Getting the Most out of Academic Advising

Your advisor is your partner in your success.

Earning a college education is an exciting and rewarding experience. It can also be confusing and overwhelming. **Ultimately, your success at SHIP is your responsibility.** But, getting your college degree is not a journey that you need to make alone. One of your most important resources for success at Shippensburg University is your academic advisor.

**Who will be my academic advisor?**

All students are assigned a faculty advisor. When you declare a major, you are assigned a faculty advisor within the academic department. Until you declare a major, you are assigned an advisor through the Office of Undeclared Students. If you declare or change majors, you will be assigned a new advisor.

If you do not know who your advisor is see the chair of your major academic department. If you have not declared a major, go to the Office of Undeclared Students in Horton Hall 112.

**Your advisor can assist you to:**

* become familiar with university policies and procedures
* develop strategies to reach your educational, professional, and personal goals
* declare a major
* design challenging course schedules
* stay on track to graduate
* clarify career possibilities
* pursue career enhancing internships
* connect with campus resources
* locate information about graduate school
* make important decisions that could save you time, effort, and money

Advising is much more than just talking about what courses to take. The advising process will empower you to realize your full potential by helping you establish and achieve important academic, career, and life goals.
How often should I see my advisor?

It all depends on two things:
- your needs as a student
- the advising plan you design with your advisor

There is a high correlation between students who are academically successful and those who work with their advisors.

You should meet with your advisor at least on the following occasions:
- at the beginning of each semester to set up your advising plan
- whenever you encounter any problems that affect your academic performance
- whenever you are thinking about dropping or adding a course
- when it is time to schedule classes for next semester

Advising is a process in which a relationship must be developed between you and your advisor so that you and your advisor can work collaboratively to develop meaningful educational plans that are compatible with your interests and abilities.

If there are barriers to you working effectively with your advisor, you should first talk over the situation with your advisor.

If the barriers cannot be resolved and you have declared a major, contact the chair of your major department to discuss the situation. If you are undeclared, contact the Associate Dean of the School of Academic Programs & Services.

To get the most out of advising, it is your responsibility to:

⇒ be proactive; take the initiative to seek the assistance, answers, and information you need
⇒ get to know your advisor’s name, office location, and office hours
⇒ meet with your advisor early in each semester to set up an advising plan
⇒ make appointments in advance and keep scheduled appointments
⇒ come to advising appointments prepared—with questions to be asked, issues to be discussed, and bring appropriate materials
⇒ maximize use of resources—Undergraduate Catalog, Student Handbook, Guidebook for Advising, departmental handbooks, web resources—to become fully aware of the policies, procedures, and rules of the institution
⇒ check the academic calendar for dates and deadlines throughout the semester

―When I first started at Shippensburg, I didn’t like meeting with my advisor. As I got further into my major program though, I realized that my advisor was a great resource I was not fully taking advantage of. Your advisor really is here to help you!‖

- Julie, Class of 2011,