GUIDE TO
Program Effectiveness

Advising Council Program Effectiveness Working Group, UC Berkeley

Supporting Website: advisingworks.wordpress.com

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The Campanile (Sather Tower) – UC Berkeley

Dear Advising Community of UC Berkeley:

As part of the campus-wide Advising Council initiative, we are a group of advisors and analysts who have been charged with establishing standards and protocols for advising, as well as tools for assessment and evaluation. In the broadest sense, we have centered our efforts on answering a simple question:

"What Makes Advising Programs Work?"

We have attempted to answer this question through research of advising practices and professional standards and a series interviews within Cal's advising community. This guide and its supporting website (advisingworks.wordpress.com) is a report of this work. Overall, we have identified key components of effective advising programs (i.e., standards and protocols), questions and methods for evaluating these components, a framework for developing student learning outcomes for advising, and assessment resources and tools. Our goal is to help advisors, faculty, and administrators:

- understand, cultivate, and evaluate the key components of their advising programs;
- develop and establish advising learning and development outcomes for their program;
- report on their advising programs' goals, activities, processes, needs, and advising outcomes; and
- improve their ability to understand and meet student needs.

We believe these tools will be most effective if their use is *locally-driven* and resources can be adapted to meet *program-level needs and goals.* Whether one works individually or is a manager of a small or a large advising program; whether one is new to advising or a seasoned professional; and, whether one works in a curricular or a co-curricular program: our aim is to help all advisors develop a framework for evaluation and assessment that benefits students, supports advising, and informs administrators and faculty. We have identified valuable and flexible resources to help the advising community better define its values and achieve its goals through meaningful self-evaluation and assessment. We believe these efforts will serve the entire UC Berkeley community well and help raise awareness of the true value of advising.

-The Program Effectiveness Working Group

➔ **Note:** *Throughout this guide are references to '**CAS Standards.**' CAS refers to the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (http://www.cas.edu/index.php/cas-general-standards/)*

Guide to Program Effectiveness

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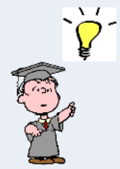
Berkeley Advising Programs



Learning and Development in light of Advising

INPUTS
demographics, student background, previous experiences

ENVIRONMENT
advising program (activities; processes)

OUTCOMES
knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. that exist after advising

The above is based upon Alexander Astin's I-E-O college impact model:
Inputs, Environment, Outcomes

See supporting website for additional resources: advisingworks.wordpress.com

Component 1: Mission and Goals ➔

Effective Advising Programs work within the context of a well-defined mission, stated goals, and clear objectives, which are reviewed on an annual basis.

Program Mission

An advising mission statement should include your program's purpose (why you exist), how your program accomplishes its purpose (what you do), and reference your program's principles and values (why you do it). A mission statement must be consistent with the mission of the University, the Berkeley advising mission, and with professional standards. It should also be clear and concise, as well as motivational and inspiring, and it should refer to student learning and development (see: *CAS).* The following is an example of a mission statement, for a team of advisors who manage the full array of student services, graduate and undergraduate, for a large department. The Berkeley Advising Vision has been included, for reference:

> **VISION:** Berkeley advising helps foster the academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, personal discovery and growth of students as they develop into well-rounded global citizens and leaders.
>
> **ADVISING PROGRAM MISSION:** The Student Services mission is to guide and support students by providing helpful and timely advising services, clarifying policies and procedures, and facilitating student's progress toward achieving their educational goals. Through advising services we aspire to support the social development and transformation of students throughout their academic careers. We welcome diversity, cultivate partnership and connection, and value fairness and mutual respect.

➔ CAS Standard: *"Programs and services must develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions."*

Program Goals

A mission statement represents the key principles of an advising program, from which concrete goals, objectives, and learning outcomes follow. Goals are said to "*express how the mission will be achieved*" *(see: NACADA)* and effective programs should be "*guided by a set of written goals and objectives that are directly related to its stated mission*" (see: *CAS).* Program goals must be consistent with the program mission statement, general in nature, and typically will remain the same year to year.

There are Two Types of Goals within an Advising Program

Program Goals and Objectives	➔	See Below
Student Learning Goals and Outcomes	➔	See Section Two

The following focuses on program goals/objectives; student learning goals and outcomes are addressed within the next section of the guide.

Program Objectives

Objectives are established relative to program goals and are more concrete, task-oriented, and set on an annual basis. Program objectives should also address specific needs, which can be identified in a variety of ways throughout the year, e.g. student surveys. Below are examples of program goals and objectives for an advising program:

Goal 1.0: Strengthening the operations of academic and student advising services to maximize efficiency and further meet the needs of our students.

Objective 1.1: Fully utilize undergraduate peer advisors by locating them centrally (front-line of advising) and publicizing their services more broadly.

Objective 1.2: Monitor closely recent changes to course formats in upper-division electives to ensure quality and that student needs continue to be met.

Goal 2.0: Increase proficiency and use of information technology to better serve students and faculty and more efficiently manage resources.

Objective 2.1: Review and restructure the student sections of the program website to improve accessibility to key information and ease navigation for students and faculty.

Objective 2.2: Conduct online exit-surveys of both the undergraduate and graduate students as part of the commencement registration website.

Key Point: *Be sure to reference each program component when establishing goals and objectives, to ensure all key areas are addressed!*

Program Evaluation Example(s)*:*

What questions do you have about your mission, goals, and objectives? What information or data will help you to answer the questions? What methods can you use to gather the information? Below are some samples.

🡒Questions to Ask🡐	🡒Information Needs🡐	🡒Methods to Use🡐
Is your program's mission statement in-line with professional standards (e.g., NACADA and CAS), clear and concise, motivational and inspiring, and does it include student learning and development?	• Alignment between program's mission and professional standards. • Advisors' rating/perception of mission statement quality and feedback on mission improvement. • Students' (and other relevant stakeholders') perceptions and feedback on wording and clarity of the mission statement	• Checklist or mapping chart • Survey or meeting • Survey or focus group
To what extent do the program objectives address (or are aligned with) the needs of the program?	• Alignment between stakeholder needs and objectives	• Focus groups, student behavior/performance tracking, interviews, and surveys on stakeholder needs **(e.g., exit survey).**

Key Point: Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods.

Key Tool: Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for sample student surveys!

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 2: Organization and Structure ➔

Effective Advising Programs are well organized and structured.

Program Organization and Structure

Any effective advising program must define and review how it organizes and delivers its services. The success of each structure depends on alignment with the mission of the unit that provides the services, the population of students being served and the resources available. There are **three overall structures**: decentralized, centralized, and shared, and UC, Berkeley represents a hybrid approach with a wide variety of advising delivery models.

CENTRALIZED - Advising services delivered by advisors in one central academic and/or co-curricular unit. Examples @ UCB: CED & CNR, centralized undergraduate advising offices. EOP/TRSP, centralized academic and co-curricular advising services.

DECENTRALIZED - Advising services delivered by professional or faculty advisors in separate academic or co-curricular units. Examples @ UCB: CED & CNR, decentralized graduate student advising offices.

SHARED - Advising services split between advisors in individual departments and central offices
Examples @ UCB: College of Letters & Science: Centralized L&S Advisors; decentralized UMA's. COC: Shared Split: 1 professional and 1 faculty.

➔ CAS Standard: *"Programs and services must be structured purposefully and organized effectively."*

Two organizational tools are provided on the Program Effective website to assist with visualizing and understanding the overall organization and purpose of advising at UC Berkeley:

1. **Advising Organization Chart:** To understand how your advising program fits into the campus wide organization, see the Program Effectiveness Website for a bubble diagram of all advising programs by structure.
2. **Advising Purpose Matrix:** To understand how your advising program fits campus wide, according to objective and purpose, see the Program Effectiveness Website for a matrix diagram of all advising programs by purpose.

The Basics

- ✓ **Create an Organizational Chart with Clear Channels of Authority**
  CAS Standards: *"The design of an Academic Advising Program must be compatible with the institution's organizational structure and its students' needs. Organizational charts must demonstrate clear channels of authority. Leaders with organizational authority for the programs and services must provide strategic planning, supervision, and management."*
- ✓ **Clarify and Balance Advisor Responsibilities**
  CAS Standards: *"Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly delineated, published, and disseminated to both advisors and advisees. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated service delivery expectations."*
- ✓ **Determine Physical Space Needs**
  CAS Standards: *"Programs and services must have adequate, accessible, and suitably located facilities and equipment to support the mission and goals."*
- ✓ **Know Your Budget**
  CAS Standards: *"Programs and services must have funding to accomplish the mission and goals. In establishing funding priorities and making significant changes, a comprehensive analysis must be conducted to determine the following elements: unmet needs of the unit, relevant expenditures, external and internal resources, and impact on students and the institution.*

Key Resources: Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness Website for examples of curricular and co-curricular **organizational charts.** Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness Website for lists of **advisor responsibilities.**

Key Point: Many programs and departments at UC Berkeley utilize frontline intake advisors or peer advisors. Graduate student and faculty mentors may also enhance the advising experience through a variety of formal and informal programs. Often, on the curricular side, multiple faculty chairs and committees will work in conjunction with advisors. It is important to account for these additional advising roles in analyzing a program's organizational effectiveness.

Key Questions

Use the following questions to begin to evaluate the advising organization and structure.

🡒 Understanding Organization and Structure 🡐
1. Who is advised? (Do advisors know who their advisees are?) 2. Who advises? (Advisors, faculty, intake or peer advisors, graduate mentors?) 3. Where is advising done? What is the delivery model? (centralized, satellite, departments, residence halls?) 4. How are advising responsibilities divided? (Undeclared/1st Years only? Faculty advisors?) 5. What is the mode of advising? (appointments, drop-in, workshops, social media?) 6. Is the current structure working? (Do students know who their advisors are? Are they receiving accurate information?) 7. Is the advisor-to-student ratio appropriate? (NACADA 2011 Survey median case load: 1:300) 8. Does the physical space support the needs of the advising program? 9. Are advisors accessible when and where students seek academic guidance? 10. Are financial, personnel, and physical resources available to support and to staff the current or intended structure? 11. Are reporting lines clear to all advisors? 12. Is it clear to students where they obtain advising for their various needs, such as general education requirements, major and minor subject areas, honors courses, pre-law or pre-medicine curriculum, exceptions to policies, academic probation, graduation, etc.? 13. Do advisors understand the structure and their role within the larger system? If the structure is decentralized, is there an advising resource and training center? 14. If the structure is decentralized or shared, does the structure promote communication and cooperation among advisors in all units? 15. Is the structure conducive to sharing information and collaborating with other academic and student service units?

🡒 CAS Standard: *"Programs and services must be structured purposefully and organized effectively."*

Program Evaluation Example(s)*:*

How functional is the structure and organization of your unit? Below is a sample question that can be asked, information that can be gathered, and information-gathering options.

🡒Questions to Ask🡐	🡒Information Needs🡐	🡒Methods to Use🡐
How effective is the program in communicating to students where they can obtain advising for their various needs? (e.g., wellness and health, leadership opportunities, general education requirements, the major and minor subject areas, honors courses, student conduct policies, graduation)	• Students' awareness about where to go for each advising need (centralized UG advising center, departmental advisor, co-curricular advisor, central services office) • Students' self-reports on their areas of need and perceived success of each referral • Students' self-report on how they found the service.	• Advising session log, focus group, interview, survey ***Sample questions****:* (a) What do students expect from the office or advisor they visit? (b) How often did students follow up on the advisor's referral? (c) How often do students consult websites before visiting an advisor? (d) Do students rely on their UMA for L&S advising? (e) Do students rely on a co-curricular advisor to help with curricular advising, and vice versa?

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods*

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 3: Tools and Technology ➔

<u>Effective Advising Programs</u> use tools and technologies to help advisors communicate with students, campus partners, and other stakeholders; to manage student information; and to share information and resources.

Program Tools and Technology

Technology permeates our students' lives, and plays an essential role in their educational experiences. Consequently, advising units need to integrate appropriate communication and information tools in all aspects of the advising process, from outreach, recruitment, and retention, to management, delivery, and evaluation of the unit's services and programs. To achieve this, units should regularly evaluate their technological capacities and evaluate their students' technological preferences.

➔ <u>CAS Standard</u>: *"Programs and services must have adequate technology to support the achievement of their mission and goals.*

When implementing new programs and systems, it's important to consider how **advising technologies** might affect the quality of communication, as well as connectivity and efficiency.

Advising technologies are the *<u>communication and information hardware and software used to deliver advising services to students.</u>* These tools impact three aspects of advising in particular:

➔ **Communicating Information**
- ✓ For example, direct communication between students and advisors via email.
- ✓ Relies on clear, effective writing skills.

➔ **Managing Information**
- ✓ For example, student records, databases.
- ✓ Should be interactive (i.e., connected, related, not siloes)
- ✓ Accessible by all relevant advisors (curricular and co-curricular)

➔ **Sharing Information and Resources**
- ✓ For example, departmental and social media web sites (Facebook; Twitter) which provide access to institutional requirements and opportunities.
- ✓ Content and layout should be accessible, engaging, current.
- ✓ Includes policies and procedures relevant to advising.
- ✓ Integrates multi-media where appropriate.

<u>Key Point</u>: *New technologies can produce significant change in the everyday advising experience.*

<u>Example:</u> *The Program Effectiveness website is one example of web-based information sharing.*

➔ <u>CAS Standard</u>: *"Programs and services must explore the use of technology to enhance delivery of programs and services."*

➔ <u>CAS Standard</u>: *"Academic Advising Programs must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish its mission. Staff members must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions."*

Key Questions

Use the following questions to begin to evaluate the advising technologies within each of the areas mentioned above.

→ Communicating Information ←	
1.	How do students and advisors communicate?
2.	Do advisors and students use the same tools to communicate?
3.	Do the technologies support fast and easy communication?
4.	Do advisors communicate effectively?
5.	Are advisors trained to use current modes of communication?

→ Managing Information ←	
1.	How do advisors access and manage student information?
2.	Do information management tools provide fast and effective access to relevant information?
3.	Do information management technologies work together to facilitate reporting and analysis?
4.	Is student information secure and confidential?

→ Sharing Information and Resources ←	
1.	Is your program information (print publications, web-based information, etc.) accessible to all stakeholders?
2.	Is the information complete, current, and visually engaging?
3.	Does your program information use a variety of methods of communication (e.g. text and video content)?
4.	Is your program information linked to other relevant programs and sources of information on campus and beyond?

Program Evaluation Example(s):

Do advising technologies help the program achieve its mission and goals? Below is a sample question that can be asked to enhance effective use of technologies, information that can be gathered, and information-gathering options.

→ Questions to Ask ←	→ Information Needs ←	→ Methods to Use ←
1. Which communications technologies support fast and easy personal communication between students and advisors?	• Volume of phone calls, emails, and other forms of electronic communication between students & advisors	• Advisor log
	• Average turn-around time for each mode (i.e., how much time elapses between responses)	• Self-report, short student survey, etc.
	• Track when "communication" has occurred when information is posted by listserv, Facebook (or other social media)	• Listserv and social media logs
	• Student perceptions about and preferences for certain modes of communication	• Student survey, focus group
	• Advisor perceptions about and preferences for certain modes of communication	• Advisor meeting or survey

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods*

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 4: Policy and Procedures ➔

Effective Advising Programs rely on clear, documented and widely publicized policies and procedures.

Program Policy and Procedures

Relevant and timely advising policies and procedures comprise the foundation of all sound advising programs and will address legal and ethical issues in higher education and advising. The policies must reflect and maintain compliance with federal and state laws, such as FERPA, and local regulations and policies specific to the university, college, school or unit. The procedures need to support the students' progress through academic milestones and/or social learning development.

➔ CAS Standard: *"Systems and procedures must be in place to disseminate timely and accurate information to students, other members of the institutional community, and appropriate external organizations."*

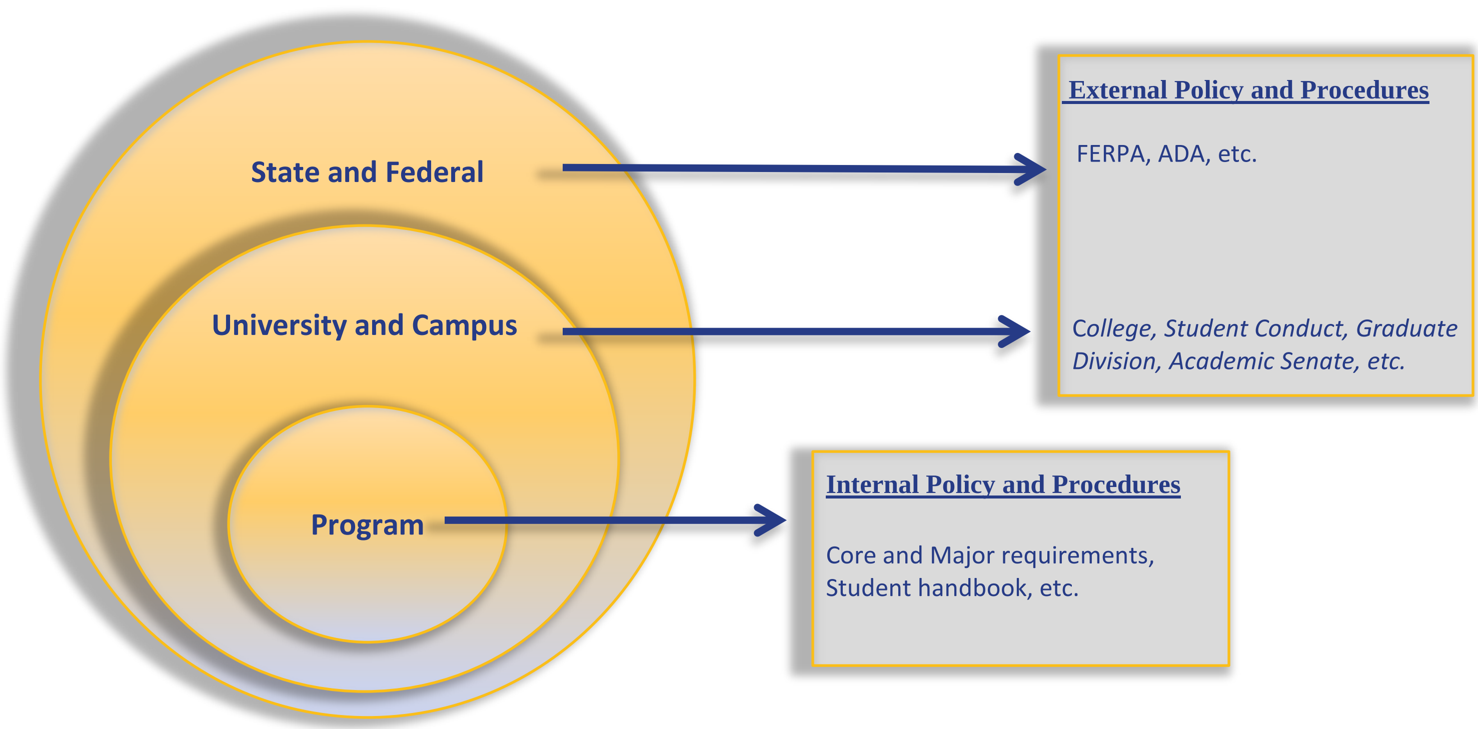
Policy and Procedure Competency

Central to advising is **communicating** policies and procedures. The Advising Council Development Working Group sees 'policy and procedures' as one of five core advisor competencies. See below:

> Policy and Procedures Competencies: Policy and procedure competencies are essential for advisors to complete their work. These competencies include knowledge about policies and regulations specific to the university, college, school or unit (e.g., co-curricular functions within student affairs or student service units); an understanding of procedures related to a student's progress through their degree at UC Berkeley; information about the technology used in one's work; and awareness of the legal and ethical issues in higher education and advising.

Key Point: Clear communication is essential to this component!

Levels of Policy and Procedure



Key CAS 'Policy and Procedures' Standards

- ✓ *"Academic advisors should have a comprehensive knowledge of the institution's programs, academic requirements, policies and procedures, majors, minors, and support services."*
- ✓ *"Staff members must be knowledgeable about internal and external governance systems that affect programs and services."*
- ✓ *"Programs and services must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy…"*
- ✓ *"Programs and services must regularly review policies. The revision and creation of policies must be informed by best practices, available evidence, and policy issues in higher education…"*
- ✓ *"Programs and services must have written policies on all relevant operations, transactions, or tasks that have legal implications…"*
- ✓ *"Programs and services must review relevant professional ethical standards…" "Programs and services must have procedures and guidelines consistent with institutional policy…"*

Key Questions

To begin to evaluate the policies and procedures within an advising program, the following questions provide a start:

Key Questions for Policies and Procedures
1. Who writes the policies, procedures, and regulations for your unit? (Committee, Director/Manager, Team Leaders?)
2. What are the policies, procedures, and regulations applicable to your unit?
3. How do you disseminate policies and procedures to students and other stakeholders, e.g., faculty, peer advisors, parents, cross-campus colleagues?
4. How do you communicate internal policies amongst the advising staff?
5. How do you document changes to policies and notify your stakeholders?
6. Do your advisors understand the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other relevant laws?
7. When do you update your policies and procedures documents, e.g. handbooks, policy and case logs, websites, checklists, worksheets, social media sites, etc.?

Program Component Evaluation Example(s):

Are the program and services in compliance with internal and external guidelines and policies? Below are sample questions, information that can be gathered, and information-gathering options that can be used to evaluate your unit's level of compliance.

🡒Questions to Ask🡐	🡒Information Needs🡐	🡒Methods to Use🡐
Are the current program policies in compliance with the institutional regulations and policies?	• A list of institutional policies the program should adhere to.	• An audit checklist
To what extent are the advisors up to date with the institutional policies (risk management, liability, etc.)?	• Advisor's knowledge and awareness about internal external policies. • A list of internal and external policies the program should adhere to.	• A survey on advisors' awareness of the policies

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods.*

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 5: Diversity and Inclusiveness ➔

Effective Advising Programs acknowledge the diversity of student values, experiences, and motivations as they move in and through the university.

Program Diversity and Inclusiveness

"Diversity refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance." Awareness of one's personal notions regarding diversity and inclusiveness are critical as we interact with students from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Greater awareness with regard to how we understand and interpret diversity can lead to diminished instances of stereotyping and fewer misunderstandings. Programs and services must not discriminate on the basis of race; ethnicity; gender; gender identity and expression; sexual orientation; abilities/disabilities; age; cultural identity; family educational history (e.g., first generation college); language; religion; nationality; socioeconomic, or veteran status; or any other basis included in institutional policies, codes and laws (See: CAS). Advisor's can demonstrate respect and sensitivity by approaching individual sessions with students with as few preconceived notions as possible.

Program Values

- **Establishes** relationships with students based on respect, trust, an understanding of their needs, and an appreciation for the complexity and richness of their experience.
- **Values** diversity and understands the role it plays in enriching the living, learning, teaching, and working experience.
- **Interacts** effectively across multiple differences.
- **Demonstrates** cultural competencies as reflected in the ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across distinct backgrounds and experiences.
- **Is aware** of his/her own attitudes and assumptions toward cultural, racial, social, and gender diversity.
- **Recognizes** demographic profiles and emerging trends in the student population.
- **Is aware** of language as it pertains to multiple identities.
- **Engages** in opportunities to increase one's understanding of the experiences of students coming from diverse backgrounds.
- **Represents** the university's values towards access and inclusiveness for all.
- **Knows** about campus resources that support and advocate for diversity.

➔ **CAS Standard:** *"Within the context of each institution's unique mission and in accordance with institutional polices and all applicable codes and laws, programs and services must create and maintain educational and work environments that are (a) welcoming, accessible, and inclusive to persons of diverse backgrounds, (b) equitable and non-discriminatory, and (c) free from harassment."*

Key Questions

To begin to evaluate the awareness of diversity and inclusiveness within an advising program, the following questions provide a start:

→ Diversity and Inclusiveness ←
1. How is diversity defined?
2. Are diversity goals clearly articulated?
3. How is diversity manifested in your program?
4. How will diversity training be implemented?
5. How will teaching moments/points be introduced?
6. Are there opportunities for discussing complex student issues?
7. Do policies/procedures reflect the needs of diverse populations of students?
8. How do we learn about trends in the student population?
9. How do we express sensitivity?
10. How do we show respect for diversity?
11. What efforts is the program making at inclusivity?
12. Where do advisors go for support?
13. Are advisors familiar with the campus' diversity and inclusivity goals and efforts?
14. Are services easily accessible to all?
15. Does the program reflect demographic profiles of the student population?
16. How is diversity reflected in the program's strategic plans?

→ CAS Standard: *"Programs and services must modify or remove policies, practices, facilities, structures, systems, and technologies that limit access, discriminate, or produce inequities."*

Program Evaluation Example(s):

Is your program creating and maintaining a diverse, inclusive, and equitable advising program and work environment? To evaluate diversity in your program, see sample questions below, as well as information that can be gathered and information-gathering options.

→ Questions to Ask ←	→ Information Needs ←	→ Methods to Use ←
What are the program's diversity goals? How is diversity reflected in the program's strategic plan? How are the diversity goals addressed and implemented in program operation?	• Unit's mission and vision statements • Programs strategic plan • The current and ongoing diversity goals for the unit • Examples of policies that reflect a commitment to diversity and diversity awareness • Examples of how unit is fostering respect and appreciation for diversity	• Document analysis of mission, vision, and policy statements (including hiring policies) using a checklist of ways diversity is supported and encouraged. • Alignment between institutional diversity goals and HR's strategies for managing diversity in the workplace
How does the program stay abreast of changing demographics/trends in the student population?	• Student profile data • Advising student access and use data • Frequency of contact and information-exchange opportunities with programs that serve diverse populations of students	• CalAnswers • Intake form, advising session access tracking • Meeting tracking, tracking of emails and information-sharing

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods.*

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 6: Training and Development ➔

Effective Advising Programs ensure advisors are well trained and have regular access to professional development.

Program Training and Development

The definition of advising as an academic discipline is best situated within the context of Advisor Competencies.

The Advising Council Development Working Group defines a “competency” as the skill or capacity required to complete one’s work effectively, and has identified the following five core competencies.

Be sure to see the Advising Council Development Working Group website for a full overview and definition of these advising professional competencies.

Professional Competencies: Professional competencies form the base of knowledge that advisors need to do their job. This includes knowledge of best practice advising research and college student development theory, broad issues and trends in higher education, and the UC Berkeley Advising Vision.

Practice Competencies: Practice competencies enable advisors to use their subject matter knowledge to provide a safe space for students that promotes exploration, development, and intellectual growth. Advisors should have an understanding of the barriers to academic success, and the ability to evaluate and monitor students’ holistic growth. Advisors should have a general understanding of, and a willingness to explain how students create their own career paths by combining the curricular and co-curricular experience.

Policy and Procedures Competencies: Policy and procedure competencies are essential for advisors to complete their work. These competencies include knowledge about policies and regulations specific to the university, college, school or unit (e.g., co-curricular functions within student affairs or student service units); an understanding of procedures related to a student’s progress through their degree at UC Berkeley; information about the technology used in one’s work; and awareness of the legal and ethical issues in higher education and advising.

Interpersonal Competencies: Interpersonal competencies such as clear communication, counseling skills, and effective information-giving skills allow advisers to build strong and sustainable relationships with students, in addition to establishing effective working relationships. Advisors should create an inclusive environment at UC Berkeley, through an awareness of the issues facing different student populations, such as various social identities, and through an understanding of the cultural lenses the advisors themselves bring to the workplace.

Institutional Competencies: Institutional competencies allow advisors to conduct their work within the context of the institutional culture and history. These competencies require that advisors understand our student demographics; current campus issues that are relevant to the student experience; the role of the student voice within the shared governance process of the campus; and how our unique history as a city, institution, and system influences our focus on access and excellence. This set of competencies also enables advisors to know and use appropriate campus resources in their work. Finally, advisors will embrace the Principles of Community and the Principles of Excellence, Equity and Inclusion, which are promoted to create a civil and open campus environment.

➔ **CAS Standard:** *“Programs and services must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish mission and goals.“*

➔ **CAS Standard:** *“Professional staff members must engage in continuing professional development activities to keep abreast of the research, theories, legislation, policies, and developments that affect their programs and services.”*

Key Questions
The following questions help units to begin to evaluate the advisor training and development within each competency area.

🡒Examples of Questions for Each Competency 🡐
Professional Competencies
1. Do you know the UC Berkeley Advising Vision Statement?
2. Are you familiar with foundational theories related to advising? How do you apply these theories?
3. How does California governance relate to UCB as a public institution?
4. How do you manage stress on the job? What are your own limitations as an advisor?
5. Are you able to take advantage of professional development opportunities?
Practice Competencies
1. How do you encourage exploration of diverse viewpoints and questions?
2. How do you assist students in translating their academic experiences into real world skills?
3. What are some factors from outside the classroom that can become barriers to academic success?
4. How do you use databases, communication tools, and other technology required your job?
Policy and Procedure Competencies
1. What are the policies, regulations, and work tasks that are specific to your unit?
2. What are the appropriate actions to take when a student is having a crisis?
3. Do you understand the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)?
4. Do you know your own rights and legal protections? Are you aware of student conduct policies?
Interpersonal Competencies
1. Do you have a working knowledge of baseline counseling and communication techniques (e.g. effective listening, attending skills, paraphrasing, etc.)?
2. Do you communicate effectively in multiple modes including email and other media formats?
3. How do you build professional relationships for the benefit of students being advised?
4. What are some of the activities for learning about diversity on campus?
Institutional Competencies
1. What are some of the characteristics that define our student profile (e.g, age, race, ethnicity, geography, etc.)?
2. What are the primary problems facing your students?
3. Do you understand the role that students play in the shared governance process?
4. What is the Master Plan?

Program Evaluation Example(s)*:*
Does the advising staff have the knowledge and skills to work effectively? To identify and learn what advising staff need, below are sample questions, information that can be gathered, and information-gathering options.

🡒Questions to Ask🡐	🡒Information Needs🡐	🡒Methods to Use🡐
What are the expected performances of advising staff? Do they have the background and skills to perform all the tasks? Are there any areas advisors feel the need to build their knowledge and skills?	• A list of performance outcomes and tasks • Advisors' self-assessment of their skills and knowledge to fulfill the tasks. Perceived needs to build their skills and knowledge.	• Document analysis of performance goals and necessary competencies. • Survey to staff advisors of their competencies and needs.
Does your program provide sufficient training for peer advisors to perform their duties?	• Peer advisors' background • Peer advisors' knowledge about the program-internal and external policies, etc. • Peer advisors' self-report on challenging advising questions and scenarios	• Document analysis of peer advisor application • Selection interview • Peer advisor and staff meeting, focus group, survey

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods.*

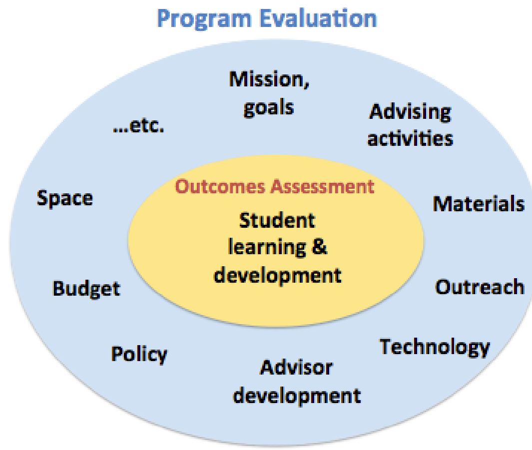
Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

Component 7: Evaluation and Assessment ➔

Effective Advising Programs regularly conduct program-level evaluations in order to identify program needs and issues and to engage in continuous self-improvement.

Program Evaluation and Assessment

Program-evaluation is a process of systematically gathering information about various elements of an advising program (e.g., goals, objectives, policies and procedures, staff training, technologies, outreach, etc.) to improve program effectiveness. Student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment is a particular type of program evaluation that is focused on student learning.



➔ CAS Standard: *"Results of assessments and evaluations must be used to identify needs and interests in revising and improving programs and services."*

"Without evaluation, how do you know what you're doing is working? You can help people until you're blue in the face, but if it's not the help they want or need, then you're just wasting your time." (UCB Advisor)

Program Evaluation

Definition:

Program evaluation is an essential tool that helps managers and advisors review and improve the state and effectiveness of their advising program by systematically gathering evidence to inform program decisions. When evaluating advising units, we collectively look into our advising mission and goals, as well as the processes currently in place to deliver services. Evaluation helps advising units appraise the strengths and weaknesses of their programs, policies, procedures, personnel, and organizational structure. More importantly, it provides managers and staff the opportunity to identify problems and suggest potential courses of action and solutions. If done correctly and continuously, evaluation may help improve effectiveness and efficiency, and support the adoption of new and innovative strategies. Overall, evaluation helps advising units identify best practices and find how best to deliver services.

Example:

A series of internal office surveys and focus groups reveals high levels of dissatisfaction among the advising staff. The survey also reveals that advisors are not sure if their efforts are making a difference in the life of students. In addition, advisors feel they are overworked, and asked to perform too many administrative tasks. Furthermore, advisors feel that their work is not valued, and there are no clear career opportunities. A manager can use this information to develop and implement changes that can create a productive work environment to motivate and engage their staff and to highlight their contributions.

This example reveals that to conduct a successful evaluation, the institution or program needs to have a clear understanding of the advising processes as well as the needs of its advisors.

"...because assessment makes me proud to work here....It's important to feel that we're making a difference [in students' lives]." (UCB Advisor)

SLO Assessment

Definition:

Outcomes assessment can reveal the impact of the services you provide, with the intent to improve student learning in the advising context. The process of assessment includes identifying expected student learning in advising programs, and gathering evidence about student experience, perceptions, and performance. Units can take advantage of existing locally-held information or institutional databases (UCUES data, CalAnswers, GLOW survey, etc.). If existing data does not provide the information you need to make advising improvements, then consider gathering your own data using the most appropriate method (e.g., focus group, interview, e-portfolio).

Example:

One of the student learning outcomes for the advising program in the College of Environmental Design is career preparation (e.g., at the time of graduation, students are well-prepared for the transition to career and/or graduate school). The advising unit found that the proportion of students graduating with a job offer is lower than other Colleges. They engaged in assessment to design interventions and effectively deploy resources to support students for their pathways after graduation. They first contacted the Berkeley Career Center to gather information about their students' career preparation behaviors. They then gathered information via senior exit survey to find out more specifically about their job applications and job offers. These results justified setting up a satellite career services in the College.

Key Questions

1. Does your organization have a set of program objectives and student learning outcomes?
2. How do you know that your program is achieving stated program goals? Do you measure and track your progress toward your program goals and student learning outcomes? Do evaluate the services you provide to your students?
3. How does your organization identify problems and explore alternative solutions? On what basis do you make your decisions? Do you gather evidence to make decisions?
4. Do you have a person or a team dedicated to systematically gather, analyze, and interpret student and program information on a regular basis?
5. What information-gathering methods do you use? How reliable and accurate are the information?
6. Does your unit produce an annual report? Who is the audience and what is the purpose?
7. Is your unit in compliance with UC, California, and Federal laws, rules, regulations and policies?
8. To what extent is the program assessment and evaluation useful, flexible, and meaningful to the advising staff?

Program Evaluation Example(s)*:*

How do you know that your program is effective and working? Below are sample questions, information that can be gathered, and information-gathering options that can be applied to improve your program.

🡒Questions to Ask🡐	🡒Information Needs🡐	🡒Methods to Use🡐
How do you know that the changes or actions taken in student advising are successful?	• Pre/post changes in student perceptions and experiences. • Pre/post changes in student performance (e.g., time to degree, job placement, etc.)	• Exit survey, focus group, interview • Central student data, behavior tracking, etc.

Key Point: *Be sure to see the Program Effectiveness website for more sample evaluative questions and methods.*

Additional Resources:
Please see Program Effectiveness Website for additional information, examples, resources, and methods.
ASK QUESTIONS AND/OR UPLOAD YOUR OWN EXAMPLES TOO!

QUICK STEP GUIDE TO

Program-level Outcomes Assessment in Advising

PROGRAM LEVEL ASSESSMENT MADE EASY IN SIX QUICK STEPS

Defining Your Program:

STEP 1: REVIEW MISSION/PURPOSE
STEP 2: IDENTIFY DESIRED OUTCOMES
STEP 3: MAP ACTIVITIES

Outcomes Assessment:

STEP 4: SITUATE
STEP 5: DESIGN & IMPLEMENT
STEP 6: UTILIZE & IMPROVE PROGRAMS

INCLUDES SIX WORKSHEETS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU DESIGN YOUR OWN ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

About the Assessment Guide

This six-step guide provides advising managers and advisors with guiding questions and strategies for stating, mapping, and assessing student learning and development in advising units. The materials will allow your advising unit to quickly initiate or develop useful and meaningful plans to (a) clarify what students are getting out of the advising activities your unit provides, (b) gather information about student learning and development, and (c) make use of the gathered information to inform advising practices.

The guide contains ample examples from undergraduate and co-curricular advising programs, as well as ready-to-use worksheets to walk you through the process. The current version of the guide draws on examples from **undergraduate advising**, but the process and guiding questions are applicable to **graduate advising** as well. We hope to further incorporate examples from graduate advising units as the campus advising community starts to adopt this guide.

Acknowledgement:

Thank you to the following units for contributing assessment examples: Athletics Studies Center, Berkeley International Office, Career Center, College of Environmental Design Undergraduate Advising Services, the Office of the Dean of Students, Fall Program for Freshmen, and Graduate Division. Your local assessment practices are insightful and immensely valuable for the Cal advising community. Special thanks go to William Heidenfeldt, the GSR who worked extensively on the associated materials to this Guide as well as Christopher Carlson and Irene Steves for transcribing the interviews.

STEP 1: REVIEW PROGRAM MISSION/PURPOSE ➔

What is the mission/purpose of this advising program?

Mission statements and statements of purpose help advising units focus on the rationale and primary objectives of their program. [Go to "Mission and Goals" for additional description on mission and goals.]

Start by asking the following questions…

- Why does this advising program exist?
- How does your unit contribute to the overall mission of the university and the division/college/other reporting units?
- What student populations does this advising program primarily serve?
- What does this advising program accomplish?
- What does this advising program value?

1. What is the value of defining mission/purpose?

Mission/purpose statements make advising programs more intentional and help faculty, students, and advisors understand the responsibilities and roles of an advising program. This is particularly important when students interact with multiple advising units and may not understand what each program offers.

2. What is the goal of defining mission/purpose?

After preparing a mission/purpose statement, you will be ready to move on to the next step – identifying student development outcomes. Student development outcomes naturally flow from a program's defined purpose.

Sample Mission/Purpose Statement (Department of Economics, UCB):

Reporting to the faculty of the Department of Economics within the College of Letters & Science, this is primarily a curricular advising program designed to serve upper division declared Economics majors. Service is focused on curricular and related administrative matters (i.e., understanding major requirements and faculty developed learning goals, development of personalized academic plans, academic progress and student development). This unit also supports disciplinary related co-curricular activities (i.e., clubs and student organizations that help students develop academic, interpersonal and career competencies and with department activities such as commencement). We also provide referrals to related resources (i.e., Student Health Services, Career Services, Financial Aid, Registrar, etc.). We offer web-based and in-person advising. This program values student growth and respects differences in individual ability, interest and goals. We aim to create a welcoming and responsive community that encourages intellectual and interpersonal engagement among faculty, students and staff.

⦿TIPS: Most advising programs are complex and multifaceted. You probably have many priorities and serve multiple student populations. It is not necessary to try to capture all of these in a statement of purpose. The objective is to identify and focus on the primary activities of the unit.

Resources:

NACADA. (2005). *Sample academic advising mission statements*. Retrieved from http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Sample-academic-advising-mission-statements.aspx

STEP 1: WORKSHEET

Crafting a Mission/Purpose Statement

1. Take a look at how your unit is situated within the university. How does your unit contribute to the overall mission of the university and the division, college, or other reporting units?

Describe how your unit is supporting the mission and goals of the organization you report to. Click to find out about the mission of the University of California, Division of Student Affairs, Division of Equity and Inclusion, Dean of Students, College *(e.g., Social Welfare, L&S advising, etc.).*

2. Describe the type of advising you do.

Is the unit primarily curricular (to assist with academic matters), co-curricular (to assist with issues affecting their performance and well-being), or exhibiting elements of both? Is it delivered online, face-to-face, or both?

3. Describe the primary student populations your unit serves.

For example, international students, under-represented minority students, transfer students, first-generation college students, student athletes, students with disabilities, etc.

4. Describe your service focus.

For example, the focus may be "successful academic and personal transition to the University", "understanding degree and major requirements", "understanding policy and procedure", "adhering to Campus code of conduct", etc.

5. Describe your program's shared advising values.

For example, student growth, development, respect for individual differences as well as community, etc.

Put the answers to these questions together and you will have a statement of purpose.

⦿TIPS: You may notice that your statement of purpose is similar to service descriptions on your website. If it is not, you may want to consider aligning these materials going forward. There should ultimately be consistency between mission, purpose, and the organization of services.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY DESIRED OUTCOMES➔

What aspects of advising do you want to know more about? What would you like students to know and be able to do as a result of interaction with your advising activities?

1. What's an area of advising?

There are many types of advising (practical, co-curricular, and curricular) and multiple skills or competencies areas within those areas. For example, on the co-curricular side, there is health promotion, leadership development, and career-focused competencies. On the curricular side, there are core academic and disciplinary based competencies. Take a look at the "Undergraduate Advising Matrix" for student competency areas, ranging from "navigate the institution" to "advanced study and career competencies."

A developmentally tiered taxonomy of macro-level curricular and co-curricular student development outcomes is available at the following link. This conceptual model may help you identify areas and competencies that are relevant to your unit.

The following questions will help you determine the advising competency areas your unit may want to target:

- **Is this unit mainly designed to support student development in co-curricular areas?**
- **Is this unit mainly designed to support student development in curricular areas?**
- **Is this a specialized advising unit designed to support both co-curricular and curricular development?**

2. What's a student learning (and developmental) outcome?

A learning outcome is basically what you want students to gain from your advising activities. There are usually three types of outcomes: knowledge, skills, and dispositions (often expressed in attitudes, behavior, and thinking). Outcomes are expressed through active verbs and learning statements (see examples below).
Try to identify student learning and developmental outcomes as they relate to your advising area/activity:

- **What do you want your students to know as a result of advising?**
- **What do you want your students to be able to do?**
- **What do you want your students to value or care about?**

Sample Desired Learning Outcomes:

Curricular

Knowledge: Students **know how to choose** a major/track/field.

Skill: Students **select** courses consistent with knowledge of requirements, individual interests, and goals.

Disposition: Students **appreciate** the breadth and the depth of curriculum and seeks to incorporate a wide variety of courses into their overall academic planning.

Co-Curricular

Knowledge: Students can **locate** mental health and other health related support services as appropriate to their needs.

Skill: Students **take on a leadership role** and **effectively manage** an organization or group projects.

Disposition: Students **acknowledge** the important relationship between maintaining their health and wellbeing and the quality of their student life and academic experience.

3. What's the purpose of developing outcomes?

The purpose of developing outcomes is to better articulate what you want your advising activities to produce. These may already be intuitively understood by advisors and students; however, there is much to be gained from actively expressing specific types of outcomes. Clearly articulated outcomes help both advisors and students understand what is to be gained from the advising interaction. They help clarify what the value of advising is to the individual student and to the academic enterprise. Ultimately, learning outcomes statements are necessary to determine if advising is "working" in the ways that are intended.

⦿TIPS: Start with a few simple and easy to describe outcomes. You can always expand these over time. Ultimately, you may want to developmentally tier these by student level but it is not necessary to do this when you are getting started (goals for freshman will naturally be different from those for seniors, for example).

Resources:

Martin, H. (2007). *Constructing learning objectives for academic advising*. Retrieved from http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Constructing-student-learning-outcomes.aspx

Aiken-Wisniewski, S. (Ed.). (2010). *Guide to assessment of academic advising* (2nd ed.). (Monograph, no. 23). Manhattan, KS: The National Academic Advising Association.

STEP 2: WORKSHEET

Defining advising learning and developmental outcomes for your unit

In completing this worksheet, you should factor in discussions you have had with advisors, students, faculty, and other important stakeholders and audiences. You may want to answer these questions after multiple facilitated brainstorming sessions and after reviewing existing advising materials, resources, and mission/purpose statements. Try to identify 3-5 outcomes to start…but if you can agree on fewer, start there.

1. **Identify core competency areas of advising (consistent with your mission/purpose) for your program.**
   Which of the three macro-level competencies does your unit address?

   [ ] Curricular: *Core academic competencies, disciplinary-based competencies* (e.g., study skills, time management)

   [ ] Co-curricular: Health and wellbeing, social/interpersonal/cultural competencies, leadership, advanced study and career competencies (e.g., career exploration and preparedness)

   [ ] Practical: Competencies to navigate the institution, such as academic planning and knowledge of policies.

   [For details about the three competency types and sub-categories, download the advising outcomes matrix here.]

2. **Now it's time to clarify in detail.**
   (a) What do you want students to know or understand as a result of advising?

   KNOWLEDGE:

   ____

   To describe cognitive outcomes use active words like "know, identify, select, locate, review, understand, list," etc.
   e.g., After attending an orientation, student will be able to locate health services.

   (b) What do you want students to be able to do as a result of advising?

   SKILL(s):

   ____

   When describing skill-based outcomes use active words like "organize, select, plan, prepare, produce, collect, create, design, predict, use," etc.
   e.g., Students are able to locate, identify and utilize resources to support them in achieve their academic and professional goals.

   (c) What do you want students to value or care about?

   VALUES (expressed through behavior and attitude)

   ____

   When identifying values based outcomes use active words like "appreciate, gain, grow, realize, welcome, acknowledge, form, grasp," etc.
   e.g., Students appreciate the importance and value of engaging in student learning communities.

⦿TIPS: Think back to your mission/purpose statement when developing your desired outcome statements. If the purpose of your unit is primarily curricular and designed for declared majors, your outcomes will probably be different from a unit that serves lower division undeclared students. Try to define clear outcomes without being too broad or too narrow. These should be designed with your program purpose and student populations in mind. Also, although most units will have at least some curricular and co-curricular outcomes, stay focused on your primary service objectives. It is also not necessary to state all of your outcomes and goals now. Focus on a few big ones to start.

STEP 3: ACTIVITY MAPPING➔

What advising activities does your unit provide for students to reach these outcomes?

The next step is to map your desired outcomes with existing activities. The effort is fairly simple and straightforward and requires that you generate a list of (a) outcomes and (b) activities. You will essentially be matching outcomes with activities.

1. What's an advising activity?
Most advising programs have multiple and complex activities. The focus here is not on individual students or individual advisors, but on program-level activities that constitute the whole advising program. The focus is on primary or core advising activities that are intended to enhance (or impact) student learning and development.

Try to identify three to four primary advising activities that form big parts of the "whole" advising program, for example:

- Workshops (or courses)
- Web-based tools
- Print materials
- Group advising sessions

Start this process by asking a few questions.

- ***What are the major activities of this advising program?***
  (e.g., workshops, programs, orientations, etc.)

- ***How do we spend most of our time and on what kinds of activities?***
  (e.g., planning orientation, designing materials for the website, developing special programs for students experiencing academic difficulty, etc.)

- ***What advising resources are under our control?***
  (e.g., web-based or print-based materials, advisor time and training, etc.)

Sample:

Advising activities and opportunities	**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Students are able to…**		
	SLO1: …select a major(s) that is consistent with personal, intellectual, and career interests.	SLO2:…register for courses consistent with knowledge of requirements, interests, and goals.	SLO3: appreciate breadth and depth of curriculum and incorporate a wide variety of courses and co-curricular activities into their academic planning.
1. New student orientation	•**Understand** career and academic pathways. (Knowledge)	•**Access** resources and advisors to select courses. (Knowledge)	•**Reach out** to student organizations (Disposition)
2. Workshop: "Selecting a Major"	•**Understand** majors and requirements. (Knowledge)		
3. Drop-in advising	•**Articulate** educational and career goals.	•**Prepare and follow-though** with an academic plan. (Knowledge + skill)	•**Express** the value of breadth and depth of learning and holistic experience at Cal. (Disposition)
4. Web: Webinar		•**Navigate** online registration system (Tele-BEARS). (Skill)	
5. Web: Advising resources		•**Understand** college and major requirements. (Knowledge)	•**Select** co-curricular opportunities that resonate with personal interest. (Knowledge)

⦿TIPS: Start simple. Focus on your primary activities and outcomes. Most advising units have important partnerships; focus on things that are under your direct control for now.

Resources:

University of Hawaii at Manoa Assessment Office. (2010). *2010 activity map: Career development and student employment*. Retrieved from http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/spprog/2010pdf/2010-CDSE.pdf

STEP 3: WORKSHEET

Linking Advising Objectives (Desired Outcomes) with Advising Activities

Instruction: List program-level learning and developmental outcomes and different types of advising activities/opportunities. Match the activity and outcomes, and clarify what each activity/opportunity is contributing to overall student learning and development.

⦿TIPS: Focus on advising activities that are key to your program. Are these activities producing what you want? You may notice some gaps or overlaps – places where you have an outcome but no clear activity, or places where you have an activity without clear outcomes, or places where you have multiple outcomes related to only one small activity. These areas are worth examination and may help guide further assessment efforts.

Advising activities and opportunities (e.g., orientation, events, peer advising, group advising, courses, workshops, webinar, website, electronic resources, print materials, handbooks, etc.)	**Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Students are able to…**				
	SLO1:	**SLO2:**	**SLO3:**	**SLO4:**	**SLO5:**

Reflection:

- ***Is your program trying to do too much?***
- ***Are there outcomes that are not addressed in your current advising activities?***

STEP 4: SITUATING (GETTING READY FOR ASSESSMENT)➔

Who should be engaged in assessment and what do you intend to improve/inform?

Key to useful and meaningful assessment is **involving people** who are going to use the information you gather and clarifying from the beginning how gathered information will be used. Unless an answer to the question, "Who intends to use what information to inform X" is clear from the get-go, there is a high likelihood of assessment efforts not bearing actionable results. So make sure you **identify (a) people who are likely to use the information, (b) their information needs, and (c) a prioritized plan to use the gathered information!**

1. Who should be involved?

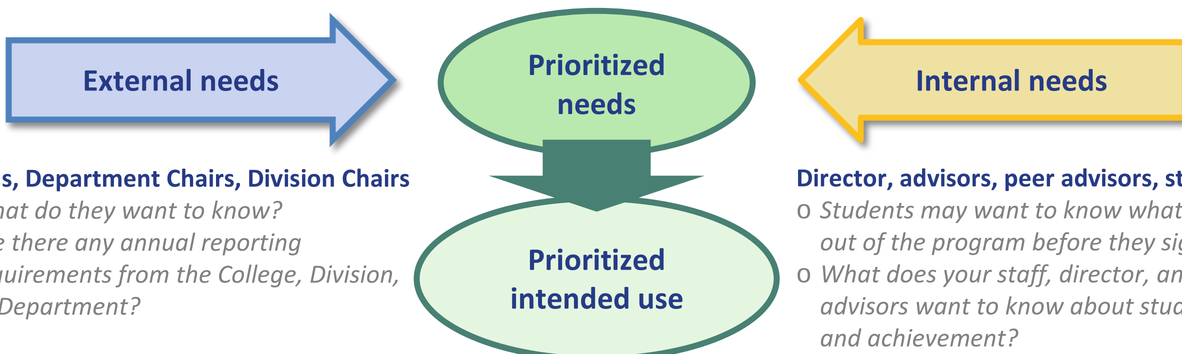
Form an assessment team or use an existing organizational structure to create space and time to discuss assessment plans and its progress. When forming an assessment team involve people who:

- intend to use assessment findings;
- are able to make or lead program changes;
- are able to commit their time and effort for an assessment project; and/or
- are able to bring in diverse perspectives on advising and student development.

⦿TIP: Consider high quality involvement and not high quantity (i.e., keep the size of the team manageable)!

2. Assessment needs and intended uses

Are there any particular external and internal needs for gathering information about student advising and/or student learning? Meaningful and feasible assessment planning should prioritize and balance internal and external demands and purposes for assessment.



Deans, Department Chairs, Division Chairs

- *What do they want to know?*
- *Are there any annual reporting requirements from the College, Division, or Department?*

Director, advisors, peer advisors, students

- *Students may want to know what they can get out of the program before they sign up.*
- *What does your staff, director, and peer advisors want to know about student progress and achievement?*
- *What questions do you have about the services and programs your unit delivers?*

> ➢ To ensure the feasibility of assessment activities, the assessment team needs to narrow down the assessment focus to the most important issues and interests.
>
> ➢ *What decisions or actions do you intend to inform on the basis of gathered information?*

⦿TIPS: Map all the information needs and prioritize the needs! Focus on (a) future decisions or (b) critical issues or concerns related to student advising.

Resources on prioritization techniques:

- Delphi technique: http://www.carolla.com/wp-delph.htm
- Nominal group technique: http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief7.pdf

STEP 4: WORKSHEET

1. **Who should be involved? Who will be using the findings?**

   ____

   (e.g., advisors, manager, faculty advisors, Department Chair, Dean, other advising units)

2. **Which learning outcome are you curious about among the outcomes you articulated in STEP 3? Which outcomes do students seems to be struggling with?**

   ____

   Choose one learning outcome.

   → Where/when should the learning occur for this outcome?

   ____

   (e.g., freshman orientation, transfer student orientation, workshop for seniors, career fair, etc.)

3. **External and internal assessment needs**
   Do you have any internal or external pressures and needs that affect the assessment process? List assessment needs and demands by stakeholder group. Then rank whose demands should be prioritized for the current assessment cycle.

	Who?	**Assessment needs or demands** What do they want to know?	**Priority ranking #**
Program-external	Advising Council		
	College Dean, Division Dean		
	Department chair, faculty		
	Other advising units		
Program-internal	Advisors		
	Manager/Director		
	Peer advisors		
	Students		

4. *For the prioritized assessment demands above,* ***how*** *will you use the assessment findings (i.e., intended use) and by when do you plan to use the findings?*

   Intended use: ____
   We conduct assessment In order to inform (decide on) X.

   When: ____
   We need to know the findings by X, in order to make decisions (or in order to report to the administration).

STEP 5: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT➔

Before jumping into choosing HOW we gather information/evidence (methods), carefully consider WHAT you want to know.

1. Link intended use to guiding questions

Clarify what we want to know (see #4 in Worksheet 4) before deciding how to gather information. Guiding questions for assessment can be about advising activities that affect the student learning and development process (process questions) as well as learning outcomes themselves (outcomes questions). Here are some sample questions.

In order to do X, we want to know A, B, C.

Process questions:

In order to improve our service to meet student needs for peer advising and to ensure students are gaining consistent information, we want to know…

Q1: What is the best way to expand the peer advising program? (open hours, format, number of qualified peer advisors)
Q2: What on-going training do peer advisors feel they need to communicate accurate and consistent information to students?

Outcomes questions: (Sample questions from Fall Program for Freshmen (FPF))

To demonstrate program value and performance to the directors, faculty, and staff at the end-of-year dinner and to communicate about the program impact to outside units, we want to know…

Q1: Are FPF students performing equally to or better than the fall-admitted students?
Q2: What is the added value of the FPF program?

☉TIPS: (a) Develop guiding/assessment questions that advisors want to answer and care about. (b) Advisors should be able to specify the relevance of an answer to future actions and decisions that need to be determined. (c) Answer(s) to the questions shouldn't be predetermined.

2. Information needs

For the guiding questions you identified, discuss what information is needed in order to answer the questions. Is one type of information enough to tell a better story about student learning?

"In order to answer A, B, C, we need to gather Y."

Let's take a look at some examples.

What is the best way to expand the operation of peer advising?
Usage traffic (daily, monthly), perceived effectiveness of peer advising formats

Are FPF students performing equally as or better than the fall-admitted students?
Grades in the courses after matriculation, GPA, time to degree, graduation rate (FPF vs. fall admit)

3. Information-gathering methods

There are various ways to gather information about students and advising. Common methods for capturing student opinions, performance, and perceived behavior and achievement are listed below.

Student opinions	Student performance	Perceived behavior & achievement
focus group	observation checklists	self-assessment
interview	performance rubrics	learning log
survey	behavior tracking	e-porfolio
	case study	

For more details on the variety of methods that are available, access the [methods table] and learn about the advantages and drawbacks of each information-gathering methods. The website also has a tip sheet for each method, if you would like to learn further about the caveats, process, and data analysis.

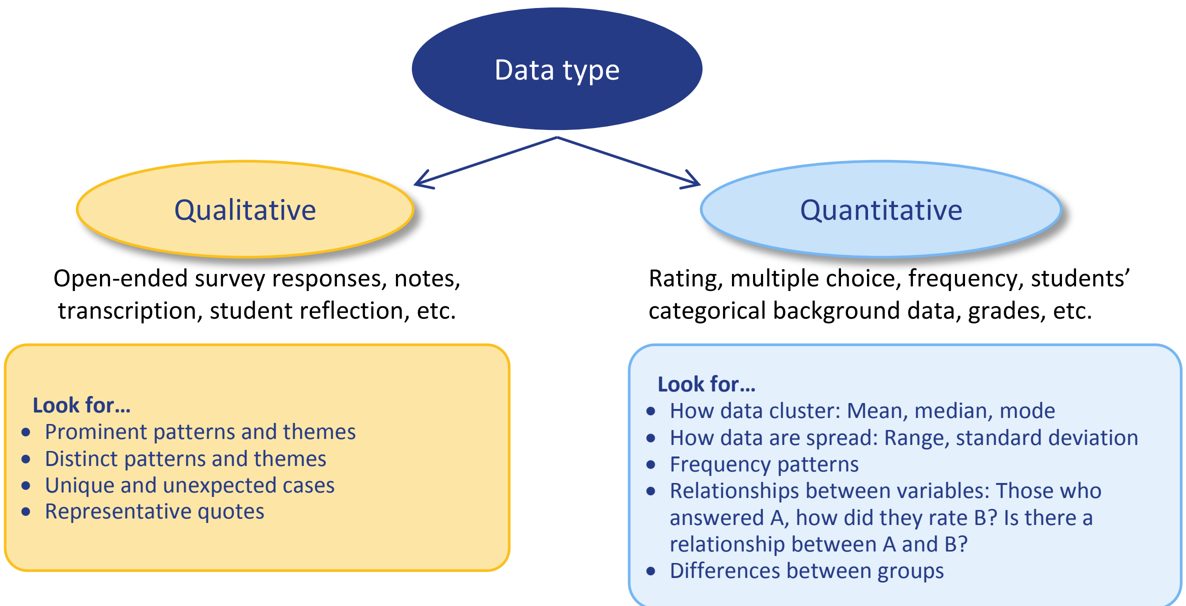
➔ **Choose an appropriate method(s) by considering the following:**

- time you need to develop a data-gathering instrument
- time required to analyze the data
- quality and type of information to understand the full story of what you are interested in

➔ **Caveat:** Each methodology provides a unique way to capture student learning and experience. Consider using **mixed- or multiple-methods**, if your time/resource allows.

4. Analysis and interpretation strategies

A number of different analytic strategies can be used to make sense of quantitative and qualitative data. Analysis and interpretation should be directed by the guiding questions you posed in the previous stage. The diagram below summarizes basic suggestions for how to analyze two types of data.



➔ Learn more about data analysis on our website. Each information-gathering method tip sheets contain data analysis strategies and caveats. Access the tip sheets [here].

5. Caveats:

(a) When do you need the information in order to make program decisions?
(b) What is the best way to gather accurate and useful information, given your time and resource constraints?
(c) Do we have existing information or instruments that are already in place?
(d) Who should be involved in data analysis and interpretation? How will accuracy of interpretation be checked?

Resources on assessment methods:

Bresciani, M. J., Moore Gardner, M., & Hickmott, J. (2009). *Demonstrating student success: A practical guide to outcomes-based assessment of learning and development in student affairs*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Bresciani, M. J., Zelna, C. L., & Anderson, J. A. (2004). *Assessing student learning and development: A handbook for practitioners*. Washington, D.C.: National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

Jacoby, M. (1991). Focus group research: A tool for the student affairs professional. *NASPA Journal, 28*, 195-201.

Schuh, J. H. & Associates (ed.). (2009). *Assessment methods for student affairs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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STEP 5: WORKSHEET

Take a look at a sample assessment design from the undergraduate student advising program at CED (click <u>here</u>) and design your own assessment plan.

1. Which outcome(s) are you curious about?

____

Name 1-2 student learning and developmental outcomes you would like to examine.

2. Where/when should the learning occur for the above outcome?

____

(e.g., freshman orientation, transfer student orientation, workshop for seniors, career fair, etc.)

3. Intended users and uses

(a) Who will be using the findings? ____

(e.g., staff advisors, peer advisors, manager, director, etc.)

(b) How will you use the assessment findings?

____

(e.g., staff advisors, peer advisors, manager, director, etc.)

(c) By when do you need to use the findings? ____________________________________

4. Guiding/assessment question(s): **What** do you want to know?

"I want to know (or further explore) if/how/what/why/when…"

____

5. Information/evidence/indicators: What information do you need in order to answer your question?

____

6. Data collection and analysis

(a) Where (from whom) and how can you get the information you need?

(b) What is the best-choice method?

[ ] survey (e.g., intake and exit survey)
[ ] student self-report
[ ] existing data
[ ] observation
[ ] focus group
[ ] interview (e.g., exit interview)
[ ] e-portfolio
[ ] case study
[ ] behavior tracking (e.g., registration)

Describe the method and your implementation plan:

(c) How are you going to analyze/interpret the information?

____

See analytic strategies for qualitative and quantitative data in the Table on page 10.

(d) Who should be involved and by when should the analysis and interpretation be done to inform decisions?

Who: ____

When: ____

STEP 6: UTILIZE AND IMPROVE PROGRAMS➔

The final phase in outcomes assessment is sharing findings and action planning. What is the best reporting format that will facilitate strategic planning and implementation?

1. Reporting

To ensure useful reporting that doesn't end up collecting dust, reporting content and format need to fit the audience and purpose. Reporting can take various formats, from a formal written report to informal interactive meetings. Reporting can also take place at the interim stage when preliminary data are gathered. Consider the following questions.

(a) Is this an interim report or an end-of-cycle report?
(b) **Who** do you need to communicate the findings to? What are their expectations?
(c) **What is the purpose** of reporting? Is it to **inform** the results, **discuss** the findings, or **decide** program actions?
(d) What is the **best format** that is **usable, accessible, and appropriate** for the intended audience?
(e) **When** do you need to report to the intended audience to inform action?
(f) Are there any **existing opportunities** to facilitate information dissemination, discussion, and decision-making?

Various Reporting Formats

Less interactive ⟷ **More interactive**

informal written report	newsletter	informal oral report	town hall meeting
executive summary	brochure	oral presentation	working session/meeting
full report	poster	web report, blog	workshop

⦿TIPS: When reporting the findings, check the following: (a) Are the data obtained sufficient to yield conclusions? If not, note the limitations. (b) Agree on key take-away findings and messages you want to communicate. (c) Be constructive when reporting negative and unexpected findings. (d) Review whether the recommendations are sufficiently supported by evidence.

2. Action/strategic planning

Among actions items that derived from recommendations, what can you do (or needs to be done) now? Prioritize the action plan based on urgency, importance, and feasibility. Clarify who needs to do what by when and what resources are needed. Here are some steps for action planning.

STEPS:

1. **Review the recommendations** and determine what needs to happen next.
2. Select a reasonable **target date and plan backwards**, considering likely time necessary for accomplishing discrete objectives.
3. Determine **a feasible and concrete timeline of events**. What additional resources are needed to take desired actions?
4. What are some of the **contextual constraints** in taking an action, and what strategies can you adopt to move forward?
5. Consider who is going to be involved and at what point in time for making program changes. Clarify responsibilities: **who needs to do what by when.**

Many advising programs at Cal share reports online. Take a look at different reporting formats other advising units are using.

- **Berkeley International Office**:
  - Strategic Plan 2011-2014 & 2012 Progress Report [ppt]
  - Undergraduate Needs Assessment Responses [pdf]
  - Graduate Needs Assessment Responses [pdf]
- **College of Environmental Design:**
  - Moving Forward: Planning for the future of undergraduate advising in the College of Environmental Design
- **Dean of Students:** Annual reports under DOS.
- **Graduate Division**: GLOW survey report

➔ Learn how assessment findings led to program change and improvement in other advising units on campus. Access the case summaries [here].

STEP 6: WORKSHEET

Take a look at a sample assessment design from the undergraduate student advising program at CED (p. 12) and design your own assessment plan.

1. Reporting

Who do you need to communicate the findings to? What is the purpose of reporting? What is the best format that is usable, accessible, and appropriate? Select the primary audiences and link the audience with reporting purpose and format.

Primary audience:

[X] staff advisors
[ ] peer advisors
[ ] faculty
[ ] students
[ ] prospective students
[ ] manager/director of the unit
[ ] Department
[ ] other advising unit
[ ] College/Division Dean
[ ] other:

Purpose:

[X] inform
[ ] discuss
[X] decide
[ ] other:

Format:

[ ] town hall meeting
[X] working session/meeting
[ ] workshop
[X] informal oral report
[ ] oral presentation
[ ] web communication, blog
[ ] newsletter
[ ] brochure
[ ] poster
[ ] informal written report
[ ] executive summary
[ ] full report
[ ] other:

Reporting opportunities:
For each audience, *by when do you need findings communicated?*

2. Action planning

Among actions items that derived from recommendations, what can you do now? What needs to be done now? Prioritize the action plan based on urgency, importance, and feasibility. Create a short-term and long-term action plan. Clarify who needs to do what by when and what resources are needed.

<u>Action #1</u> [priority ranking:]:

- **<u>Who</u> will follow-up with the actions?**
- **<u>How</u> will this person follow-up?**
- **<u>When</u> should it be implemented?**
- **<u>What</u> support is needed and what is available?**

<u>Action #2</u> [priority ranking:]:

- **<u>Who</u> will follow-up with the actions?**
- **<u>How</u> will this person follow-up?**
- **<u>When</u> should it be implemented?**
- **<u>What</u> support is needed and what is available?**

<u>Action #3</u> [priority ranking:]:

- **<u>Who</u> will follow-up with the actions?**
- **<u>How</u> will this person follow-up?**
- **<u>When</u> should it be implemented?**
- **<u>What</u> support is needed and what is available?**

<u>Action #4</u> [priority ranking:]:

- **<u>Who</u> will follow-up with the actions?**
- **<u>How</u> will this person follow-up?**
- **<u>When</u> should it be implemented?**
- **<u>What</u> support is needed and what is available?**