

Ocean County College, Toms River, NJ

STUDENTS
ALL EMPLOYEES
College Wide Advisement #5020

POLICY

The College will maintain a program for college-wide advisement to insure that students are provided with multiple services and tools to accomplish their academic and lifelong learning goals. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President of Student Affairs will oversee these services.

ADOPTED: July 27, 2009

PROCEDURE

College-Wide Advisement Program Policy/Goals/Services

Academic Advising at Ocean County College offers students multiple services and tools to accomplish their academic and lifelong learning goals. These services are an integral part of the College mission and span the Student Services and Academic Affairs Division.

1. New Student Orientation

The College requires first time, full-time students who have completed admissions procedures and taken the College's placement test (or have submitted the appropriate scores on the SATs or on HSPA) to attend a four-hour orientation session prior to starting classes. Orientation sessions are held on campus during various times throughout the year. Orientation is not mandatory for part-time students, but advisors encourage them to participate in the College's virtual orientation program.

2. Continuing-Student Academic Advising and Registration

Step One: Planning

Prior to their registration date, students assess their educational goals and determine what courses will support the accomplishment of these goals. Students should consider their academic program (major), their course transferability, personal issues such as work schedule or financial situation, and full- or part-time status. One of the best ways to begin is with Web Advisor, OCC's online service that provides a variety of functions. It is available to all current students. The class schedule on Web Advisor shows what courses are offered including days, times and location.

Step Two: Academic Advising

Academic advising is a collaborative process that consists of a meeting each semester with a faculty/department member who serves as a student's faculty advisor. The role of the faculty advisor is to assist advisees in exploring short and long-term academic goals and to clarify OCC educational requirements. The student's role is to make decisions concerning an educational plan, to understand OCC degree requirements, and to select suitable courses to achieve academic goals.

Step Three: Registration

Once students have determined what courses they want to take, they are ready to register on the date listed on a postcard from the Registrar, or any time after this date until classes begin. The Academic Calendar displays specific semester information and registration dates. The College staff recommends that students register as early as possible. Most classes will fill to capacity.

3. Career Counseling for Academic Planning and Transfer

Educational decisions are a critical part of a student's academic planning responsibility. An important function of the Advising Department is to provide students with accurate information about academic programs available at OCC. Students can comprehensively plan their degree program through the services offered in the Academic Advising Center as well as coordinating the OCC degree with program requirements at the transfer institution. Online programs, such as NJ Transfer, NJ Edge, Peterson's.com and many other tools, assist students with transfer needs and requirements. Ocean County College also offers a College Majors Interest Test (CoMIT) to help students identify college majors that relate to their interests.

4. Employment Services

For employers the College offers the Employer Partnership Program that provides employers with a range of services, including participation in job fairs, on-campus recruiting sessions and recognition as an "Employer Partner" on the Career Center's web page and other marketing materials.

For students and community members, we offer:

- Interviewing skills
- Job Fairs each semester
- Job workshops and seminars
- Job-line - listing of local open positions
- Monitor job openings for registered job seekers
- On-line resources
- Recruiters on campus - local employers recruiting for open positions
- Resume assistance and review

We offer additional employment opportunities for students needing work, both on and off campus. Useful online resources, such as NACE-link jobs, connect students to thousands of job opportunities at no cost.

5. Application Processes for Graduation and/or Transfer

The registrar processes all graduation applications and these must comply with all academic and procedural guidelines.

Successful transfer from Ocean County College requires careful planning. Through online services, the Academic Advising staff helps these students access information on two- and four-year colleges/universities. Advisors will help students plan their course of study to parallel the first two years of the four-year institution to which they plan to transfer. Students interested in transferring should meet with an advisor early in their enrollment at OCC. The online site, NJ Transfer, also assists students with the following transfer information:

- How the courses will satisfy four-year degree requirements
- How to contact a New Jersey college or university if you need information about admissions, transferring courses, or transfer recruitment events
- Where you can transfer your community college courses in New Jersey
- Which courses to select at a community college
- Which New Jersey four-year colleges offer equivalent courses
- Which professional fields are in high demand in the State, as well as other job opportunities

If students are transferring to another school, and need their transcripts to reflect their status as a graduate, this information will not automatically appear on a transcript until approximately one week after the graduation date.

6. Faculty Advising

One: Academic Planning

1. Each semester, students will be assigned to a faculty/department advisor.
2. Each semester, students are advised to: schedule an appointment with their faculty/department advisor, understand the degree program requirements within the college catalog, and consider their transfer options before meeting with the advisor. While meeting with the advisor is optional for most students, it is strongly encouraged.
3. Students are encouraged to use online resources including NJ Transfer, a web-based resource for obtaining information on New Jersey's four-year college transfer programs of study.
4. Students should use Web Advisor to conduct a degree audit by clicking "Program Evaluation" to determine progress in completing degree requirements.
5. The faculty/department advisor will answer questions and discuss career goals and transfer plans when meeting with the student.

Two: Student/Faculty Conferencing

Faculty members are an integral and valuable resource in Academic Advising. Research shows that students who have regular one-on-one meetings with faculty are more invested in course content and more connected to the faculty. Individual conferences related to academic progress, especially for those students in their first year at the college (at least once per semester) at or near the mid-semester point, are considered an essential component of student academic achievement and success. Additional meetings with students throughout the semester can enhance the formation of this academic relationship.

7. Special Needs Counseling/Workshops

One: A Comprehensive Support Center for College Students with Disabilities

The Center for Academic Services is an integral part of the Ocean County College community. The Center for Academic Services provides an array of services for students with disabilities. While the Center for Academic Services serves all students with disabilities, a special program within the Center for Academic Services, Project Academic Skills Support (P.A.S.S.), is specifically designed to assist college students who have learning disabilities.

Two: Educational Opportunity Fund

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) is a state-funded program offering academic, financial and counseling support services to students who meet the selective criteria set forth by the NJ Commission on Higher Education. The mission of the Ocean County College Educational Opportunity Fund Program is to provide access to higher education. Through access to higher education, a person's quality of life, economic promise, and academic achievement through advocacy and advisement, improves markedly.

Three: Veterans Affairs

Veterans, dependents of a deceased or disabled veteran, or active duty military members may be eligible to receive monthly educational assistance from the Veterans Administration while enrolled at OCC. The college makes numerous forms of assistance available to Veterans which include academic advising that directly relates to their veteran status.

Four: Services for Academically at Risk Students

The College initiates contact with an academically at-risk student, who is not making academic progress, by a letter sent to the student by the Vice President of Academic Affairs to notify the student of his/her academic status. This letter includes contact information for Counseling Services. For students who are on restricted status, the Academic Standards Committee student appeal process includes referral to Counseling Services as one possible condition for granting the appeal. The student must initiate contact. Counseling Services also conducts outreach to the Special Probation and Restricted status populations by e-mail, letter, and telephone calls.

Counseling Services include: Individual appointments, study-skills seminars, and career seminars.

During the semester, Counseling Services conducts interventions for students who are demonstrating at-risk behaviors:

1. *Early Warning Program.* Within the first five weeks of the semester, academic departments notify faculty members about the Early Warning Program. Faculty members then talk with students who demonstrate at-risk behaviors (e.g., absence, lateness, missing quizzes or tests, not completing assignments, not having a textbook, etc.). As necessary, faculty members notify Counseling Services about connecting with the student.
2. *Consultation services* with faculty are available throughout the semester for interventions with an at-risk student.

Another at-risk population is students with Financial Aid restrictions. The Financial Aid Office sends out warning letters with a referral to Counseling Services.

8. Personal Counseling

Counseling Services provides developmental, problem solving counseling that is designed to help the student be successful and productive. Counseling Services does not provide therapy for students; practitioners will recommend that a student seek outside services when the situation is severe, requires long term or intensive therapy, or is beyond the scope of brief, problem-solving counseling.

Counselors are available if faculty or staff members have questions about helping a distressed student or addressing a disruptive student's behavior. They can help faculty to assess the situation, explore referral options, determine the appropriateness of an intervention, and determine how faculty can be effective in a supportive role. There will be times when counselors suggest that faculty members speak to their Academic Dean to determine how the academic school handles student situations.

Adopted: July 28, 2009