



Student Retention Strategies at Midsize Public Universities

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MAJOR SECTIONS

- I. Project Objective and Methodology
- II. Increasing Utilization of Existing Retention Programs
- III. The Next Frontier: Micro-Demographic Programming and Self-Service Advising Intranets

THE ADVISORY BOARD COMPANY
WASHINGTON, D.C.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Lessons from Exemplars: Increasing Utilization of Existing Retention Programs

- Repertoire of retention programs at high performers is conceptually straightforward; no one has devised “magic bullet” practices, most employ essentially equivalent repertoires of advising, counseling and engagement programs
- Instead, exemplars are achieving high retention through policies designed to maximize utilization with these provenly effective services; the lesson is that waiting for students to “opt-in” following academic probation or social isolation will be too late for even best programming to reverse the slide towards attrition
- Exemplars are pursuing three generic approaches to drive utilization of retention services:
 - ***Compulsory Engagement with Advising Programs:*** Some schools are making participation in retention programs mandatory, requiring freshmen to complete academic advising before registering, enroll in “University 101” courses, or participate in regular counseling and skills training if they are identified as remedial.
 - ***Facilitating Access to Advising Services:*** A few schools are heavily investing in technology that allows advisors to identify at-risk students, route them to campus services appropriate for their needs, and even schedule and follow up with appointments on students’ behalf. This approach addresses the problem of students being unaware of full range of services available to them and unmotivated to make and keep appointments
 - ***Engaging Stakeholders from Outside the University:*** Educating parents about the range of campus advising services and using local Chamber of Commerce resources to introduce out-of-area students to town amenities have been cited as low-cost, high-yield levers to drive support service utilization and acclimation to college

The Next Frontier: Micro-Demographic Programming and Self-Service Advising Intranets

- The Council asked what innovations exemplars are considering in the coming years to improve on already-admirable retention performance. Two themes emerged:
 - ***Targeting Non-Intuitive At-Risk Populations:*** Systematic analysis of campus-specific attrition patterns to identify non-intuitive pockets of retention risk; these sub-segments are highly localized and ungeneralizable (e.g., children of migrant workers at one campus vs. “tourist freshman” at another)
 - ***Self-Service Advisory Portals:*** Student portal functionality combining a checklist of all required actions students must take to keep on track towards graduation, linking to year-specific counseling and advising services and advertisements for out-of-classroom activities correlated with engagement and retention. This intranet allows a students to self-diagnose where they may be at risk of falling behind their class, and come to advising resources with more sophisticated understanding of services.

I. PROJECT OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE

This project had a two-fold objective: First, identifying a set of institutional “comparables” to the member university across the United States, similar in size and demographics, but sustaining superior six-year graduation rates >55%. The Council took pains to select the most promising public-domain databases and apply reasoned assumptions to screen a peer group sufficiently refined to reflect the member university’s demographics and resources, but large enough to permit a qualitative benchmarking effort.

Second, interviewing these institutions to inventory the breadth of retention practices utilized and isolate those considered instrumental in achieving enviable retention performance.

METHODOLOGY FOR IDENTIFYING COMPARABLES

The basic data set for the comparables screening exercise was obtained from the National Center for Educational Statistics’ **Integrated Post-Secondary Education Database (IPEDS)**
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds>.

This database of 268 research institutions was screened for demographics similar to those at the member institution:

- **Tax Status:** Public control
- **Enrollment:** 10,000-20,000
- **Admissions Selectivity:**
 - ACT range 21-24 (equivalent to SAT range 1000-1100)
 - Admissions rate > 75%
- **Student Body Socioeconomics:** Pell Grant eligibility > 20%
(Pell Grant eligibility is used here as a proxy for share of low-income students)
- **Six-Year Graduation Rate:** >55%, stable or increasing (declines excluded)

PROFILED PEERS

The Council obtained interviews with 8 of the 20 universities at the top of the comparables screened. Several asked for their identities to be withheld, so we have disguised the identities of all participants.

Institution	Location	Interviewee Title
University A	West	Vice Provost
University B	Midwest	First-Year Advising Director
University C	West	First-Year Advising Director
University D	Midwest	Provost Vice President of Student Affairs
University E	West	Vice Chancellor
University F	Midwest	First-Year Advising Director
University G	Northeast	Vice Provost
University H	West	Vice President of Student Affairs

The 45-minute interviews focused on three questions:

- *What are the most effective practices you maintain to promote student retention and graduation?*
- *What at-risk student populations present the most promising opportunities for improving retention?*
- *What retention programs are you considering introducing in the next years?*

II. INCREASING UTILIZATION OF EXISTING RETENTION PROGRAMS

Retention programming at high-performing schools within the identified peer set is conceptually straightforward. Most employ an essentially equivalent repertoire of advising, counseling and engagement programs. Exemplars explain their high retention through policies designed to increase utilization of these provenly effective services. The implication is that waiting for students to “opt-in” or fall under academic probation will be too late for even best programming to reverse the slide towards attrition.

Practice	Univ A	Univ B	Univ C	Univ D	Univ E	Univ F	Univ G	Univ H
Compulsory Engagement with Advising Programs								
Mandatory Academic Advising for Freshmen Course Registration			Yes	Yes		Yes		
Compulsory “Introduction to University” Courses		Optional 30%	Optional 25%	Yes		Yes	Required 100%	
Mandatory Academic Skills Training for Provisional Admits	Yes				Yes	Yes		Yes
Facilitating Access to Advising Services								
Self-Service Online Transcript Auditing	Yes			Yes			Planned	
Survey Tools to Triage Attrition Risks for Incoming Students		Yes	Planned	Yes		Yes		Yes
Fast-Track Referrals to Advising		Yes						
Single Record of Student Advising History		Yes					Yes	
Engaging Stakeholders From Outside of the University								
Orientation Programming for Parents			Yes	Yes		Yes		
Local Community Block Parties			Yes					

COMPULSORY ENGAGEMENT WITH ADVISING PROGRAMS

Interviewees concur that the need for first-years to be exposed to certain advising and instruction is so critical for future success that these programs should be made mandatory for some or all incoming students. These programs have the common theme of introducing students to life at the university and equipping them with a baseline of academic preparation and skills.

1) Mandatory Academic Advising for Freshman Course Registration

Several interviewees use a combination of “carrots” and “sticks” to drive up freshman participation in academic advising and orientation:

Withholding Course Registration PINs Pending Advising Sessions

(University C, 60% six-year grad rate)

New students cannot register for classes until they receive their PIN to log into the online registration system. PINs are distributed during academic advising sessions, thus, student must meet with an advisor and discuss their planned course of study before being allowed to register.

On-the-Spot Course Registration During Advising Sessions

(University F, 55% six-year grad rate)

New students are inexperienced not only in selecting classes, but also in the technical process of navigating the online registration system. Advisors conclude their meetings with students at University F by logging into the course registration system and helping student select their classes on the spot, reducing confusion and the chance for errors.

“Early Bird” Academic Advising During Orientation

(University C and University F)

Universities C and F make academic advising sessions available to students during summer orientation, allowing students to fulfill their mandatory advising requirement and register for classes earlier than if they waited until fall arrival.

High Participation, with No Student Satisfaction Problems

Interviewees uniformly report that students have responded to mandated advising with high rates of orientation attendance, reduced anxiety surrounding the course registration process, and increased subsequent use of academic advising services.

Representative Results:

- **Availability of academic advising during summer orientation results in greater than 90% participation by incoming students.**

Universities C and F report that the ability to fulfill academic advising requirements and register for classes has resulted in very strong participation in summer orientation activities. University C reports 90% participation, and University F reports 96% participation. This represents nearly 2000 students at University F. This demand is met using the existing freshmen advising staff spread out over the course of June and July. The advising team will meet with 85 students per day, four days per week, for six weeks. The Advising Director reports that, “It is exhausting, but very exciting and energizing at the same time.”

- **Compulsory advising is viewed positively by families, who see it as “personalized attention”**

Far from reacting negatively to a forced advising session necessitating a summer visit to campus, advising directors report positive feedback from families. According to one advising director, “Families who also have children at other schools, including private schools, have said repeatedly how much more welcoming the registration experience is on our campus.”

2) Compulsory "Introduction to University" Courses

Many schools offer one-credit seminars where freshmen learn academic study skills, receive an introduction to university resources, and connect with peers. While these courses are thought to improve retention rates, most interviewees report sporadic student participation (less than 30% at two reporting universities) and low student engagement due to a perceived lack of challenge. Some institutions are seeking to enhance the impact of these courses by making the course offering more robust and requiring it of all first-year students.

- **Mandatory Freshmen Enrollment in "Introduction to University" Course**
(University G, 57% six-year grad rate)

For more than ten years, University G has required all freshmen to participate in the university introduction class. With more than 3000 students enrolled in 125 sections, this class has become a standard part of the campus experience, which the university executive interviewed for this study described as their "primary mechanism for addressing first-year retention."

Anatomy of Mandatory "Introduction to University" Courses

- One credit, half-semester weekly seminars of approximately 20 students each
- Taught by faculty member or university administrator
- Students are grouped by common curricular and co-curricular interests
 - Some sections organized by major and connected to department
 - In half the sections, participants enroll as a group in two other freshmen courses to create a learning community
 - Students in some sections associated with Engineering, Environmental Science and Honors program also share the same dorm
- Class topics prepare students for their academic and non-academic life at the university:
 - Explore plans for their college careers such as majors, internships or study abroad opportunities
 - Learn time management, analysis, and study skills
 - Adjust to college life through an introduction to residential life, library services, and personal health and safety
- All sections contain a service learning component

3) Mandatory Academic Skills Training for Provisional Admits

Several universities interviewed for this study have provisional admission programs as a part of their effort to fulfill their mandate of public access to the population of their state. Two interviewees recommend mandatory counseling and academic support required of participants in their respective provisional admission programs.

- **Group Tutoring and Counseling for Remedial Math and English Students**

(University A, 55% six-year grad rate)

University A determined that two-thirds of the attrition between freshman and sophomore years derived from students with remedial-level skills in Math or English. As a response, the university recruited 20 instructors from the Math and English departments to provide 150 freshmen identified as remedial via their application test scores with several hours of supplemental instruction each week. Students met in a group “homeroom” setting where they received academic and emotional support from instructors and peers. The executive interviewed for this study stressed the importance of hand-picking instructors who had a history of working well with developing students. Total incremental cost for this program was \$30,000, divided equally between professional development programming and small stipends for the instructors.

As a result of these efforts, the pass rate in the remedial college algebra class rose from 70% to 88%. Gains were also made in the pass rate for the remedial English courses. Participating students reported feeling an increased validation from positive interactions with peers and sympathetic instructors in their “homerooms”.

- **Multiple Academic Advising Meetings for Provisional Admits During First Semester**

(University F, 55% six-year grad rate)

Approximately 8% of University F’s freshman class is admitted provisionally (identified as students with an ACT score less than 21 and a high school GPA of 2.5). These students scored an average of 19 on the ACT (vs. an average ACT of 24 for non-provisional admits). Provisional admits are required to take a one-credit seminar on academic skills, and must meet with a staff member from the advising office twice during the semester. In addition to monitoring the student’s academic progress, the advisor helps the student articulate his or her goals for college and work towards meeting them. The program uses existing freshman advising resources, and necessitated the hiring of just one additional FTE.

Despite low ACT scores, provisional admits are retained to sophomore year at a rate of 89%. While this lags the overall freshman to sophomore persistence rate of 94%, the interviewee from University F reports that her institution “has been very pleased with the performance of the program.” Participating students have responded positively to the additional advising, finding comfort in being accountable to someone other than themselves.

FACILITATING ACCESS TO ADVISING SERVICES

An alternative to compulsory advising pursued at some schools is the use of technology to pre-screen and refer at-risk students. Interviewees report that the combination of technology and proactive advising practices increase the chance that students – including upperclassmen – are utilizing pro-retention campus services in a timely manner

1) Self-Service Online Transcript Auditing

University officials agree that students enrolled at large, complex universities face a challenge when trying to understand the progress they have made towards fulfilling graduation requirements, especially when changing majors or using credits transferred from another institution. Confusion and misunderstanding of requirements can delay graduation and put students at risk for attrition late in the collegiate careers.

Advances in registration software have made it possible for students to track their progress towards degree completion online. Several interviewees allow students to log into their school's online registration systems and perform transcript audits detailing unmet graduation requirements. Interviewees believe that these self-service audits decrease the chance that a student will approach graduation unaware of an unfulfilled requirement.

- **Proactive Alerts of Unfulfilled Graduation Requirements for Seniors**

(University A, 55% six-year grad rate)

Even universities offering self-service transcript audits rely on students to opt into the system and interpret results. University A has side-stepped this problem by proactively auditing students:

Step #1: Identify Students Nearing Graduation: Advisors focus their attention on students who have fulfilled at least 100 of the 120 required credits for graduation. Results are then triaged – students who show the most risk of failure to complete graduation requirements receive first priority. Advisors also focus on any students in their sixth year of college in an effort to increase the six-year graduation rate reported to the Federal Government.

Step #2: Students Notified of Unfulfilled Requirements and Offered Assistance: Advisors reach out to students via email and telephone calls to notify them of what they need to do to graduate via personalized conversations. Often the advisor needs to do little more than ensure that the student knows the right classes to take to fulfill major and general requirements. Other times the advisor needs to suggest more aggressive steps, such as applying for course substitutions.

Step #3: Advisors Work with Student and Registrar to Facilitate Graduation: In some cases, students may need to have an entry on their transcript clarified with the registrar or apply for a course substitution with the academic appeals committee. The academic advisor will act as an advocate for the student with these offices and help students make the necessary arrangements.

University A estimates that an additional 100 graduates are generated each year as a result of these audits, corresponding to a 2% gain in graduation rate.

Caveat: Transfer Credits Introduce Error and Increase Staff Workload: University A cautioned that poorly articulated transfer credits reduce the accuracy of the computerized transcript auditor. Academic advisors must double-check the computerized results before approaching students, adding extra work. Nevertheless, reported gains made in graduation rate justify this effort, with the interviewee at University A describing proactive transcript auditing as the “biggest bang for your buck” when trying to institute practices to raise graduation rates.

Next-Generation Functionality: Modeling Fastest Path to Graduation: University A is adding functionality to its auditing system that will allow students to determine if changing their intended degree will reduce the number of course they still require for graduation. The advising staff is beginning to investigate ways to use this functionality to produce a “fastest path to graduation” report that will stand alongside the already existing proactive degree audits

2) Risk-Scoring and Concierge Advising

Most universities fault their own retention efforts for being too reactive - offering support services to students only after they’ve landed in academic or social difficulty - and for being difficult to navigate across campus organizational silos.

University B has addressed both problems by developing a holistic advising system targeted at incoming freshmen during the first weeks on campus, combining online surveys where students “self-diagnose” retention risks followed up by proactive contact from an advisor who schedules appointments on the student’s behalf.

Step 1: High-Volume Online Surveys

All rising freshman are requested to take Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) survey. Participation is voluntary, but 90%+ compliance achieved by:

- Assigning CSI as homework in large freshman classes
- Encouraging parents to ask their students to take the survey
- Daily e-mail reminders during students’ second week in school
- Resident Advisors notified of students who haven’t completed survey for face-to-face requests

The Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory in Brief

<http://www.noellevitz.com>

Description: A multiple-choice survey of student background, education history, stance towards college academics, and receptivity to advising

Administration: During second week of college for most accurate results

Cost: \$8 per student for the online version

Time Requirement: 20 to 50 minutes

Step 2: Fast-Track Referrals

Using survey results, advisers proactively contact at-risk students for a counseling session, culminating in an appointment with the most appropriate service:

- Remedial Tutoring
- Career Counseling
- Mental Health Counseling
- Residential Life (for socially isolated students)

Step 3: Single Record of Student Counseling Activity

University B has created a common record system used by all advising units which allows counselors to log into a student file and view previous advising contacts from every campus service.

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS FROM OUTSIDE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Adding new campus advising resources and personnel incurs incremental cost to the university. Some universities are finding ways to positively impact student retention at minimal addition cost by partnering with parents and the local community.

1) Orientation Programming for Parents

Several interviews commented that the current generation of students wants their parents to take an active role in their college life. One advising director interviewed for this study remarked that:

“Parents have always wanted to be more involved with their students, but in the last five years we have noticed that students increasingly want that involvement as well. We used to have a focus on helping parents let go of their students. Now our focus is on partnering more with parents because the students don’t want them to let go.”

-First-Year Advising Director, University C

Accordingly, universities are beginning to leverage parents as an extension of their first-year advising staff. The proliferation of cell phones and other forms of electronic communication allows for parents and students to be in daily contact, even while the student is far away from home.

Several universities interviewed for this study have incorporated sessions for parents into freshmen orientation programs to ensure that parents receive the same introduction to university services and academic expectations as their children. This information is particularly important for the parents of first-generation college students, as these parents are the least likely to have pre-existing knowledge of available campus services. Anecdotally, these programs are proving popular: University C has seen nearly a 20% increase in parental attendance at orientation over the last two years.

2) Local Community Block Parties

(University C, 60% six-year grad rate)

Several interviewees believe freshmen retention risk is mitigated when students develop a connection with the local community outside of campus. This may be especially true for freshmen hailing from rural communities and communities more than 100 miles from the university.

University C has developed orientation programming designed to connect incoming students with the surrounding town, a small city several hours away from neighboring metropolitan areas. Leveraging positive town-gown relations, this university has worked with the chamber of commerce to organize a day where the city closes down streets, brings in bands, and introduces students to local businesses via a “block party” event. This event has proven popular with both new and upper-class students who return to campus early. The university represents 40% of the town population, thus the local community recognizes the value in engaging new students.

III. THE NEXT FRONTIER: MICRO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROGRAMMING AND SELF-SERVICE ADVISING INTRANETS

The Council concluded interviews asking retention exemplars “what’s next” – what new strategies and tactics they were considering implementing in the next three years to improve on their already admirable performance. Two themes emerged – micro-demographic segmentation to identify non-intuitive at-risk students and the creation of a self-service portal aggregating advising services and co-curricular activities.

Micro-Demographic Segmentation of At-Risk Students

An intermediate-term retention endeavor voiced by several exemplars is data analysis intended to spotlight non-intuitive, campus-specific pockets of high student attrition. By definition, these analyses are not generalizable – the lesson here is merely that “the last few points” of retention improvement may rely on addressing narrow student segments. Below is a list of some micro-demographic retention challenges reported by interviewees:

Examples of Micro-Demographic Retention Initiatives
<p>University C <i>Problem Group:</i> Freshmen from Spanish-speaking migrant worker families. Most are first-generation college attendees, and many families have higher-than-average skepticism about sending their children away to college. <i>Solution:</i> Focused orientation programming presented in Spanish.</p>
<p>University D <i>Problem Group:</i> Freshmen from more than 100 miles away feel lonely and homesick when their peers from nearby (the majority of the student body) go home for the weekend. <i>Solution:</i> Targeted programming in the dorms on the weekends and over breaks.</p>
<p>University E <i>Problem Group:</i> Freshmen enrollees come for the “nice weather” but have no intention to graduate, representing perhaps 10-20% of the freshman class. <i>Solution:</i> Pending</p>
<p>University G <i>Problem Group:</i> Out of state females, who represent 30% of the freshman class and suffer from attrition at a high rate. <i>Solution:</i> Strategic scholarships and tuition discounting</p>

Self-Service Advisory Portals

A theme from emerging from Council interviews is that advising services and engagement programs fail to achieve fullest retention impact due to a fragmented, siloed delivery structure. Students and advisors alike “don’t know what they don’t know” about the range of advising and counseling services and on-campus events.

To reduce the search costs of learning about campus services and ensure transparency between students and advisors about the requirements and learning opportunities during each college year, several interviewees expressed intentions to create online, self-service advising portals, consolidating links to the full range of advising services with email reminders for students to investigate or comply with “next steps” in graduation.

The Council is aware of only one school that has implemented such a portal – Stanford University, in August 2007. While Stanford has a student body and administrative resource base different from those of the schools interviewed for this project, we are including a profile of its advisory portal as a reference point for future planning and prioritization discussions, given the obvious value of aggregating such information online.

Key Functionality of Stanford’s Self-Service Portal – www.ual.stanford.edu

- Year-by-Year Grouping of Advising and Engagement Content: Specific advising content for freshman, sophomore, junior and senior students
 - *Deadlines Calendar*: For submitting paperwork, applying for majors, etc, with links to required forms
 - *Academic Opportunities*: Processes, pros and cons of honors programs, study abroad, internships, grants, etc.
 - *Student Involvement Opportunities*: Student government, leadership development, residence hall positions
- “Looking Ahead” Checklist for Rising Classes: Prompts for students to engage early in thinking through important decisions in the next year (eg, whether to live off-campus, how to begin career search)
- Advertising of Campus Tutorial Services: Writing center, tutoring centers, study groups, “Univ 101” courses
- Advising and Tutoring Scheduling: Students may schedule appointments through the portal, referencing a particular question for advance preparation by the advisor
- Parents Resource Center: A parents and family page provides link to content for parents

A Complement, Not a Substitute, for In-Person Advising

- Stanford emphasizes that the portal is not intended to replace in-person advising services, but to improve the quality and impact of in-person interactions by allowing students to ask more sophisticated questions on more important counseling matters (e.g., “What are the pros and cons of doing a double-major vs. study abroad in my junior year?”)

Self-Service Advising Portal Resource Requirements and Usage Data

Launched in August 2007, the student portal has not been online long enough for Stanford to assess impact on its key business-case metrics: utilization of and satisfaction with advising services, participation in academic and campus programs, and graduation rates. Likewise, steady-state site traffic and IT support requirements are difficult to estimate. Stanford’s portal administrator is able to offer the following approximations based on one semester’s use (Stanford enrolls ~ 6,500 undergraduates):

Stanford Student Portal Statistics	
Resource and Utilization Metrics	Early Estimate
<i>Unique Visits per Day</i>	2,000-2,500
<i>Most Popular Page</i>	Freshman “Must-Do” page
<i>Frequency of Content Update</i>	Events updated weekly for each class
<i>Project Manager</i>	0.2 FTE
<i>IT Support Staff</i>	0.4 FTE
<i>Content Publishers</i>	20 staff distributed throughout university trained to add content from their area directly to site; combined time ~ 0.5-1 FTE per year
<i>One-Time Site Design Cost</i>	~\$150,000 (funded through office of undergraduate education)

SELECTED SCREEN SHOTS FROM STANFORD'S SELF-SERVICE ADVISING PORTAL

Freshmen "Must-Do" Page

<http://ual.stanford.edu/NBY/Freshman.html>

UAL - Welcome to the Freshman Page - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Academic Planning
Tutoring & Academic Support
Options & Opportunities
Rights & Responsibilities
Deadlines & Events
Printables
For Faculty & Staff
Ask Us

Hello, Class of 2011.
Bookmark this page. Use it as a navigational tool as you familiarize yourself with the nuts and bolts of your freshman year as well as the host of opportunities available to you.

11

Get Involved
Frosh Specific Dates and Events
Thinking Ahead
Questions to ask yourself
Freshman Dean's Office
For the Class of 2012

Freshman Links:

- IHUM
- SLE
- Writing and Rhetoric Requirement (PWR)
- Help with Writing
- Tutoring & Study Skills
- Scrapbook
- Acronym Soup

Taking Care of Business

- Registrar
- Axxess
- Stanford Bulletin
- Financial Aid
- Prospective Students
- For Parents and Family

:: The Freshman "Must Do" list

Take advantage of the resources and opportunities available to you. Know what's required, what's optional, and what you definitely don't want to miss.

- Learn the [university requirements](#) for graduation
- Read the printed Quarterly Time Schedule from cover to cover
- Explore the search tools for course planning on [Axxess](#)
- Take a [Freshman Seminar](#)
- Get good advice about course planning and your academic path by making an appointment with your advisor, [Academic Director](#), or [UAR liaison](#)
- Go to a professor's office hours
- Know important prerequisites and course sequences -- [meet with a professional advisor from the VPUE](#)
- Visit the [Hume Writing Center](#)
- Visit a [Community Center](#)
- Check out the [Tutoring and Academic Resources](#)
- Become familiar with Stanford libraries; take a tour
- [Get to Know Faculty & Staff](#); take the initiative in developing relationships with your instructors, Resident Fellows, advisors, and student service representatives
- Discover good study spaces around campus
- Think about [possible majors](#)
- Visit academic departments and programs for in-depth information; speak with the student services representative whose role is to introduce you to the department offerings
- Have fun!

SELECTED SCREEN SHOTS FROM STANFORD'S SELF-SERVICE ADVISING PORTAL – CONTINUED

Sophomore “Choosing a Major” Page

http://ual.stanford.edu/AP/choosing_majors/ChoosingMajors.html

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "UAL - Choosing Majors - Mozilla Firefox". The page is for Stanford University's Undergraduate Academic Life portal, specifically for Sophomores. The main heading is "Choosing Majors".

Undergraduate Academic Life
Stanford University
 Freshman | Sophomore | Junior | Senior | Transfers | **Summer**

Home
 Academic Planning
 Advising
 Academic Policies
 University Requirements
 Choosing Courses
 Choosing Majors
 Choosing Minors
 Choosing to Co-term
 Planning Research
 Planning for Overseas Study
 Planning for Honors
 Working with Faculty
 Planning for Graduate & Professional School After Stanford
 Tutoring & Academic Support
 Options & Opportunities
 Rights & Responsibilities
 Deadlines & Events
 Printables
 For Faculty & Staff
 Ask Us

Choosing Majors

The choice of a major is one of the most important decisions you will make at Stanford. It can also be among the most difficult. Above all else, your major should excite you intellectually; it should focus and deepen your most important academic interests.

You will likely need to undertake significant exploration and consultation to focus your interests and choose your major. Stanford offers more than 80 majors and many more subfields, concentrations and options within these. Consult frequently with faculty, department or program advisors, and student services staff to assess how various academic fields fit with your academic interests, strengths and goals.

On This Page:

- Advice for Exploring and Choosing Majors
- Majors and Careers
- Majors and Preparation for Graduate or Professional School
- Breadth through Double Majors, Minors, Honors, Individually Designed Majors

Advising Appointments

Deadlines & Events

Majors Links:

- Major Requirements
- Double Majors & Secondary Majors
- Arts Majors, Minors, Honors and Coterm
- Compare Majors Options

Related Links:

- The Office of the Registrar, "Declaring Undergraduate Majors / Honors"
- List of Department Advisors(PDF)
- Planning for Graduate and Professional School
- Choosing Courses

:: Advice for Exploring and Choosing Majors
 Discuss your plans and questions with your advisors.

- Speak early and often with your academic advisor or a UAR advisor about your evolving interests and thoughts on majors. Advisors have deep knowledge of Stanford curriculum and study programs that can lend new perspective to your decisions and, sometimes, lead you in new directions. They can also make valuable referrals to other faculty who share your interests.

Explore prospective departments / programs through introductory courses.

- Introductory Seminars, in particular, provide a good opportunity for you to assess the field of study within a small, seminar format. Most departments also offer larger introductory courses intended to provide

"Your major offers an opportunity to develop your intellectual skill, to show your capability in grasping a subject from the fundamentals through advanced

SELECTED SCREEN SHOTS FROM STANFORD'S SELF-SERVICE ADVISING PORTAL – CONTINUED

Junior “Must-Do” Page

<http://ual.stanford.edu/NBY/Junior.html>

UAL - Welcome to the Junior Page - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Undergraduate Academic Life Search Site

Stanford University Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Transfers Summer

Home

Academic Planning

Tutoring & Academic Support

Options & Opportunities

Rights & Responsibilities

Deadlines & Events

Printables

For Faculty & Staff

Ask Us

Welcome to the Junior Page

Hello Class of 2009. Bookmark this page and use it as a navigational tool for this site and for finding resources and opportunities for Juniors.

On This Page:

- The Junior “Must Do” list
- Resources and Opportunities
- Junior Specific Dates and Events
- Thinking Ahead

Junior Links:

- Writing in the Major
- Help with Writing
- Scrapbook
- Acronym Soup

Taking Care of Business

- Registrar
- Axess
- Stanford Bulletin
- Financial Aid

For Transfer Students (Incoming Juniors)

- For [Transfer Students](#) (Incoming Juniors)

The Junior “Must Do” list

- [Declare your major](#) if you haven't already
- Take your [WIM course](#)
- [Develop a strong relationship with your Major Advisor](#)
- Plan for [Overseas and Off-Campus Studies](#)
- Consider pursuing [Honors](#)
- Take advantage of [tutoring](#) in Junior-level courses
- Check degree progress on [Axess](#)

Resources and Opportunities

Your Major Department is your new academic and intellectual home. Cultivate relationships with people and resources while staying in touch with faculty and advisors from prior years. Stay connected with your department's student affairs administrators when you go overseas so that you don't miss opportunities and deadlines that are managed through the home campus.

Contact other academic resource offices early and often to allow ample time for planning and applications:

Writing in the Major
Help with Writing
Scrapbook
Acronym Soup

Registrar
Axess
Stanford Bulletin
Financial Aid

09

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SELECTED SCREEN SHOTS FROM STANFORD'S SELF-SERVICE ADVISING PORTAL – CONTINUED

Senior “After Stanford” Page

http://ual.stanford.edu/AP/after_su/AfterStanford.html

UAL - After Stanford - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Undergraduate Academic Life Search Site

Stanford University Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Transfers Summer

Home

- Academic Planning
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 - Academic Policies
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 - Planning for Graduate & Professional School
 - After Stanford
- Tutoring & Academic Support
- Options & Opportunities
- Rights & Responsibilities
- Deadlines & Events
- Printables
- For Faculty & Staff
- Ask Us

After Stanford

The Undergraduate Academic Life site contains a variety of resources for students planning their future after Stanford. Links to those pages follow. Also included are links to additional resources the University offers to help you plan your life after Stanford. Students will also find resources for planning for life after graduation within their major department and schools.

On This Page:

- After Stanford Resources
- Career Development Center (CDC)
- Stanford Alumni
- Haas Center for Public Service

▶ Advising Appointments
 ▶ Deadlines & Events

Related Links:

- Stanford Magazine
- After Stanford: Famous Alumni

After Stanford Resources

- Planning for Graduate and Professional School
- Scholarships and Fellowships

Career Development Center (CDC)

The Stanford Career Development Center provides innumerable resources for University students or graduates, including job counseling and a letter-of-recommendation service. It also includes "Life After Stanford" — a website containing helpful printables for students looking for a job, starting a career, or beginning graduate or professional school.

Stanford Alumni

The Stanford Alumni Association provides networking and social events for undergraduates. It fosters student / alumni connections that can help you make the transition to life after Stanford. The association provides many additional benefits. These include career services, connections to Stanford clubs across the nation, discussion groups, reunion events and *Stanford Magazine*, a publication for Stanford graduates.

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