 | 66.9 |
| Dropping/Adding courses <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.40, <i>SD</i> =.825 Missing=1 | 34 | 21.8 | 25 | 15.9 | 97 | 62.2 |
| Meeting requirements for graduation, student teaching, certifications <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.15, <i>SD</i> =.861 Missing=0 | 48 | 30.6 | 38 | 24.2 | 71 | 45.2 |
| Withdrawing or transferring from this institution <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =1.38, <i>SD</i> =.721 Missing=0 | 119 | 75.8 | 16 | 10.2 | 22 | 14 |

Research Question 2: How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their satisfaction with academic advisor assistance when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?

Table 4.6 contains information describing Rowan student's satisfaction with their academic advisors' assistance regarding scheduling, registration, and financial aid. In terms of scheduling and registration procedures, the majority of Rowan students were either very satisfied or satisfied with their advisors assistance. The items concerning financial aid (49.7%) and scheduling/registration (51%) resulted in approximately half of the students reporting neutral feelings on the topics.

Table 4.6

Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance: Scheduling, Registration, and Financial Aid Scale: Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Neutral | | Dissatisfied | | Very Dissatisfied | |
|--|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Obtaining financial aid <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.47, <i>SD</i> =.896 Missing=0 | 28 | 17.8 | 40 | 25.5 | 78 | 49.7 | 9 | 5.7 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Obtaining course credit through non-traditional means <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.44, <i>SD</i> =.901 Missing=0 | 32 | 20.4 | 35 | 22.3 | 80 | 51 | 9 | 5.7 | 1 | 0.6 |
| Scheduling/Registration procedures <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.06, <i>SD</i> =1.084 Missing=0 | 59 | 37.6 | 51 | 32.5 | 31 | 19.7 | 10 | 6.4 | 6 | 3.8 |

Table 4.7 contains information describing Rowan student's satisfaction with their academic advisors assistance regarding personal and academic problems. The majority of students reported being neutral, in terms of advisor assistance, to all questions in this

category. All neutral percentages in this section were closely related ranging from 47.8% to 58.6%.

Table 4.7

Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance: Personal and Academic Problems

Scale: Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Neutral | | Dissatisfied | | Very Dissatisfied | |
|---|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Dealing with personal problems <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.58, <i>SD</i> =.871 Missing=0 | 24 | 15.3 | 31 | 19.7 | 92 | 58.6 | 7 | 4.5 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Matching my learning style to particular courses/course sections/instructors <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.52, <i>SD</i> =.910 Missing=0 | 25 | 15.9 | 43 | 27.4 | 75 | 47.8 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Improving my study skills & habits <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.48, <i>SD</i> =.889 Missing=0 | 27 | 17.2 | 41 | 26.1 | 76 | 48.4 | 12 | 7.6 | 1 | 0.6 |

Table 4.7 (Continued)

*Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance: Personal and Academic Problems**Scale: Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5*

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Neutral | | Dissatisfied | | Very Dissatisfied | |
|---|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.46, <i>SD</i> =.890 Missing=1 | 28 | 17.9 | 40 | 25.6 | 78 | 50 | 8 | 5.1 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Coping with academic difficulties <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.45, <i>SD</i> =.925 Missing=1 | 30 | 19.2 | 40 | 25.6 | 75 | 48.1 | 8 | 5.1 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.8 contains information describing Rowan student's satisfaction with their academic advisors assistance regarding career and future planning. In this section, the majority of students reported being neutral in regards to all items. Second to the neutral response, a fair number of students reported being satisfied with their advisors' assistance in these areas.

Table 4.8

Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance: Career Planning/Future

Scale: Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Neutral | | Dissatisfied | | Very Dissatisfied | |
|--|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Obtaining employment on campus <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.56, <i>SD</i> =.865 Missing=0 | 24 | 15.3 | 34 | 21.7 | 88 | 56.1 | 9 | 5.7 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Continuing my education after college <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.52, <i>SD</i> =.837 Missing=0 | 22 | 14 | 43 | 27.4 | 83 | 52.9 | 7 | 4.5 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Finding a job after college/job placement <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.50, <i>SD</i> =.889 Missing=0 | 25 | 15.9 | 41 | 26.1 | 82 | 52.2 | 5 | 3.2 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Identifying career areas that fit my current skills, abilities, & interests <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.43, <i>SD</i> =.914 Missing=0 | 27 | 17.2 | 52 | 33.1 | 65 | 41.4 | 10 | 6.4 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Clarifying my life & career goals <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.38, <i>SD</i> =.905 Missing=1 | 30 | 19.2 | 48 | 30.8 | 69 | 44.2 | 6 | 3.8 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.9 contains information describing Rowan student's satisfaction with their academic advisors assistance regarding program and course changes. Within this category, the majority of Rowan students reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their advisors assistance.

Table 4.9

Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance: Program and Course Changes

Scale: Very Satisfied=1, Satisfied=2, Neutral=3, Dissatisfied=4, Very Dissatisfied=5

| Variable | Very Satisfied | | Satisfied | | Neutral | | Dissatisfied | | Very Dissatisfied | |
|--|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Withdrawing or transferring from this institution <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.52, <i>SD</i> =.837 Missing=0 | 25 | 15.9 | 34 | 21.7 | 90 | 57.3 | 7 | 4.5 | 1 | 0.6 |
| Meeting requirements for graduation, student teaching, certifications <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.29, <i>SD</i> =.948 Missing=0 | 37 | 23.6 | 52 | 33.1 | 57 | 36.3 | 8 | 5.1 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Selecting/Changing my major <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.25, <i>SD</i> =1.054 Missing=0 | 46 | 29.3 | 48 | 30.6 | 45 | 28.7 | 14 | 8.9 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Dropping/Adding courses <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.11, <i>SD</i> =1.013 Missing=1 | 55 | 35.3 | 44 | 28.2 | 44 | 28.2 | 11 | 7.1 | 2 | 1.3 |
| My academic progress <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.06, <i>SD</i> =.969 Missing=0 | 52 | 33.1 | 59 | 37.6 | 33 | 21 | 11 | 7 | 2 | 1.3 |

Research Question 3: What impressions of their advisors do selected students report in the areas of personal characteristics, advising skills, technical knowledge, rapport, and availability and scheduling?

Table 4.10 contains information describing Rowan students' impressions of their advisors in terms of personal characteristics. When reporting on their impressions in terms of personal characteristics the majority of students had a favorable view of their advisor. When students were asked if they felt their advisor showed concern for their personal growth and development, 31.2% strongly agreed and 24.2% agreed. When asked if they felt their advisor seemed to enjoy advising 33.1% of students strongly agreed while 30.6% agreed.

Table 4.10

Impressions of Your Advisor: Personal Characteristics

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Shows concern for my personal growth & development <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.06, <i>SD</i> =1.205 Missing=0 | 11 | 7 | 49 | 31 | 38 | 24.2 | 44 | 28 | 9 | 5.7 | 6 | 3.8 |

Table 4.10 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Personal Characteristics

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|-----|----------------|----|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Has a sense of humor <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.99, <i>SD</i> =1.163 Missing=0 | 12 | 7.6 | 46 | 29 | 49 | 31.2 | 36 | 22.9 | 9 | 5.7 | 5 | 3.2 |
| Is helpful, effective advisor whom I would recommend to other students <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.95, <i>SD</i> =1.185 Missing=1 | 11 | 7.1 | 52 | 33 | 47 | 30.1 | 34 | 21.8 | 4 | 2.6 | 8 | 5.1 |
| Approachable & easy to talk to <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.92, <i>SD</i> =1.118 Missing=0 | 10 | 6.4 | 55 | 35 | 44 | 28 | 37 | 23.6 | 7 | 4.5 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Seems to enjoy advising <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.89, <i>SD</i> =1.062 Missing=0 | 11 | 7 | 52 | 33 | 48 | 30.6 | 39 | 24.8 | 4 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.11 contains information describing Rowan students' impressions of their advisors in terms of advising skills. The student responses in this category were fairly evenly distributed between neutral and strongly agree. When asked if they felt their advisor was a good listener, 33.8% of students reported strongly agree. When asked if their advisor checks to make sure they understand each other, 34.6% of students agreed with this statement. Additionally, when asked if their advisor encourages their involvement in extracurricular activities, 35% of students reported being neutral to this topic.

Table 4.11

Impressions of Your Advisor: Advising Skills

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Encourages me to talk about myself & my college experiences <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =3.14, <i>SD</i> =1.188 Missing=1 | 14 | 9 | 35 | 22.4 | 41 | 26.3 | 51 | 32.7 | 11 | 7.1 | 4 | 2.6 |
| Helps me examine my needs & values <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.11, <i>SD</i> =1.196 Missing=0 | 9 | 5.7 | 46 | 29.3 | 44 | 28 | 43 | 27.4 | 7 | 4.5 | 8 | 5.1 |

Table 4.11 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Advising Skills

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Checks to make sure we understand each other <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =3.10, <i>SD</i> =1.073 Missing=1 | 6 | 3.8 | 43 | 27.6 | 54 | 34.6 | 38 | 24.4 | 12 | 7.7 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Encourages my interest in extracurriculars <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.08, <i>SD</i> =1.212 Missing=0 | 18 | 12 | 37 | 23.6 | 33 | 21 | 55 | 35 | 12 | 7.6 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Helps me explore careers in my field of interest <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.07, <i>SD</i> =1.225 Missing=0 | 17 | 11 | 39 | 24.8 | 36 | 22.9 | 49 | 31.2 | 13 | 8.3 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Helps me identify the obstacles I need to overcome to reach my educational goals <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.06, <i>SD</i> =1.090 Missing=0 | 7 | 4.5 | 49 | 31.2 | 43 | 27.4 | 46 | 29.3 | 9 | 5.7 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.11 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Advising Skills

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Encourages my interest in an academic discipline <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.04, <i>SD</i> =1.085 Missing=0 | 11 | 7 | 43 | 27.4 | 43 | 27.4 | 51 | 32.5 | 7 | 4.5 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Helps me select courses that match my interests & abilities <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.03, <i>SD</i> =1.211 Missing=0 | 10 | 6.4 | 52 | 33.1 | 41 | 26.1 | 38 | 24.2 | 9 | 5.7 | 7 | 4.5 |
| Anticipates my needs <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.02, <i>SD</i> =1.179 Missing=0 | 15 | 9.6 | 42 | 26.8 | 42 | 26.8 | 44 | 28 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Is knowledgeable in courses outside my major <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.02, <i>SD</i> =1.083 Missing=0 | 9 | 5.7 | 48 | 30.6 | 43 | 27.4 | 48 | 30.6 | 6 | 3.8 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Is willing to discuss personal problems <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.01, <i>SD</i> =1.243 Missing=0 | 19 | 12 | 42 | 26.8 | 31 | 19.7 | 54 | 34.4 | 6 | 3.8 | 5 | 3.2 |

Table 4.11 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Advising Skills

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Clearly defines advisee-advisor responsibility <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.96, <i>SD</i> =1.052 Missing=0 | 10 | 6.4 | 47 | 29.9 | 50 | 31.8 | 43 | 27.4 | 4 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Is a good listener <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.92, <i>SD</i> =.944 Missing=0 | 3 | 1.9 | 53 | 33.8 | 66 | 42 | 25 | 15.9 | 8 | 5.1 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Accepts constructive feedback concerning his/her effectiveness as an advisor <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.92, <i>SD</i> =1.149 Missing=0 | 20 | 13 | 36 | 22.9 | 49 | 31.2 | 44 | 28 | 5 | 3.2 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Keeps personal information confidential <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.82, <i>SD</i> =1.101 Missing=0 | 14 | 8.9 | 54 | 34.4 | 47 | 29.9 | 33 | 21 | 6 | 3.8 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.12 contains information describing Rowan students' impressions of their advisors in terms of technical knowledge. The majority of Rowan students sampled reported strongly agreeing or agreeing that their advisor has technical knowledge in terms of advising. When asked if the advisor provided them with accurate information about requirements and prerequisites, 37.6% of students strongly agreed with this statement. When asked if their advisor keeps them up to date on changes 30.6% of students agreed.

Table 4.12

Impressions of Your Advisor: Technical Knowledge

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Keeps me updated on changes <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.19, <i>SD</i> =1.127 Missing=0 | 7 | 4.5 | 40 | 25.5 | 48 | 30.6 | 44 | 28 | 14 | 8.9 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Refers me to other sources from which I can obtain assistance <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.05, <i>SD</i> =1.114 Missing=0 | 8 | 5.1 | 48 | 30.6 | 46 | 29.3 | 42 | 26.8 | 9 | 5.7 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Provides me with accurate information about requirements & prerequisites <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.94, <i>SD</i> =1.066 Missing=0 | 6 | 3.8 | 59 | 37.6 | 45 | 28.7 | 36 | 22.9 | 8 | 5.1 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.13 contains information describing Rowan students' impressions of their advisors in terms of rapport. The majority of Rowan students sampled reported strongly agreeing, agreeing, or being neutral in terms of their advisor rapport with them.

Table 4.13

Impressions of Your Advisor: Rapport

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Knows who I am <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.38, <i>SD</i> =1.352 Missing=0 | 14 | 8.9 | 25 | 15.9 | 48 | 30.6 | 41 | 26.1 | 15 | 9.6 | 14 | 8.9 |
| Expresses interest in me as a unique individual <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.20, <i>SD</i> =1.089 Missing=0 | 6 | 3.8 | 37 | 23.6 | 55 | 35 | 42 | 26.8 | 13 | 8.3 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.06, <i>SD</i> =1.014 Missing=0 | 4 | 2.5 | 48 | 30.6 | 54 | 34.4 | 39 | 24.8 | 10 | 6.4 | 2 | 1.3 |

Table 4.13 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Rapport

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|---|----------------|-----|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Is familiar with my academic background <i>n</i> =155, <i>M</i> =3.05, <i>SD</i> =1.161 Missing=2 | 12 | 7.7 | 42 | 27.1 | 45 | 29 | 42 | 27.1 | 10 | 6.5 | 4 | 2.6 |
| Encourages me to achieve my educational goals <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.01, <i>SD</i> =1.003 Missing=0 | 4 | 2.5 | 51 | 32.5 | 54 | 34.4 | 39 | 24.8 | 6 | 3.8 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Respects my opinions & feelings <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =2.94, <i>SD</i> =.962 Missing=1 | 6 | 3.8 | 45 | 28.8 | 69 | 44.2 | 28 | 17.9 | 5 | 3.2 | 3 | 1.9 |
| Provides a caring, open atmosphere <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.94, <i>SD</i> =.989 Missing=0 | 5 | 3.2 | 54 | 34.4 | 53 | 33.8 | 37 | 23.6 | 6 | 3.8 | 2 | 1.3 |
| Respects my right to make my own decisions <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.93, <i>SD</i> =1.032 Missing=0 | 6 | 3.8 | 55 | 35 | 53 | 33.8 | 33 | 21 | 7 | 4.5 | 3 | 1.9 |

Table 4.14 contains information describing Rowan students' impressions of their advisors in terms of availability and scheduling. Regarding the availability and scheduling of their advisors the Rowan students surveyed reported "Strongly Agree" responses when asked if their advisors are on time (31.2%), available to help (28%), and flexible in their advising methods (28.8%).

Table 4.14

Impressions of Your Advisor: Availability and Scheduling

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|------|----------------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % | <i>f</i> | % |
| Takes the initiative in arranging meetings with me <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.21, <i>SD</i> =1.335 Missing=0 | 16 | 10.2 | 36 | 22.9 | 36 | 22.9 | 47 | 29.9 | 12 | 7.6 | 10 | 6.4 |
| Is available when I need assistance <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =3.10, <i>SD</i> =1.110 Missing=0 | 7 | 4.5 | 44 | 28 | 51 | 32.5 | 41 | 26.1 | 9 | 5.7 | 5 | 3.2 |

Table 4.14 (Continued)

Impressions of Your Advisor: Availability and Scheduling

Scale: Does Not Apply=1, Strongly Agree=2, Agree=3, Neutral=4, Disagree=5, Strongly Disagree=6

| Variable | Does Not Apply | | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
|--|----------------|----------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Is flexible in helping me plan my academic program <i>n</i> =156, <i>M</i> =3.03, <i>SD</i> =1.166 Missing=1 | 12 | 7.7 | 45 | 28.8 | 41 | 26.3 | 48 | 30.8 | 4 | 2.6 | 6 | 3.8 |
| Is on time for appointments with me <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.92, <i>SD</i> =1.101 Missing=0 | 12 | 7.6 | 49 | 31.2 | 47 | 29.9 | 41 | 26.1 | 4 | 2.5 | 4 | 2.5 |
| Allows sufficient time to discuss issues or problems <i>N</i> =157, <i>M</i> =2.85, <i>SD</i> =1.014 Missing=0 | 9 | 5.7 | 56 | 35.7 | 51 | 32.5 | 34 | 21.7 | 5 | 3.2 | 2 | 1.3 |

Chapter V

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary of the Study

This study explored how selected students at Rowan University, advised by the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their interactions with academic advisors in terms of scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes. It also explored the student's satisfaction in these four areas. Additionally, the impressions that selected students reported about their advisor in the areas of personal characteristics, advising skills, technical knowledge, rapport, and availability were investigated. The subjects in this study were Rowan University undergraduate students, freshmen to senior, who were advised by CAAdE during the spring 2013 semester

The *Survey of Academic Advising*, developed by ACT, was distributed to over 300 Rowan undergraduate students advised by the CAAdE center during spring of 2013. The survey was returned to me once it was completed. One hundred fifty seven surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 42%.

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the survey data. The information was explored using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software.

Discussion of the Findings

Overall, academic advisors play a vital role within the higher education system. Research shows that students who are satisfied are more likely to continue their education and therefore be retained by the university. A good way to satisfy students is to make them feel as though they are an integral part of the institution's community. Academic advising is one area in which institutions can foster integration. The advisor-advisee relationship offers repeated and consistent contact with specific groups of students. This allows students to make significant bonds with their advisors, thus beginning the integration process.

Research Question 1: How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their interactions with academic advisors when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?

The findings show that overall, the selected Rowan University undergraduate students reported having discussed the topics of scheduling, registration, financial aid, and program and course changes. Within these areas, scheduling/registration procedures, academic progress, and selecting/changing a major were reported most often discussed. In contrast, obtaining financial aid and withdrawing or transferring from the institution were reported least often discussed. These areas are the most common topics discussed by advisors. They are imperative to the students' education and are the main focus of advisor-advisee interaction. It is important that

students are reporting having discussed these topics with their advisors but these results are not uncommon.

Schlossberg's (1995) transition theory describes the transition of students from high school to college. Support is a key component in making this transition successful. When students discussed topics such as scheduling, registration, financial aid, and program and course changes with their advisors, they are gaining support. Their advisors are guiding them down their educational path and offering a helping hand. This support helps advisors build a connection with their students which, in turn, allows the students to feel more connected to the university (Schlossberg et al., 1995).

In terms of career and future planning and personal and academic problems, the majority of the selected students reported not having discussed these topics with their advisor and not needing to discuss them. The highest percentage of students reported not having discussed the topics of personal problems and obtaining employment on campus and not needing to discuss these topics with their advisor. These results may be due to the fact that Rowan University has a Career Management Center and a Counseling Center located on campus and within the same building as the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration. Due to the fact that both of these offices are available and in a similar location on campus, students may elect to visit these centers to discuss career/future planning and personal and academic issues.

These findings were similar to those from the Smith (2004) study done at Florida State University. Smith found that students reported being most satisfied in the

areas of level of ease when speaking with their advisors, their advisors knowledge of general education and university requirements, and their advisor's availability when the student needed assistance. In contrast, students reported disagreeing with the statements that their advisor encouraged regular meetings and that their advisor helped them match their academic abilities with potential majors (Smith, 2004).

Moreover, Smith found that students reported the most satisfaction with the topics of scheduling, registration, financial aid, and program and course changes, which were the area's most discussed with advisors. As in the Smith study, Rowan University students also reported a lack of discussion in regards to matching their academic abilities with potential majors which will lead to future plans.

Research Question 2: How do Rowan University undergraduate students, advised by the Center of Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE), describe their satisfaction with academic advisor assistance when dealing with scheduling and registration, personal and academic problems, career planning, and program and course changes?

The findings show that overall, the selected Rowan University undergraduate students reported being very satisfied or satisfied with their advisors assistance in regards to scheduling, registration, financial aid, and program and course changes. Students reported the highest percentages of satisfaction on the items of academic progress and scheduling/registration procedures. Students reported very low dissatisfaction in all topics within these areas. Additionally, students reported having the most neutral feelings towards the topic of withdrawing or transferring from the institution. These data make sense due to the fact that most of the selected

students reported having discussed the topics with their advisors. Since these topics were discussed, it is not unusual that students would report being satisfied with assistance in this area.

Tinto's (1988) transition theory examined the stages in which students often pass through to obtain their degree. The three stages include separation, transition, and incorporation. He believed that the more incorporated a student was into the community of the institution, the more likely they were to be retained by the institution (Tinto, 1988). One way that students achieve incorporation is by making connections with peer, faculty, and administrators. The advisor-advisee relationship is a connection that can contribute to a student's incorporation into the institutional community. The needs of the majority of the selected students, in the areas listed above, appear to be met and therefore resulting in favorable responses. If a student's needs are being met, they are likely to have a positive experience which may lead to a positive connection. This connection may lead to incorporation (Tinto, 1988).

However, in relation to career and future planning and personal and academic problems, the majority of Rowan students report being neutral in their satisfaction with their advisors' assistance. Students reported the highest neutrality in areas such as dealing with personal problems, obtaining employment on campus, and continuing their education after college. The neutral response makes sense due to the fact that the majority of students reported not having discussed these topics with their advisors. As mentioned above, this may be due to the fact that Rowan

University offers a Career Management Center and a Counseling Center in the same building as the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration.

These findings were supported by Smith (2004) who found that students expressed the most satisfaction in the areas of level of ease when speaking with their advisors, their advisors knowledge of general education and university requirements, and their advisor's availability when the student needed assistance. In contrast, students expressed disagreement with the statements that their advisor encouraged regular meetings and that their advisor helped them match their academic abilities with potential majors (Smith, 2004).

These findings were consistent with this study in that students reported the most satisfaction with their advisors assistance on the topics of scheduling, registration, financial aid, and program and course changes. These areas were most discussed with advisors and therefore the highest satisfaction was reported. As in the Smith study, Rowan University students also reported a lack of discussion in regards to career and future planning as well as personal and academic problems.

Research Question 3: What impressions of their advisors do selected students report in the areas of personal characteristics, advising skills, technical knowledge, rapport, and availability and scheduling?

The findings show that overall, the selected Rowan University undergraduate students reported being very satisfied, satisfied, or neutral most frequently when asked about their impressions of their advisors. In terms of personal characteristics, the highest percentage of students strongly agreed that their advisor was effective,

helpful, and someone they would recommend to other students. In regards to advising skills, a high percentage of students agreed that their advisor is a good listener. A very low percentage of students did not believe that their advisor had technical knowledge and a low percentage of students reported having a negative rapport with the advisors. The results for these three responses were fairly evenly distributed in all areas. For those selected students reporting being very satisfied or satisfied with the impressions of their academic advisors, their responses are supported by previous research.

In a study conducted by Smith (2004), students expressed the most satisfaction when speaking to an advisor and the availability of advisors. Students who reported having advisors that were easy to talk to and available when needed reported higher levels of satisfaction. Consistent with Tinto's research, satisfied students are more likely to become integrated into the college community, be retained by the institution, and persist throughout college (Tinto, 1988).

In terms of the selected students who reported having neutral impressions towards their academic advisors, the data suggest that more research needs to be done in this area. It would be beneficial to examine the neutral responses further in order to better understand such ambivalence. If an underlying factor can be found between these neutral responses, such as not discussing a certain topic, the issue can be more easily addressed and perhaps produce more favorable responses in the future.

The Rowan University undergraduate students being advised by CAAdE reported discussing important topics with their advisors such as scheduling, registration, programs, and course changes. The majority of students also reported being satisfied with their advisors assistance and having positive impressions of their advisor. These favorable results are consistent with previous research in that students at Rowan University are utilizing the advisor-advisee relationship as a way to develop themselves as a student and become integrated in the campus community.

Conclusions

Based on the results of this study it can be concluded that in general Rowan University undergraduate students are happy with the interactions and services they are being provided with by the advisors at the Center for Academic Advising and Exploration (CAAdE). Students reported discussing topics such as scheduling, registration, programs, and course changes with their advisors. At Rowan University these are the main topics addressed by CAAdE which is the general advising office. More specific topics such as career planning, and personal, and academic problems could be addressed by other offices such as the Career Management Center or the Counseling Center.

Rowan University students also reported being satisfied with the assistance they received from their advisor in terms of scheduling, registration, programs, and course changes. They reported being neutral to the assistance provided on career planning and personal and academic problems. These results are consistent with the interaction results in that they are satisfied with the assistance they received on the topics discussed. They

are neutral to the topics they reported having not discussed with their advisors. From the data, it can be concluded that in order to produce a more satisfied student body, in term of advising assistance, more topics need to be discussed. If advisors can make sure that they address a wide array of topics with students, the students will be more informed and have a more positive outlook on the advisor-advisee relationship.

Additionally, Rowan University students, in general, report favorable impressions of their advisors in all areas. The majority of the responses ranged from very satisfied to neutral. From these responses, it can concluded that Rowan University students are happy with their advisor-advisee relationships.

Recommendations for Practice

The results of this research study are instructive and provide a deeper awareness of students' views regarding academic advising. The descriptive statistics of items comprising the academic advising interactions, satisfaction, and impressions indicate areas requiring attention. These areas include career and future planning, as well as personal and academic problems. The following recommendations are suggested for academic administrators and other individuals responsible for training and leading academic advisors on this campus.

1. A close collaboration between CAAdE, the Career Management Center, and the Counseling Center is recommended. In general, students reported discussing scheduling, registration, programs, and course changes with their advisor. However, these same students reported that they did not discuss and did not need to discuss career planning and their future as well as personal and academic problems. Due to

the fact that Rowan has both a career center and a counseling center perhaps accounts for students lack of discussion with their advisors on these topics. If that is the case, it is vital for CAAde advisors to promote the services of the other centers to ensure that students are speaking with someone about these topics.

2. Encourage students to talk more about topics in the area of career and future planning, and personal and academic problems. Even though Rowan University has separate centers that can address these topics more thoroughly it is important for students to feel that they can talk openly to their advisor. Advisors should acknowledge the areas in which students report lack of discussion and make more of an effort to bring them up in their sessions with students. If the advisor brings up the topic, a student might feel more inclined to speak about something he or she might have never brought up themselves. This will allow advisors to dig deeper into what kind of services the student may need.
3. The final recommendation involves an advising challenge. CAAde is a centralized advising system utilized by Rowan University. The data in this study report that the system, in general, is working in regards to topics discussed. However, professional advising makes it more difficult to foster meaningful relationships. Even though the majority of students reported the advising services they received to be favorable, it is important to not forget the students who reported them to be unfavorable. The advising challenge is to examine how to build more meaningful relationships with each student instead of offering a generic advising plan for the students served.

Recommendation for Further Research

Based upon the findings and conclusions of the study, the following suggestions are presented:

1. Further studies should be conducted with larger populations to confirm the findings of this study.
2. A study could be done comparing the results of this study to the same study done at a simliar university.
3. A longitudinal study could be conducted in order to follow selected students throughout their college career. This would ensure that they have experienced various advisors and advising methods.
4. It may be beneficial to reformat this study to incorportae qualitative data. Since the response rate was an issue during the research it may be better to select a smaller group in order to gain more in-depth responses.
5. A study that focuses on administration and faculty satisfaction and impressions should be conducted. This would allow researchers and institutions to compare student, administration, and faculty opinions in order to develop the most beneficial advising system.

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Appendix A
Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



December 12, 2012

Stephanie Easterday
501 Estaugh Ave
Haddon Township, NJ 08108

Dear Stephanie Easterday:

In accordance with the University's IRB policies and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to inform you that the Rowan University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has exempted your project, category 1.

IRB application number: 2013-110

Project Title: Academic Advising: A Study Of Academic Advising on Student Satisfaction

If you need to make significant modifications to your study, you must notify the IRB immediately. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

If, during your research, you encounter any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects, you must report this immediately to Dr. Harriet Hartman (hartman@rowan.edu or call 856-256-4500, ext. 3787) or contact Dr. Shreekanth Mandayam, Associate Provost for Research (shreek@rowan.edu or call 856-256-5150).

If you have any administrative questions, please contact Karen Heiser (heiser@rowan.edu or 856-256-5150).

Sincerely,

Harriet Hartman, Ph.D.
Chair, Rowan University IRB

c: Burton Sisco, Educational Services, Administration, Higher Education, James Hall

Office of Research
Bole Hall
201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028-1701

856-256-5150
856-256-4425 fax

Appendix B

Instrumentation: Survey of Academic Advising



Survey of Academic Advising

I understand that by completing this survey I agree to participate in the study entitled Academic Advising: A Study of the Impact of Academic Advising on Student Satisfaction which is being conducted by Stephanie Easterday, to fulfill thesis requirements for the Department of Educational Services, Administration and Higher Education, Rowan University.

This survey has been created and copyrighted by ACT and is being used with ACT's permission.

If I have any questions or problems concerning my participation in this study I may contact the researcher, Stephanie Easterday, at 609-314-7984. I can also contact Ms. Easterday's Faculty Supervisor, Dr. Burton Sisco, at 856-256-4500 ext. 3717.

*****IF YOU HAVE ALREADY COMPLETED THIS SURVEY ONLINE, PLEASE DO NOT COMPLETE IT AGAIN*****

1. Section I: Background Information

Age:

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23-25
- 26-29
- 30-39
- 40-61
- 62 and over

2. Racial ethnic group:

- African American or Black
- Native American (Indian, Alaskan, Hawaiian)
- Caucasian or White
- Mexican American, Mexican Origin
- Asian American, Oriental, Pacific Islander
- Puerto Rican, Cuban, Other Latino or Hispanic
- Other
- I prefer not to respond

3. Indicate your current class level:

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

4. For what primary purpose did you enter this institution?

- No definite purpose in mind
- To take a few classes for self-improvement or personal satisfaction
- To take a few job related or job required courses
- To take courses necessary for transferring to another college
- To obtain an associate's degree
- To obtain a bachelor's degree

5. Sex:

- Male
- Female

6. Marital status:

- Unmarried (Including single, divorced, widowed)
- Married
- Separated
- Prefer not to respond

7. What is your current enrollment status?

- Full time student
- Part time student

8. What was the last type of school you attended prior to entering this institution?

- High School
- Vocational/Technical School
- 2 year community/ junior college
- 4 year college or university

9. Indicate the number of hours per week that you are currently employed:

- 0 or only occasional jobs
- 1 to 10
- 11 to 20
- 21 to 30
- 31 to 40
- Over 40

10. Indicate your overall college grade point average:

- A- to A
- B to A-
- B- to B
- C to B-
- C- to C
- D to C-
- Below D
- Have not established a grade point average
- Does not apply

11. Indicate your current college residence:

- Residence hall
- Fraternity or sorority house
- College married student housing
- Off campus room or apartment
- Home of parents or relatives
- Own home
- Other

12. Section II: Topics Discussed With Advisor

| | HAVE NOT DISCUSSED & DO NOT NEED TO | HAVE NOT DISCUSSED BUT SHOULD HAVE | HAVE DISCUSSED |
|---|--|---|-----------------------|
| My academic progress | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Scheduling/Registration procedures | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dropping/Adding courses | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining course credit through nontraditional means | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Selecting/Changing my major | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Meeting requirements for graduation, student teaching, certifications | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Improving my study skills & habits | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Matching my learning style to particular courses/course sections/instructors | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining remedial /tutorial assistance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Clarifying my life & career goals | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Identifying career areas that fit my current skills, abilities, & interests | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Coping With academic difficulties | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining financial aid | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining employment on campus | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Finding a job after college/job placement | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Continuing my education after college | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Withdrawing or transferring from this institution | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dealing with personal problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

13. Section III: Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance

| | VERY SATISFIED | SATISFIED | NEUTRAL | DISSATISFIED | VERY DISSATISFIED |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| My academic progress | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Scheduling/Registration procedures | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dropping/Adding courses | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining course credit through nontraditional means | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Selecting/Changing my major | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Meeting requirements for graduation, student teaching, certifications | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Improving my study skills & habits | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Matching my learning style to particular courses/course sections/instructors | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Clarifying my life & career goals | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Identifying career areas that fit my current skills, abilities, & interests | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Coping with academic difficulties | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining financial aid | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Obtaining employment on campus | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Finding a job after college/job placement | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Continuing my education after college | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Withdrawing or transferring from this institution | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Dealing with personal problems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

