

The document you are reading is an updated version of a motion and supporting information the Admissions, Retention, and Financial Aid Committee (ARFAC) presented to the Faculty Senate in April 2021 regarding a blended model of academic advising. The ARFAC spent significant time this fall updating this document to address the questions posed by faculty from across campus in the past year. Those questions centered on the whether a blended model of advising would meet the needs of our students, the roles of the faculty advisor versus the advising specialist, and financial implications. The ARFAC is asking the Faculty Senate to consider our revised motion.

***Information that directly addresses common questions/concerns raised by faculty members has been bolded throughout the document.**

Improving Retention at Drake University Through Advising

Executive Summary

In the Open Pathway for accreditation, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requires institutions to complete a Quality Initiative. The Quality Initiative must represent a major improvement effort and “is intended to allow institutions to take risks, aim high, and learn from only partial success or even failure.” The University has identified increased retention rates of students as the Quality Initiative for this accreditation cycle. Increased retention rates are important for multiple reasons. First, as the Provost has communicated, the retention of students is vital to fulfilling the promise we make during their recruitment and prevents the accumulation of unnecessary debt and extra years towards achieving a degree that can result from transferring. Second, President Martin has repeatedly communicated the importance of tuition generated revenue to help improve the University’s finances. While other sources of revenue help the University create its budget, tuition and room and board are the most significant contributors. As it takes significant time and resources to recruit new students, initiatives to increase the retention of matriculated students are more cost effective. Efforts to improve the retention rate of first-year students have been the primary focus of several recent initiatives (e.g., Crew Scholars Program) on campus. These programs have had success, students in the Crew Scholars program had a 15% greater retention rate (90% v. 75%) than a comparison group of fall 2020 first-year students, and as a result, the program is being expanded next year. While these programs have had success, they do not directly impact all students on campus. **As academic advising impacts all students on campus and has been shown to be a significant factor in student retention and success,¹⁻⁵** the University’s Quality Initiative on retention will include efforts to enhance advising on campus.

Academic advising occurs in, “situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a student about an academic, social, or personal matter. The nature of this direction might be to inform, suggest, counsel, coach, mentor, or teach.”⁶ Academic mentoring is focused on growth and accomplishment that includes assisting with professional and career development in relationships that are personal and reciprocal.⁷ **Research suggests that academic advising is a factor in student success¹⁻⁵ and is the most important factor of student satisfaction.⁶ Both of these factors play a significant role in student persistence and retention. To achieve this success, academic advising must cover basic needs (e.g., academic major requirements), advanced advising (e.g., accountability), and ultimate advising (e.g., mentoring and**

growth).⁸ One of the key factors in determining the advising model at an institution is its mission.⁹ As Drake's mission is to “provide and exceptional learning environment” that is “distinguished by collaborative learning between students, faculty, and staff,” our advising model should provide students with all of the resources they need to have “meaningful personal lives, professional accomplishments, and responsible global citizenship.” Finally, examining the retention rates of institutions that have implemented blended advising on campus, suggests Drake would see similar positive increases in retention that are being sought.

Most Colleges/Schools at Drake use a faculty advisor model. While there is not a required style of advising imposed on advisors, due to the large number of advisees, very often a transactional advising style is the default. Transactional advising focuses on the nuts and bolts of the student experience; focusing on process and procedures that enable a student to navigate a path successfully and efficiently from orientation to graduation, in other words, the basic needs. Along the way, there is some ability for the faculty advisor to serve as a mentor. Drake currently has many quality faculty advisors that develop strong relationships with students. However, qualitative and quantitative feedback from students suggests there is room for improvement.

In a blended model of advising, students are assigned two advisors: an advising specialist and a faculty advisor. Both positions have clear roles (see Figure 1) and are placed in a position to better support the student's growth and development. The distribution of advising roles provides the student with more support and sets the student up for greater success. Blended advising affords the faculty member to move beyond a transactional advising and become a mentor to the student. This allows the faculty member the opportunity to meet the full definition of academic mentoring and develop strong and meaningful relationships that helps the student reach their potential. **This allows all the needs of students outlined in the research to be met⁸ and allows for greater retention and success of students. It also provides more support to students to allow Drake to meet its mission by providing an exceptional learning environment and effective preparation for success in personal and professional endeavors.**

Figure 1. Distribution of Advising Duties in a Blended Model⁶



This model is not prescriptive in limiting the number and content of meetings faculty advisors have with their advisees. Faculty members and their advisees determine when each meeting should occur and what the topics of discussion will be. Additionally, there are no restrictions on what faculty advisors can or should discuss with advisees. As seen in Figure 1, there are suggested topics/areas of focus for faculty mentors. However, this advising model does not adversely impact the faculty advisor's ability to mentor a student.

It lets the faculty member do what they do best, use their professional expertise and experience to help a student meet their academic, professional, and personal goals.

The suggested distribution of duties in this model has the advising specialist focus on guiding students through the administrative requirements of academic majors and minors and AOI requirements, registration deadlines, and paperwork to earn their degrees while also monitoring their advisees progress and overall health and well-being. The advising specialist makes proper referrals to campus offices (e.g., counseling center or Access and Success Office) when additional assistance is needed. This does not mean that the advising specialist cannot also develop meaningful relationships with students and help them grow and achieve goals. Blended advising does not place limits on how either the faculty member or advising specialist interacts with students. **The, advising specialist helps support students and is responsible for those tasks that don't need a faculty member's expertise to get done (e.g., dropping classes or ensuring enough AOIs have been taken). This allows the faculty member time to be an even better advisor and mentor and should strengthen the faculty advisor-advisee relationship.**

Implementing a blended model of advising University-wide will positively impact the entire campus. However, this is not a one size fits all approach. **Each College/School will be able to establish the culture of advising they need to best support their students and programs, whether this is for undergraduate, graduate, or online programs. A total of 13 advising specialists (8 modified existing positions and 5 new positions) will be assigned to specific programs and colleges/schools. This will ensure that advising specialists are not trying to learn and juggle requirements for too many programs and will be able to provide quality advice to the students on the current requirements for a specific degree program.**

The University will benefit through increases in admission and retention rates. While admissions counselors promote the current faculty advising model to prospective students, they are excited by the opportunity to promote a blended model of advising. The increased network of academic support is attractive to students and parents. The enhanced support network for students will improve retention rates and provide a subsequent positive impact on persistence to graduation in support of the goals for graduation rates. The retention of students is vital to fulfilling our promises to the students during their recruitment. **Additionally, the potential financial benefits for Drake University from this plan are noteworthy, with a financial analysis suggesting an annual net gain of over \$500,000.** As with any new program, the change in advising models should be consistently assessed and a report can be provided to the Faculty Senate at regular intervals to ensure goals are being met.

Reviewing best practices in advising, campus-wide input, and past reports from Advising and Arts and Sciences Work Groups, the ARFAC is proposing the following motion:

The Faculty Senate endorses ARFAC's recommendation to implement a university-wide blended advising model in support of our retention efforts through the Quality Initiative being undertaken for HLC accreditation and affirms that faculty support will be essential to successful implementation of the model.

Models of Academic Advising

Academic advising occurs in, “situations in which an institutional representative gives insight or direction to a student about an academic, social, or personal matter. The nature of this direction might be to inform, suggest, counsel, coach, mentor, or teach.”⁶ Academic advising is the one common thread that all students should participate in during their time at a college or university. Co-curricular activities, major course requirements, and social activities will vary greatly between students. However, all students should and will need advice at some point during their careers on what class to take, what form to fill out to complete an academic process, or how to connect with a campus resource. Academic advising is one way in which the college or university fulfills its promise to prospective students to make sure that they efficiently and successfully earn a degree. The appropriate model of academic advising for a campus should align with its mission and goals.⁸⁻⁹

Research has consistently shown that academic advising has a significant impact on student persistence and success in college,¹⁻⁵ can increase a student’s loyalty to an institution,¹⁰ and is, “the single most powerful predictor of satisfaction with the campus environment for students at four-year schools.”² The positive impact of advising comes from the meaningful relationships that students can develop with their advisors throughout their academic career. Academic advising affords students the opportunity to make a connection on campus which will allow them to positively deal with stressors.¹¹ Furthermore, as students have so many choices in how they spend their time on campus, academic advising is the only certain activity on campus that all students must utilize and provides the opportunity for a meaningful relationship with an invested campus representative.¹³ Conversely, poor academic advising can result in student anxiety and frustration.¹² Thus, providing quality academic advising is essential for student persistence and retention.

Developmental Academic Advising

Developmental academic advising equally shares the process of advising between the advisor(s) and advisee. In developmental academic advising, a strong relationship between advisor and advisee is needed to allow for progress to be made towards academic, career, and personal goals.¹⁴ Meetings involve deeper conversations where the advisee is challenged to develop answers and strategies while the advisor serves as a resource for the student drawing upon their professional experience and their contemporary expertise. By the end of the relationship, the advisor-advisee relationship more closely resembles a mentor-mentee relationship. Academic mentoring is focused on growth and accomplishment that includes assisting with professional and career development in relationships that are personal and reciprocal.⁷ For faculty members, developmental advising and mentoring is more closely aligned with the area of teaching in their job description as the faculty advisor serves as a guide to the developing students as they transition from student to professional.

Blended Academic Advising

As indicated by surveys of Drake students, the faculty advising model on campus often lends itself to a transactional model of advising. A transactional model of advising focuses on a banking method of advising. With the student seeking information from their advisor and the places increased responsibilities on the advisor rather than the advisee. This often results in limited and shallow relationships between the advisor and advisee.¹⁵ Drake students have

reported that their conversations with their advisor most commonly (84% of the time) are focused on registration, review of curricular plans, course advice, and academic support.

In a blended model of advising, it is easier to implement a developmental style of advising. While a blended advising model might look slightly different on each campus, its foundation includes an advising specialist and faculty advisor assigned to each student (see Figure 1). The goal is to support the student throughout their journey by ensuring they can navigate the higher education environment by having access to multiple professionals to guide them along the way. This is accomplished by assigning a student two advisors, an advising specialist and a faculty advisor. The advising specialist ensures the student is aware of the essential information related to curricula and policies. The advising specialist also focuses on holistic needs and ensuring the advisee is connected to the correct resources. **Advising specialists have training in student development theories that faculty often do not receive in their training. This allows those students who do not feel comfortable having conversations with a faculty advisor regarding more personal or wellness issues to have another campus representative to engage with.** By having access to an advising specialist, an additional campus representative can have meaningful conversations with a student about their overall health and well-being and academic performance and connect them to the correct resource. Advising specialists are well prepared for their roles through their academic degree programs. The degree requirements for an advising specialist are a minimum of a bachelor's degree but typically require a master's degree in a related field. Examples of related fields include but are not limited to:

- Higher education
- College student personnel
- Higher education administration within student affairs
- Counseling
- Human services as psychology and social work
- A specific discipline related to their area of advising¹⁶

Figure 1. Distribution of Advising Duties in a Blended Model⁸



In the blended model of advising, the faculty advisor is focused on helping the student grow and reach their goals. The goal of developmental advising is to ensure the student not only graduates in a timely fashion but is also prepared to thrive in their post-graduate placements. Faculty advisors do this by focusing their advice on what are the appropriate elective courses a student should take to ensure success, helping a student develop understand the requirements and path necessary to gain employment or entry to a post-graduate degree program, and connect them to the right networks for placement in internships or post-graduate degree programs. Faculty

advisors receive their training for this role as they go through their own professional education and development, often learning adding additional skills and knowledge of this role in a practical setting. Additional professional growth can occur through continuing education opportunities offered by the campus or professional community.

A blended model of advising improves the academic experience for students by spreading the responsibilities between two individuals (see Figure 1). The faculty member serves as a mentor in this model of advising. They focus on ensuring the student is gaining the experience, knowledge, and skills to grow into a young professional and be successful in gaining employment or placement in another degree program after graduation. The advising specialist focuses on the “nuts and bolts” of the advising experience. It is more transactional in nature but allows the student to make progress purposefully and successfully towards their degree each semester while trying to limit the many pitfalls and problems that students encounter. **Faculty advisors are not pigeonholed into giving specific advice or being limited on how they guide students. This advising specialist should not interfere or negatively impact how often and what content faculty advisors discuss with students. Flexibility is present for faculty advisors and advising specialists to support students in the best way possible. Advice can be given by faculty to students on course registration if so desired. This often includes the appropriate elective courses that a student should take to better set themselves up for their career or post-graduate degree program.**

Benefits of a Blended Advising Model

The benefits from a blended model of advising impact the entire campus community (see Figure 2). Students will have a better experience while at Drake. From day 1, they should have a larger safety net to help support them as they traverse their path through higher education. In this model, required meetings with at least the Advising Specialist should be required and will ensure that at least one Drake representative has a strong relationship with each student. The advising

Figure 2 – Benefits of a Blended Advising Model

1. Provides more support to the student to ensure success
2. Reinforces to students’ role of faculty as mentors
3. Allows faculty members and advising specialists to use their strengths
4. Saves time for faculty by sharing advising responsibilities
5. More focused AOI advising for students by advising specialist
6. Students are more likely to persist at university
7. Increased retention rates would increase overall university revenue

specialist will be able to use their skill and make appropriate referrals to help support the students when additional assistance is needed. Students will also have a strong professional mentor in their faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will not have to meet with the advisee as regularly as the advising specialist, but will be able to personalize their meeting and times to fit the advisees’ needs and their own schedules/workloads. Overall, faculty members will see a lower advising workload once this plan is fully implemented. Faculty will still need to have an initial introductory meeting with advisees during the fall semester to build relationships.

However, after those initial meetings, faculty members will likely see fewer advising meetings. The University should see a higher rate of retention of students. Our peer institutions that have implemented a blended advising model regularly report higher retention rates than we experience at Drake (see Table 1). Additionally, Texas Wesleyan recently implemented a blended model of advising and saw an increased retention rate of 4% in the first year.¹⁰ Higher retention rates at the university will result in more stable projections of income and improve the University's finances.

Advising Models at Other Institutions

The blended model of advising is not new. Drake is an outlier in still using a faculty advising model. Examining advising on a national scale Nearly all our peer institutions (14/15; see Table 1) have implemented a blended advising model. It is important to note that these institutions have regularly had a higher rate of retention than was seen on our campus over the past 5 years. As advising has been shown to be the most significant factor influencing student satisfaction,² the advising that is occurring at our peer institutions must be meeting their students' expectations.

Table 1 – Retention Rates of Peer Institutions with Blended Advising

Institution Name	2015 cohort	2016 cohort	2017 cohort	2018 cohort	2019 cohort	5-Year Retention Avg
Drake University	88	87	89	84	86	86
Peer Institutions with Blended Advising Models						
Butler University	93	89	89	88	86	89
Creighton University	89	89	89	90	92	89.8
Elon University	91	89	90	91	90	90.2
Gonzaga University	92	94	94	94	92	93.2
Loyola University Chicago	82	83	85	85	85	84
Marquette University	89	89	87	90	88	88.6
Santa Clara University	96	94	95	94	93	94.4
Texas Christian University	91	91	92	91	92	91.4
University of St Thomas	88	88	86	87	87	87.2
University of Tulsa	91	88	88	87	84	87.6
<i>Average Hybrid Data</i>	90.2	89.4	89.5	89.7	88.9	89.54

*Numbers in red indicated years in which an institutions retention rate was below the overall Drake retention rate

Current Advising Models at Drake University

Since 2011, Drake has operated on the following advising principles:

Drake University strives to provide students with the opportunity to effectively assimilate the many aspects of their educational experiences. Quality advising is characterized by collaborative relationships among faculty, staff, and students that facilitate the development of meaningful personal lives and professional preparation. Advisors assist

students in planning their academic careers through activities such as course selection, internship opportunities, and career exploration.

Drake University defines quality advising as interactions that include:

- *Contextualizing the student's professional aspiration(s) within the broader knowledge base represented by the student's program of study. As appropriate, advisors are also knowledgeable about the outcomes of the undergraduate Drake Curriculum as well as the graduate and undergraduate programs in the advisor's College/School.*
- *Promoting discussion and ongoing reflection regarding student academic interests and professional aspirations. Advisors enable students to appreciate how their Drake degree facilitates a range of professional opportunities.*
- *Assisting the student in identifying opportunities for mentorship.*
- *Connecting students to the appropriate campus support systems, as needed, including academic support services, career counseling, international programs, campus counseling services, student disability services, etc.*
- *Challenging students to examine how the many facets of their life intersect (e.g., classroom experience, student life, pre-professional activity, athletics, research, community service).*
- *Encouraging students to take individual responsibility for their educational plan and to be literate in policies that govern their membership within the Drake Community (e.g., academic integrity, student conduct, athletic eligibility, etc.).*

[Faculty Advising Model on Campus](#)

To provide advising to students that meets these principles, most colleges/schools at Drake have implemented a faculty advisor model. The close relationship between faculty and students that develops through the advising relationship is one of the selling points to potential students during the admissions process. Most faculty members are strong advisors, and their students are benefiting from the relationships that they develop and the guidance that faculty are providing students.

However, there are some drawbacks to this model of advising. For those colleges/schools that have a faculty advisor model, the advising load can range from 10-90 students for a single advisor. The large number of advisees can limit the amount of time a faculty advisor can spend with their advisee and diminishes the ability for a faculty advisor to meet all the advising principles established for Drake University. This leaves students sometimes on their own in searching for which classes to take, navigating university systems on their own, and trying to get the correct paperwork turned in by the right date. Additionally, the range in the distribution of advisees between faculty members can cause significant variability in the advising experience between students across campus. The faculty advisor at Drake also has additional job strain. The

faculty member has to find time to hold meetings with their advisees to exchange information, must educate themselves and be a resource for helping students complete all degree requirements (including AOIs), be knowledgeable enough to guide students through the process of considering a change in major, be a resource and guide for students as they jump through the many hoops and deadlines that exist, identify students who need extra support and make the proper referral, while still completing the other requirements of a faculty role (e.g., teaching, scholarship, and service) in a manner that doesn't negatively impact promotion or tenure. While many faculty successfully serve as quality advisor for Drake students, many students are left dissatisfied with their overall advising experience when they are not able to get all their academic questions accurately or quickly answered by their faculty advisor.

Existing Models of Blended Advising at Drake

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC) and CPHS have implemented parts or the entirety of a blended advising model. The blended advising model in CPHS includes two advising specialists that provide students with guidance on course schedules, forms/paperwork, and degree plans with faculty advisors providing mentoring that focuses on choosing professional electives, career and graduate school advice, and professional growth and development. SJMC relies heavily on faculty advisors, although the Dean's Office provides student support as well. To help equip advisors, the SJMC developed a collection of advisor resources, including a list of key contacts for student support services on campus and throughout the community. SJMC also implemented electronic student records, so faculty were able to access the Success Plans completed by SJMC students facing probation. All faculty completed Starfish training, and they utilized the tool's reporting and appointment scheduling features. This coordination of information was critical to seamlessly serving students as a team. The SJMC faculty also implemented learning community initiatives to build connection to the "SJMC Family." Faculty social media features, in-person networking sessions and special events created meaningful connections.

Since the implementation of this model in CPHS, entering first-year (EFR) retention rates have improved, with the most recent retention rate (2021) being 88.3% (compared to a university average retention rate of 83.9%). In addition, student satisfaction rates with the quality of academic advising, as reported in the Drake Student Survey, have steadily improved. In 2020, 79% of CPHS respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of academic advising, compared to 67.8% in 2014. SJMC has also seen increases in advising satisfaction since changes have been made. Advising satisfaction has improved from 83.5% (2014) to 91% (2020).

Feedback on Advising at Drake

While research has shown that advising is an important factor in student persistence and retention, it is hard to tease this single factor out when examining student perceptions that have been gathered through satisfaction surveys. However, looking at the data, some important patterns stand out. In 2021 Multi-institutional Study of Leadership, most students at Drake (79%) indicated that a faculty member (not necessarily their advisor) served as a mentor. This percentage was higher than the national average and was also higher than the percent of parents/guardians that were identified as mentors by Drake students. This does not suggest that advising at Drake cannot be improved, instead it demonstrates the importance of a connection

between students and faculty at Drake. The connection between faculty and students, particularly in the form of mentorship, is retained or enhanced in a blended model of advising.

A shift to a blended model of advising will also ensure students are getting sufficient support in achieving academic goals. In 2017, only 73.8% of students reported that their academic advisor assisted them in the creation of a plan to achieve academic goals. In a blended model of advising, the advising specialist will be charged with helping all students develop these plans. Faculty advisors will also be able to assist in academic planning by providing their expertise and advice in suggesting appropriate elective courses in a degree plan to help best prepare them for careers and post-graduate education.

Qualitative feedback has also been received from Drake students regarding academic advising. Members of the Student Senate offered the following comments during a discussion this past December.

- Many students in a college/school talk to other students instead of advisor. This is viewed as quicker and more effective.
- Faculty advising doesn't always work for undecided. Professional advisors would be helpful given number of undecided students.
- Advising can be difficult for students with double major. It can be frustrating and hard for advisors to give consistent advice. Sometimes priorities one major over the other. One student with majors had not encounter similar issues but hears frustration with advising is common in the student population.
- There is a reported inconsistency in advising reported by students. The students wondered if faculty could opt out of this role if they weren't interested or if they could be more consistently evaluated in their advising performance.
- The students didn't always feel comfortable asking faculty for help with personal concerns. They wondered if an advising specialist would be easier to talk to.

The qualitative and quantitative data suggests that there are many positive relationships being developed between faculty and students. However, there is room for improvement. As each retained student adds \$18,000 in income to the annual budget, even a small increase in the number of retained students would have a significant impact. The blended advising model is meant to keep the strengths of the current faculty advising experience for students and add a second layer of advising support to ensure that students can not only persist but thrive during their time at Drake.

Implementation of Blended Advising at Drake

If Drake chooses to implement a blended model of advising campus wide, it must be effectively implemented. The process would be phased in over time, with fall 2022 entering first-year students assigned an advising specialist and faculty advisor upon their arrival to campus. The implementation of blended advising would leverage eight existing positions (3 in Arts & Sciences, 2 in SJMC, 2 in CPHS, and 2 in CBPA) to help make the change quicker and more

efficient. A few current staff positions across campus have similar responsibilities to that of an advising specialist will be reworked to ensure the job description is appropriate for what will be asked of them. Additionally, Drake would need to search for and hire two new advising specialist positions in the summer of 2022 to allow for their timely arrival and training. The advising specialists would be properly trained by existing staff and faculty to ensure that they were up to date on academic curricula that will be in their areas of advising and have meetings with faculty members to build familiarity and outline areas where they will complement each other in advising. A director of advising, housed in the Office of the Registrar, would also be hired during the initial implementation to support on-boarding and professional development for all advising specialists and would also create the appropriate systems and processes to support advising across campus. One additional advising specialist position would be hired in 2023, and two advising specialist positions in 2024, allowing full implementation of this advising plan by fall of 2025. Best practices in advisor to advisee ratio have been used to determine the appropriate number of advising specialists that will be needed at Drake.

To ensure success of this advising model, faculty would also have new training and advising resources available to them. Ideally, regular professional development sessions focused on advising would occur for faculty members to become stronger mentors and for continued coordination on best practices in advising between the faculty and advising specialists.

The implementation of a blended model of advising could also help with recruitment. Currently, the Admissions Team sells the faculty advisor and having a one-on-one relationship with them as a strength and benefit to potential students. However, the admissions team is more excited to sell a blended advising model to prospective students. They feel having a larger support structure in place for all students will be even more attractive to potential students. The faculty advisor, serving primarily as a mentor, will remain and this gives us an advantage over many of our competitors. This advantage comes from the data we have that shows our faculty are better mentors than their counterparts at other colleges and universities. The addition of a second advisor will be attractive to students and parents. The knowledge that Drake is assigning two individuals to each student to ensure that they are successful and maximize their investment in education should make parents and students confident in placing their deposits.

As with any new program at Drake, this program should be consistently reassessed to ensure goals and objectives are being met. As this program would be a part of the Quality Initiative for HLC accreditation, data will be routinely gathered and assessed to determine the success of the change in the advising model on campus and its impact on student satisfaction, retention rates, faculty satisfaction, and overall financial implications. These reports can be provided to the Faculty Senate or Admissions, Retention, and Financial Aid Committee as available and desired.

Advising for Undergraduate, Graduate, and Online Programs

Advising needs are different for undergraduate, graduate, and online programs. Additionally, some programs have unique requirements (e.g., requirements for educational endorsements for teachers) necessary for gaining employment after graduation. The implementation of blended advising on campus will need to be very intentional. The onboarding process for advising specialists in each school will also have to be appropriate to ensure they develop good relationships with faculty and are prepared to handle the

advising challenges that vary between undergraduate, graduate, and online students. Specifically looking at online programs, faculty advisors should still be assigned to students in online programs that are within their discipline in addition to having advising specialists that are very familiar with online programs, which often have very different advising questions.

Financial Implications

The Provost has put significant efforts and resources in the past few years into market salary adjustments. These efforts have been successful in helping provide additional compensation for many on campus. However, as merit raises have been infrequent during the same time frame, some frustrations have been expressed by faculty and staff at town hall meetings. As previously noted, one of the major concerns raised when the proposal was presented to stakeholders in the campus community was the potential costs.

A financial analysis of implementing a blended advising model on campus was developed. As noted in the financial analysis, a total of 5 new advising specialist positions and one director position will need to be created across campus over the next three academic years. This does not mean that only five advising specialists will be needed for implementation of this advising model. Leveraging some existing positions in colleges/schools where efforts are already being made to provide additional advising support through staff positions and adding an additional five positions will make it possible for appropriate ratios of advising specialists to students will be met. Advising specialists will be hired and embedded within each college and school and assigned appropriate majors for them to be responsible for advising. To ensure consistency across campus, all advising specialist positions will have a similar set of job descriptions when it comes to the advising specialist role.

The financial analysis was completed using an average increase of retention of 2.7% across campus. Our peer and aspirational institutions have demonstrated an average retention rate that is 3.5% higher than Drake has realized over the past 5 years while utilizing a blended model of advising. Additionally, a recent university that switched to a blended model of advising saw an increase in their retention rate of 4% in the first year.⁶ Thus, a projected average increase in retention rates of 2.7% for Drake University is achievable.

Overall, the financial analysis demonstrates that while there are some costs to implementing the blended model of advising in the form of salary, benefits, and operational costs, there is a substantial net gain to the University's bottom line if the proposed increase to the retention rate resulting from enhanced academic advising is realized. Once fully implemented, almost \$500,000 would be added to the University's budget on an annual basis. This amount would make it easier for the University to realize its financial goals, especially those related to faculty and staff salaries.

The Provost has indicated that she will find funding from multiple sources from across campus, just like we do when departments request brand new faculty lines, to help support the creation of any new advising specialist positions. This is no different than when a strong case is made for a new faculty line. The Provost continually reviews and prioritizes the budget to fund what faculty say they value and what will have the biggest impact. As

retention improves, the need for additional faculty lines is supported by increased enrollment. As there are benefits to the adoption of blended advising on retention and our overall budget, and it also meets the moral imperative that we have/owe to students to retain them once we recruit them to Drake, the Provost will analyze her budget and prioritize these positions for funding.

Motion for Consideration

The Admissions, Retention, and Financial Aid Faculty Senate Committee has utilized past reports from Advising and Arts and Sciences Work Groups, in addition to feedback from the Faculty Senate last year to propose the following motion:

The Faculty Senate endorses ARFAC's recommendation to implement a university-wide blended advising model in support of our retention efforts through the Quality Initiative being undertaken for HLC accreditation and affirms that faculty support will be essential to successful implementation of the model.

2020-21 and/or 2021-22 Admissions, Retention, & Financial Aid Committee Members

Kelly Bruhn, SJMC	Royce Fichtner, CBPA
Anne Kremer, Dean of Admission	Olga Lazareva, A & S
Lauren McCarthy, CAAD	Wade Leuwerke, SOE
Nathan Newman, CPHS	Jerry Parker, Dean of Students
Terrance Pendleton, A&S	Chris Porter, A&S
Sean Severe, CBPA	Priya Shenoy, Cowles Library
Melissa Sturm-Smith, Associate Provost	Ryan Zantingh, Director of Financial Aid

2020 Arts & Sciences Working Group

Eric Barnum, Music	Megan Brown, English
Adina Kilpatrick, Physics	Inbal Mazar, Spanish
Heidi Sleister, Biology	

2015 Advising TIG Membership

Chrystal Stanley, Academic Achievement/PCDS	Randy McMullin, Residence Life
Jennifer Tran-Johnson, A&S	Olivia O'Hea, Student
Frank Caligiuri, CPHS	Shannon Odenbach, Student Records
Nancy Geiger, Student Information Analyst	Jennifer Reitano, CBPA
Danette Kenne, CBPA	Rachelle Setsodi, Admissions
Wade Leuwerke, SOE	Lou Ann Simpson, CBPA
Carla McCrea, SJMC	Stephanie Sledge, Athletics
Joe Lenz, A&S	Krysta Thomason, Student
Kevin Maisto, Student	

References

1. Light, R. J. (2003). Enhancing students' college experience with specific advising suggestions. *Academic Advising Today*, 26(2).
2. Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J. L., Buckley, J. A., Bridges, B. K., & Hayek, J. C. (2006). *What matters to student success: A review of the literature* (Vol. 8). Washington, DC: National Postsecondary Education Cooperative.
3. Pascarella, E. & Terenzini, P. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
4. Reason, R. D., Terenzini, P. T., and Domingo, R. J. (2005, May). *First Things First: Developing Academic Competence in the First Year of College*. Paper presented at the annual meeting for the Association for Institutional Research, San Diego, CA.
5. Nutt, D., Calderon, D., & National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition. (2009). International Perspectives on the First-Year Experience in Higher Education. The First-Year Experience Monograph Series No. 52. In *National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*.
6. Kuhn, T. (2008). Historical foundations of academic advising. In Gordon, Habley, & Grites. *Academic Advising: A comprehensive campus process*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
7. Crisp, G., & Cruz, I. (2009). Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. *Research in higher education*, 50(6), 525-545.
8. Crocker, R. M., Kahla, M., & Allen, C. (2014). Fixing Advising: A Model for Faculty Advising. *Research in Higher Education Journal*, 26.
9. King, M. C. (1993). Academic Advising: Organizing and Delivering Services for Student Success. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, Number 82.
10. Hubbard, C. (2021). *Are These Stale Debates Stalling Advising Reform at Your School*. EAB.com <https://eab.com/insights/blogs/student-success/debates-stalling-advising-reform/>
11. Vianden, J., & Barlow, P. J. (2015). Strengthen the bond: Relationships between academic advising quality and undergraduate student loyalty. *The Journal of the National Academic Advising Association*, 35(2), 15-27.
12. Bigger, J. J. (2005). Improving the odds for freshman success. NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources. Retrieved November 1, 2005. Habley, W.R. (2009). Academic Advising as a Field of Inquiry. *NACADA Journal*, 29(2), 76-83.

13. Astin, A.W. & Astin, H.S. (2000). *Leadership reconsidered: Engaging higher education in social change*. *Kellogg Foundation*. Battle Creek, MI: The W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
<http://www.wkkf.org>.
14. Missouri State Policy Library. *Theories of Advising*. Missouri State University Webpage.
https://www.missouristate.edu/policy/Op3_26_4_AdvisingTheories.htm
15. Johnson, B. *Transactional vs. Transformational Advising*.
<https://media.suweb.site/2021/11/transactional-vs-transformational-advising.pdf?v=1637244273?v=1637241791>
16. McMahan, A.B. (2008). *How to Become and Academic Advisor*. NACADA.
<https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Become-an-Advisor.aspx>