



COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT POLICY ON STUDENT ADVISING

The Communication Department is committed to assisting students in making informed educational choices about your major and about appropriate ways to meet your personal academic and professional goals. Toward this end, the department offers every student a comprehensive program of academic advisement. Here is an overview of what the department offers you and other students in terms of advisement.

Purpose of Advisement

Academic advisement is meant to focus on your ongoing progress toward graduation. It also offers you a periodic point of contact so you may assess your academic progress and discuss any difficulties or concerns with a faculty member in their department.

Advisement is just that—advisory. It is not telling you what courses you must take, and advisers will not select your classes or arrange your schedule. Rather, advisement is an opportunity for you to reflect on your academic progress and to discuss choices and alternatives about courses for upcoming semesters. With input from advisers, you then will be able to make informed decisions about the courses you will take and how you will proceed toward graduation and beyond.

Devising your course schedule without consulting with your adviser is like self-medicating. It's never a good idea! On too many occasions, the department has seen students who have gotten into trouble and find that they have added one or two semesters to their time at Buffalo State. It may have been that they took courses out of sequence courses or courses that did not move them toward graduation or that they didn't know they could withdraw from a course they were failing. In each case, the problem was worsened because they tried to go it alone. Your adviser is familiar with graduation requirements and can help you explore options and make informed decisions about your education through the Communication Department.

Assignment of Adviser

The department assigns you a faculty adviser, generally someone teaching in your area of professional interest. You may initiate a change in advisers simply by asking another faculty member to serve in that capacity and then notifying the department office so records can be adjusted. FYI, the student record in Banner indicates your academic adviser.

Some students may also work with advisers in other departments or programs, such as EOP, minors, second majors, or varsity athletics. However, you must meet with their departmental adviser. For all academic purposes, we consider your department adviser as primary.

The department chair also is available to advise Communication majors, often serving as a second point of reference for students with difficult or confusing academic issues. Generally, the department protocol is that you should meet first with your assigned faculty adviser, who then would refer you to the chair if necessary.

Communication About Advisement

You can access information about advisement at the department's website. You also will receive e-mail and in-class notices of advisement/registration periods. However, you are responsible for being informed about the university's schedule and procedures for registration.

Nature of Advisement

You can ask to meet with your faculty adviser any time during the semester. Things get busy at mid-semester as registration nears, and advisers post sign-up sheets outside their offices prior to each semester's registration period. You can select the most convenient time for the meeting. You are expected to show up for advisement on time and prepared with a list of anticipated courses. Each faculty member has, on average, 60 student advisees. Thus it is important that you keep your scheduled appointment. If you don't, you may find that you cannot make another appointment until after your scheduled registration day.

As an alternative to one-on-one academic advisement, the Communication Department also offers group advisement to incoming transfer students, generally during the summer term prior to the fall semester. We also offer group advisement to freshmen as part of and as a follow-up to orientation.

Preparing for Advisement

Print your Degree Navigator “full report” student audit. Review the report, and note the categories of graduation requirements that you have completed and those that remain to be done. Review “graduation requirements” posted at the department website’s Quick Links. Note questions to ask your adviser. Be prepared to update your adviser on progress in your current courses. Your adviser will not select your scheduled; instead, you should bring to the advisement session a list of courses that you think you need. Your adviser then will react to your choices, suggest alternatives, and otherwise work from your lead.

Frequency of Advisement

The Communication Department offers advisement to every student every semester. We strongly encourage you to meet frequently and regularly with your academic adviser. At any time, you may ask to meet with their academic adviser; the best time for this in the weeks prior to the university’s registration period. Each faculty member schedules several hours of office time to be available to meet with you and other students. On average, faculty are available to students about nine hours a week – in person office hours, virtual hours for phone or e-mail, or special appointments.

We believe that advisement is a necessary interaction between faculty and students. Therefore the department has established the following times for required advisement meetings:

- Prior to making a change in your major within the department
- Prior to transferring into any Communication major or any interdisciplinary major or minor using Communication courses
- At the point of reaching 60 credit hours of completed or in-progress courses (generally the beginning of your junior year)
- At the point of reaching 90 credit hours of completed or in-progress courses (generally the beginning of your senior year)
- Every semester for students with a major GPA of less than 2.6
- Every semester for students on academic probation, with an overall GPA of less than 2.0

Additionally, the university requires on a random basis that some students need a PIN before registration. If you are informed that you need a PIN, you must meet with your department adviser.

Record-Keeping

The department maintains documentation about student advisement. You should leave each advisement meeting with a signed/dated copy of your Advisement Record, which lists the courses that you are being advised to take. The original is kept in your file in the department office. This record is important, because any request you may initiate for special consideration (such as support for a petition to waive a graduation requirement) requires documentation that you have been consistent in meeting with your adviser. Without this record, the department cannot support your petition request.

We consider advising you as one of our most important tasks. We have set high standards for you, and we want to help you meet those standards and move successfully toward graduation. Your adviser can help you understand the requirements, consider your options, and obtain the needed information so you can make good choices while you are studying in the Communication Department at Buffalo State.