



# The Advisory

## College of Charleston to Co-host Regional Academic Advising Conference

### CHARLESTON, S.C.--

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), co-hosted by the College of Charleston and the University of South Carolina is coming to Charleston. The Annual Mid-South Regional Conference will be held this February 23-25th at Charleston's Embassy Suites Hotel.

David Goss, the Director of the College's Center for Academic Advising, is the presiding conference co-chair, along with Micky Ward, Undergraduate Services Coordinator, Department of History, University of South Carolina.

Dr. Pamela Isacco Niesslein, Assoc. Dean to the College of Charleston's Office of Assessment and Planning and Chair of the Office of Educational Services is giving the keynote address, "To Touch a Heart, To Change a Life," discussing the importance the ways we as advisors connect with and empower students as they move through their academic careers.

The conference theme, "Make Advising History in Charleston" provides an opportunity to "look at where we've been, where we are, and where we're headed as academic advisors" says co-chair David Goss. Technology has significantly impacted the advising process and the way students are provided academic support. Academic advisors are called upon to serve an ever-evolving student population, with contin-

ual changes in the methodology of information access, interpretation and use.

The conference workshops will serve as forums to sound out issues such as the dynamics of advising large student populations; assessing the needs of the emerging adult learner population; the role early academic advising plays in student retention; and inexpensive, yet effective ways to connect to students using interactive learning and technology.

Among those attending the regional conference will be academic administrators, professional advisors, faculty advisors, peer advisors, and even students who are interested in Advising as a career. Faculty and students involved in advising will learn more about the Academic Advising profession and how to become more effective advisors with enhanced skills to reach and influence students.

The applied practice of sound academic advising raises the bar for the quality of students' experiences here at the college and increases student and faculty awareness of the needs of the student population and what it takes to successfully manage and complete matriculation at the College of Charleston.

This is in line with and supports the College's Fourth Century Initiative, in that the quality of student-faculty relationships will be enhanced by the faculty reaching out and providing real-

istic, beneficial and current information regarding the academic requirements of those they advise. Students will benefit from having established relationships with faculty in a mentor/advisor position that leads them to make better, more informed decisions about their goals and course work—which ultimately leads to an increase in student satisfaction and retention.

Sound advising skills serve the good of the faculty by empowering them to be effective listeners and leaders. Sound advising skills serve the good of the student population by providing them with thoughtful, informed guidance. And sound advising skills within the College populace serves the institution in that we are equipped to provide vital services and build meaningful relationships that reinforce the College's agenda for student-focused learning.

For registration and more information about the conference, please go online to <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/regions/region3/2003/home.htm>

For information about \*NACADA, please see the association's official website, <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu>

*\*NACADA is the national forum for academic and faculty advisors and advising administrators and serves as a clearing house for information on advising.*

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I have come to realize that many times the students I advise who say "What should I take" are just looking for a way to start a conversation on a higher plane, but lack the considerable maturity that the project takes. I've found that questions about simple curriculum issues really are questions that are trying to start a conversation about "Do I really belong here? Do I have what it takes?"

Dan Woolston, NACADA Academic Advising News

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# Advising Center Personnel Changes Reflect the College's Fourth Century Initiative Agenda

**Kristal Cooper** has been promoted to Advising Coordinator for the Center for Academic Advising. She has worked with the Center as an Administrative Assistant since September of 2002 and started her new position this January. She has a B.A. in English from Bluefield College in Bluefield, Virginia and has done post-graduate studies in Psychology, here at the College of Charleston. Kristal has exemplary administrative skills as she is experienced in hospitality management and publications production and editing.

**Myra Whittemore** has been appointed the Communication Coordinator of the Advising Center. An alumnus of the College of Charles-

ton, she has done post-graduate work at Clemson University in Professional Communication and is experienced in professional writing, document design and information management.

Both of these positions are new to the department as former positions have been redefined to meet the evolving needs of students and faculty as the College moves forward with the Fourth Century Initiative.

These changes are proactive toward the Fourth Century Initiative goals of "increasing the quality of student-faculty interaction and increasing student quality" and "keeping more of South Carolina's top students in state," as defined by President

Higdon when launching "The Fourth Century: A Quest for Excellence" program .

## HOW to CHOOSE a MAJOR

### Student Workshop

**February 11, Maybank 100**

**5:30 - 7:00 PM**

Or

**March 12, Education Center 118**

**3:00 - 4:30 PM**

Offered by

**Office of Career Services**

**Center for Academic Advising**

## You Ought to Know...

### How to calculate your Grade Point Average (GPA):

GPA is calculated by dividing total Quality Points by the total earned Semester Hours.

### Sample 4.0 Scale

**\*A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0**

<u>Course Grade</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
Course 1 <b>B</b>	3 credit hours X <b>B (3)</b>	9
Course 2 <b>C</b>	3 credit hours X <b>C (2)</b>	6
Course 3 <b>B</b>	4 credit hours X <b>B (3)</b>	12
Course 4 <b>A</b>	<u>2 credit hours X <b>A (4)</b></u>	<u>8</u>
	12 credit hours	35

35 Quality Points divided by 12 earned Hours = **2.92 GPA**

The same formula applies to calculating a cumulative GPA. The GPA is computed by dividing the total quality points a student has earned at the college with the total number of quality semester hours the student has carried.

Both the semester-end GPA and the cumulative GPA is calculated at the end of each semester.

*\* See the "Academic Policies" section of the Undergraduate Catalog for more details.*

## Important Dates Spring 2003

### February

19 - Last Day to withdraw from classes with a grade of "W"  
28 - Midterm Grades Due

### March

2- Spring Break Begins  
9- Classes Resume,  
Express II classes begin  
17- Cougar Trail Registration begins for Fall classes

### April

23 - Last Day of Classes  
24- Reading Day  
25 - Final Exams Begin  
30 - Reading Day

### May

3 - Final Exams End  
6 - Final Grades Due  
10 - Graduate Commencement  
11 - Undergraduate Commencement



# Warning Signs

The best time for a student to be advised is BEFORE he or she runs into significant academic difficulty which can be hard to repair. Being aware of the warning signs is key to helping the student avoid trouble.

If the student:

- is chronically absent from class
- has consistently low grades
- has a remarkable drop in academic performance
- seeks an inordinate amount of your time or assistance
- displays signs of stress such as a change in typical behavior or seems agitated or distracted,

then he or she needs to seek out advice

or counseling. At this point, the student may be too distracted or embarrassed to take the initiative in seeking help and would benefit from a faculty member's offering assistance—either by advising the student or by referring the student to the Advising Center.

Naturally, there are a variety of reasons that a student fails to meet academic standards. Among them are poor study habits, unrealistic course choices, lack of direction, too many work hours, personal problems, and lack of preparation.

Our goal is to lead students to help



themselves. By providing students the insight and resources for them to make informed decisions about their needs, study habits and course work, we can lead them to create their own academic successes. Those of us who are in the classroom have the immediate contact with students that allows us to watch for signs of student distress and to assess the need for student advising.

If you become concerned about a student for any reason, contact the **Center for Academic Advising** at (3-5981) or the **Counseling Center** at (3-5640).

## Advising Students with Poor Academic Performance

An unfortunate fact of academic life is that some students demonstrate poor academic performance. Advisors must often work with students who have received a warning, or are on probation, or are facing dismissal.

Some suggestions for working with students with substandard performance are as follows:

- Convey to students your concern about their academic careers and invite them to meet with you regularly.

- Work with students to determine the reason for the unsatisfactory grades and help them assess the changes to be made.
- Review students' prior academic record for patterns of performance. Is there one area of weakness or is the performance poor overall?
- Discuss the students' options in course repetition, choosing alternative course work, changing majors, or taking a leave of absence.

- Make students aware of the impact of past poor performance, and the consequences of continued poor performance.

- Refer students to on-campus resources such as:

**the Center for Student Learning, the Center for Disability Services, the Center for Student Wellness, Career Services or the Office of Undergraduate Studies.**

## Ask An Advisor

In this column, our General Education Advisors address commonly asked questions, to which the answers are not commonly understood. This issue's question is addressed to **Cristy Landis**.

### What happens to my GPA when I repeat a course?

If you choose to repeat a course, the course will be listed and the grade recorded twice on your transcript, once for each time the course is taken. The new grade does not replace the earlier attempt; both the course listings and the grades earned are a matter of record and will appear on your transcript.

If a student fails a course and then repeats it successfully, only the hours for the passed class will count toward graduation, but the failing grade and the attempted hours are never removed from the transcript.

Because one's GPA is based on the hours taken, and a student can only receive credit hours for successfully completed classes, the two combined grades will, technically, average out. Thus an F and a B make a C- average

for a single class' credit. But the grade is "diluted" by the hours of the failed attempt.

Check to see if the course is required for graduation; if not, you may actually choose to take a different course to meet your credit hours requirement and prevent the "watering-down" of the grade for the repeated course. Thereby giving an increased opportunity to raise your GPA.

## COLLEGE GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS\*

In order to graduate from the College of Charleston, you must complete 122 hours of study with a Grade Point Average of 2.0 or higher. General Degree Requirements are as follows:

English 101 & 102 (six hours)

MATH or LOGIC (six hours)

HIST 101 and 102 *or* 103 and 104 (six hours)

Foreign Language (proficiency at the 202 level via course work or an by approved exam)

Social Science (six hours)

Natural Science (eight hours, two course sequences of lectures and labs)

Humanities (twelve hours with no more than six from one discipline)\*\*

The course of study to complete degree requirements in four years is based upon a course load of fifteen or sixteen hours per semester. The number of hours per semester can be reduced if you take courses during the summer. A reduction in hours per semester may be prudent if you work twenty or more hours a week. Please refer to the Academic Policies section of the Undergraduate Catalog for details.

**\*Every major has course requirements determined by each respective department. Once you decide on a major, go to the main office of that department to declare your major and to be assigned an advisor for your course of study.**

**\*\*Check the CofC course catalog for the courses which satisfy the Humanities Requirement ([www.cofc.edu/about/ug2002-2003.pdf](http://www.cofc.edu/about/ug2002-2003.pdf))**

## Advising Center Personnel

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