

Making the Most of Your Academic Advisor

Having a Counselor or an academic advisor is a great resource to help you during your time at Capital. You can make the most of your relationship with your advisor by considering a few tips:

Contact your advisor throughout the year, not just at course enrollment times. Let your advisor know if something particularly interesting or exciting has happened in your life, or if you have questions or concerns your advisor may be able to help with. Let your advisor know what you do outside of your classes -- advisors receive grade reports, but they have no way to learn about any other aspect of who you are unless you share that with them.

Ask your advisor what would be the best way to contact him or her. Many faculty check their e-mail several times a day; others prefer a phone call, an appointment, or for you to drop in.

For meetings, **ask your advisor if he or she designates certain office hours** each week for drop-in visits, uses an open-door policy, or prefers that you call ahead to make an appointment. Ask how far in advance you should call to set an appointment.

Always come prepared to meetings with your advisor. If the agenda includes discussing course enrollment for the next semester, bring a completed copy of your program curriculum requirements worksheet indicating which requirements you have already met, and bring a tentative plan for courses for the next semester. It's okay to include a list of several courses that you're thinking of selecting from; you and your advisor can pare down the list together.

The 2- or 4-year plan...with your advisor, **plan with the "whole picture" in mind** -- consider how courses and activities (e.g., internships, travel abroad) might line up over your entire time at CCC and / or transfer plans, not just one semester at a time. Some courses are offered in alternate semesters; some programs have specific application deadlines. Planning ahead, with your advisor, will help ensure you minimize any unforeseen problems you could encounter.

Submit forms and applications well ahead of the due date. Don't leave things until the last minute and risk losing out on great opportunities.

Use your advisor's knowledge about your professions linked to your major to help you think more about your career options. Don't limit your advising meetings to talking about course enrollment. Share your career aspirations with your advisor, and ask for suggestions. If you learn that your career interests are somewhat different from your advisor's, you can still remain with that advisor for general advice in the major. The Career Department (Room 209) can meet with students who are not sure about their career path for Career Counseling.

Your advisor is here to help -- take advantage of that resource!