

FACULTY HANDBOOK, SECTION 2

HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY ADVISERS

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HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY ADVISERS

A. THE FACULTY ADVISER

At The College of Wooster, all academic advising is done by members of the faculty, and the adviser-advisee relationship is among the most important relationships a student will form. The adviser assists the student in the construction of the academic program in a number of important ways: by providing information about requirements, policies, procedures, and educational options; by assisting students in planning a program that is consistent with their interests and abilities; and by helping students to integrate the resources of the College to meet their educational needs and aspirations. Although decisions about course selection and construction of their program are ultimately the responsibility of the student, the adviser provides an essential resource.

For entering students, the faculty adviser is also the student's instructor in First-Year Seminar in Critical Inquiry; as such, the adviser will have special insight into the student's background and interests, goals and needs, strengths and weaknesses. When the student declares a major, a new adviser is assigned who will help to introduce the student into the discipline as a professional, socialize the student into the culture of the department or program, mentor the student closely in the development of an appropriate academic program, and look for special opportunities that will help the student to grow both as a major in the discipline and as a liberally educated person. When the student undertakes the senior project in Independent Study, the adviser will work extremely closely with the student and mentor his or her final development as a student-scholar in the discipline and to prepare the student for graduation. The adviser will also counsel the student and offer assistance as he or she plans for life and a career after Wooster. Note that in many departments, however, the Independent Study adviser is different from the academic adviser.

In our relationships with our advisees, we serve as agents of the institution. In this capacity, we must fairly and accurately interpret the academic rules and expectations of the institution to the student. At the same time, we also serve as the student's advocate. In this capacity, we must be sensitive to each student's background, needs, talents, and personality and work with each student to identify the program of academic and co-curricular experiences that will be most beneficial. We must also use our experience and judgment to help the student through the bureaucratic and procedural complexities that are part of every academic institution.

B. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

It is essential that the faculty adviser become thoroughly familiar with the rules, policies, and curriculum of the institution as described in the *Catalogue*. Advisers are encouraged to study the *Catalogue* carefully, in particular the sections on Degree Requirements and Registration, and to regard the *Catalogue* as a first point of reference in their conversations with advisees. Note that students are bound by the *Catalogue* for the year in which they entered.

1. The adviser supervises the academic program of the advisee. The responsibilities of the adviser include the following:
 - a. assisting students in elucidating goals and values;
 - b. helping students to understand the nature and purpose of a liberal arts education;
 - c. providing information about requirements, policies, procedures, and educational options;
 - d. assisting their students in planning a program that is consistent with their interests and abilities;
 - e. helping students to integrate the resources of the College to meet their educational needs and aspirations;
 - f. increasing advisees' awareness of abilities and talents through the use of test results and other data (advisers can refer advisees to Career Planning for such tests);
 - g. assisting advisees to plan each semester's program of courses, using the Degree Audit found on ScotWeb;
 - h. directing students in academic difficulty to the appropriate campus resource;
 - i. being aware of each advisee's progress by sufficient contact and the keeping of accurate records; and
 - j. monitoring and evaluating one's own effectiveness as an adviser.
2. Advisers should be aware of the following limitations on their advising responsibilities.
 - a. An adviser should not make decisions for an advisee, but be a sympathetic listener, direct the student to appropriate resources, offer various alternatives for the student to consider, and recommend what in his or her judgment is the best decision or course of action. Students themselves, however, make final decisions about their education and their academic program, and the final responsibility for these decisions is theirs.
 - b. An adviser is not expected to have detailed information about all departments, programs, and requirements at the College. The adviser is expected to check the information provided to advisees for accuracy and, as necessary, to direct the student to other sources that can provide accurate information and definitive answers to specific questions. It is the

student's responsibility to take advantage of such counsel and these resources.

- c. An adviser should not betray a student's confidence. This should not preclude exchange of helpful information between adviser and instructor or the Deans. Such exchanges should always be conducted in a professional and discrete manner. Student information should only be shared as educationally appropriate *within* the College. Outside contacts, including contact with parents, are governed by FERPA regulations, though many students have release forms on record. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.
3. Advisers must approve registration for all courses for their advisees. The procedure for registration for courses is as follows:
 - a. Advisers should meet with all advisees during the times designated for advising conference prior to on-line registration.
 - b. Should a student fail to meet with the adviser prior to scheduling, the adviser should place a hold on the student's registration. Advisers must clear each advisee for registration.
 4. Advisers must approve all course changes for their advisees. The procedure for changing a course after the registration deadline is as follows:
 - a. The student must persuade the adviser that the course change is appropriate, and the adviser must agree that the reasons offered for changing the course(s) are valid.
 - b. The student is to complete the appropriate form (available at the Office of the Registrar).
 - c. Students who are receiving financial assistance and wish to drop below three courses should be advised to contact the Financial Aid Office to determine what implications there may be for financial aid. *This should be done prior to dropping the course.*
 - d. The adviser should sign the Registration Adjustment form only after the student has completed it thoroughly.
 - e. The student is to take the Registration Adjustment form to the instructor involved for his or her signature. If the change involves adding a course, the instructor of the second course has discretion as to whether the student may be admitted. The signature of the adviser does not guarantee admission to a course.

- f. The student is to take the completed Registration Adjustment form to the Registrar's Office. *The change is valid on the date the form is received in the Registrar's Office.*
5. Advisers may be consulted about the progress of students by the Deans, Registrar, members of the Admissions staff, and by the Committee on Academic Standards.
6. If, after consultation with one of the Deans, a student wishes to change advisers after the end of the first semester and before declaring a major, the student should use the Change of Adviser form (available in the Registrar's Office), get the signatures of the original adviser and the new adviser, and return the form to the Registrar's Office.

C. REFERRALS

Students frequently ask to whom they should turn for the solution of particular problems or for further information on specific programs. There also will be times when the adviser wishes to suggest that the student receives counsel and advice from someone else. The following list identifies personnel at the College to whom you may wish to send students. Note that there is some overlap in areas of interest and concern.

1. **Dean for Curriculum and Academic Engagement**

All matters relating to the academic procedures and policies of the College that cannot be resolved at the departmental level should be referred to the Office of the Dean for Curriculum and Academic Engagement.

2. **APEX (Advising, Planning, and Experiential Learning)**

APEX integrates and coordinates the resources and activities that help students develop a thoughtful educational plan and career path. APEX complements our one-on-one faculty advising system by providing a centralized location for programs and resources.

By combining the offices of Academic Advising, the Learning Center, the Registrar, Experiential Learning, Entrepreneurship, and Career Planning, APEX fosters the cultivation of self-reflective and intentional learning throughout a student's four years at Wooster and prepares them to be lifelong learners and responsible global citizens. One of the goals of APEX is to enable students to translate their liberal arts education at Wooster to life after college through experiential learning programs that foster the integration of theory and practice.

The faculty and staff in APEX sponsor workshops on topics such as developing time management and good study skills, and enhancing their educational experience through a variety of on- and off-campus programs. In addition, the faculty and staff are available for one-on-one consulting appointments.

- a. **Advising Center**

The Advising Center and the Associate Dean for Advising help students develop a comprehensive educational plan. The staff is available for

individual meetings and provides programming to meet the challenges of College Life.

b. Learning Center

The Director of the Learning Center can arrange for tutoring and referrals for students who have diagnosed learning differences to appropriate consultants. Students seeking professional testing for learning differences are referred to their personal physician for recommendations.

c. Registrar

Questions and concerns involving course schedules and the completion of requirements should be referred to this office. Forms for adding and dropping courses, S/NC grading status, tutorials, and the Teaching Apprenticeship are available here. The Registrar's Office also produces the *Course Schedule*.

d. Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning is grounded in the ideal of 'learning by doing.' Wooster provides an array of experiential learning opportunities that range from teaching apprenticeships and on-campus leadership roles to field experiences, off-campus study, global entrepreneurship, and off-campus internships. The Associate Dean for Experiential Learning assists students in finding and selecting appropriate programs.

e. Center for Entrepreneurship

The Center for Entrepreneurship cultivates students' innovative ideas and helps them integrate theory and practice. The Director of Entrepreneurship assists, educates, nurtures, and empowers students in their efforts to bring an idea into reality.

f. Career Planning

The faculty adviser plays a critical role in helping students explore and select career options consistent with their abilities and goals. This section outlines resources available to faculty advisers from Career Planning. Please encourage any student who desires help to make an appointment with us.

- Assessment Tools such as the Myers-Briggs, Self-Directed Search and Campbell Interest and Skill Survey help students gain a clearer focus on their interests, skills, and abilities in relation to many occupations.
- A Career Library filled with career exploration materials, graduate school program information, internships, and summer and fulltime job opportunities.
- The Scots Career Network offers current students access to over 800 alumni nationwide who serve as career mentors.

- Career Services Homepage will give students access to thousands of career-related links.
3. **Dean of Students, Senior Associate Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Multi-ethnic Affairs, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of International Student Affairs**
Student personnel deans are committed to the development of the student and may become involved in the counseling program at any level of concern. Students are welcome to consult with them.
 4. **Associate Dean of Students for Academic Success and Retention**
Advisers who are concerned that a student may be seeking to transfer or withdraw from the College should contact the Associate Dean of Students for Academic Success and Retention.
 5. **Financial Aid**
Inquiries related to financial aid should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid. Students needing employment on campus should be directed to the Student Employment Office. Students with work-study awards will receive priority in placement referrals if they report to the Student Employment Office prior to the seventh day of class in the Fall Semester.
 6. **Residence Life and Housing**
In general, questions concerning a student's housing or residential community issues should be directed to the Director of Residence Life and Housing.

Housing Placement: Each year, this office works to place students in residential environments that match closely with the students' needs and interests. Questions regarding room draw, first-year housing, program housing, or room changes should be directed to the Residence Life and Housing office.

Staffing: This office includes over 75 staff members, including professional staff (many of whom live on campus) and undergraduate Resident Assistants. Each year applications for RA positions are available for rising juniors and seniors who have proven themselves as student leaders and role models. Often, RA candidates seek out reference letters from faculty members. If you have questions pertaining to departmental staffing, please contact our Assistant Director for Staffing and Training.

7. **Faculty Advisers for Scholarships, Fellowships, and Special Programs**
Faculty members serve as advisers for a number of scholarships, fellowships, and programs. Consult the *Catalogue* and the Appendix of the *Handbook*.
8. **Off-Campus Studies Office**
This office provides information on all international and domestic off-campus study programs. The office is located in the Center for Diversity and Global

Engagement in Babcock Hall. For further information, contact the Director of Off-Campus Studies.

9. **Professional Counseling**

The College offers professional counseling services. Offices are located in the Longbrake Student Wellness Center. Students should call the Center to arrange for an appointment. In the event of an emergency, any of the counselors may be reached on a 24-hour basis through the nurses or the administrative coordinator at the Center. There is no fee charged for counseling provided to registered students. On occasion, students may wish to arrange for off-campus counseling. In such an event, referrals can be arranged through the Office of the Dean of Students. Off-campus counseling services are subject to standard fees assessed the general public.

10. **Medical Services**

The Longbrake Student Wellness Center includes outpatient clinic student rooms and 24-hour in-patient coverage. In addition, the College maintains a contractual arrangement for physician care and referrals with the Cleveland Clinic Wooster, a private multi-specialty group of physicians located several blocks from the campus. A registered nurse is always available at the Wellness Center when school is in session; a physician is available at scheduled times. Students who are unable to visit the Wellness Center during the regular hours, or who become ill or injured at a time when the physician is not at the Center, will be seen and treated by the nurse on duty and, as necessary, referred to the Cleveland Clinic Wooster. Students should note that visits to the Wooster Community Hospital emergency room, without referral from the Wellness Center, are not covered by the Student Health Plan.

11. **Clergy**

Clergy are available for consultation with students on personal and religious issues and questions, including the Campus Minister, the Minister of Westminster Presbyterian Church, the Rector of St. James Parish, the Newman Campus Minister, and the Rabbi of Knesseth Israel Temple.

Other clergy in the community are available to meet with students and are identified in the Church Directory distributed by the Office of Campus Ministries.