

Western Illinois University
COUNCIL OF ACADEMIC ADVISORS BY-LAWS
REVISED AND APPROVED JULY 17, 2014

ARTICLE I
NAME AND ACRONYM

The name of this organization shall be the Council of Academic Advisors, herein referred to as “COAA.”

ARTICLE II
AUTHORITY

COAA was established in 1987 and is composed of representatives from academic advising units at Western as well as other key areas on campus that support advising activities.

ARTICLE III
MISSION, PURPOSE, AND GOALS

Section 1
Mission

COAA strives to provide a forum for collaboration between advising representatives from all advising units and other areas on campus to discuss relevant issues that affect students and advisors, improve advising services for all students and ensure consistency in advising and interpreting University policy.

Section 2
Purpose

The purpose of COAA is to promote the quality of academic advising at Western Illinois University. It is dedicated to the support and professional growth of advisors. COAA serves its constituency concerned with the intellectual, developmental, personal and vocational needs of students. It is the forum for discussion, debate, and exchange of ideas regarding academic advising on the Western campus. COAA is the official representative and advocate of academic advising and academic advisors on the Western Illinois University campus.

Section 3
Goals

COAA goals include the following:

- Improve students' experience and educational success, thereby improving Western's retention and graduation rates;
- Clarify University and campus policies in order to promote greater consistency in advising with respect to interpreting policy for students;
- Propose changes to policies, procedures, and processes as necessary to improve campus function and the experience of our students;
- Serve as an adjudicating body to resolve discrepancies and conflicts between units regarding advising practices and the interpretation of policy;
- Improve the quality of academic advising at Western by promoting developmental advising that provides context and meaning for students' academic experiences;
- Serve as a forum to share information about advising and as a network for communication and support, and foster collaboration between units;
- Promote professional development about academic advising through advisor development workshops and other opportunities;
- Provide an academic advisor liaison to the Council on Admission, Graduation, and Academic Standards (CAGAS) as well as other committees and councils as needed;
- Organize and implement methods of successful student transition into the academic environment through SOAR and other registration programs

**ARTICLE IV
THE NATIONAL ACADEMIC ADVISING ASSOCIATION**

COAA supports the goals and programs of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). Advisors are encouraged to attend conferences and other professional development opportunities.

**ARTICLE V
MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING RIGHTS**

Section 1
Membership

- A. All university advisors are members of COAA. The voting membership shall consist of representatives from the following areas:

1. Two from each college: College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Technology, College of Education and Human Services and College of Fine Arts and Communication.
 2. Two from University Advising and Academic Services Center (UAASC)
 3. One each from the following campus-wide advising offices: Centennial Honor's College, Bachelor of Arts in General Studies Program, Athletic Advising, Quad Cities Campus, and Center for International Studies.
 4. One each from the following administrative offices: Admissions, Registrar's Office, and Registrar's Office representing NCAA.
- B. The term for voting members runs from August 1 to July 31.
- C. Non-voting members include the Chair, Vice-Chair, CAGAS representative if not an adviser listed in Article V. Section A. and the Student Government Association representative.
- D. Meetings are open to all advisors and interested Western Illinois University personnel. A closed session may be called by the Chair if necessary.
- E. There shall be no discrimination for reasons of religion, age, race or ethnicity, color, sex, marital status, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

Section 2 Voting Rights

- A. COAA membership is divided into voting and non-voting members. Voting members consist of representatives listed in Article V.1.A. Non-voting members consist of all others attending the open meetings.
- B. If a COAA member is unable to attend a meeting s/he may designate a temporary substitute from his/her own unit. Designating a substitute constitutes giving proxy authority to vote on behalf of that unit. If no representative from a voting unit attends a meeting, that unit is considered to be absent and thus forfeits its voting rights for that meeting.
- C. The CAGAS representative on the Council can be elected from the non-voting membership.
- D. Voting can only take place with a quorum of members present. A quorum is defined as 2/3 of all voting members.

- E. All votes except those pertaining to by-law amendments are ratified by a simple majority of votes cast in person.
- F. By-law amendments are ratified by a 2/3 affirmative vote of all voting members present.

ARTICLE VI
LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION OF MEETINGS

Section 1

Leadership

The affairs of COAA shall be managed by a Chair and a Vice Chair.

- A. The position of Chair will be held by the Director of the University Advising and Academic Services Center. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Council and is charged with oversight of all Council activities and functions. In case of emergency, the Chair may ask the Vice Chair or other COAA member to take the Chair's place at any committee meeting where representation is needed for the advising community.
 - 1. The Chair serves as a spokesperson and representative of the council for campus committees, campus events, and at state/national conferences and may call special meetings of the Council.
 - 2. The Chair is a non-voting member of the Council.
 - 3. In the instance of tie during voting, the Chair will break the tie.
 - 4. The Chair is responsible for choosing a secretary to take minutes during meetings.
- B. The Vice Chair will run all meetings where the Chair cannot be present.
 - 1. The Vice Chair is a non-voting member of the Council.
 - 2. The Vice Chair will oversee all COAA standing and ad hoc committees.
 - 3. The Vice Chair is elected by the COAA membership. He/she will serve a term of two years and assume office on August 1 following the election. The Vice Chair will be selected in odd years. Elections will be held in the spring term. A special vote will be taken in the event that the Vice Chair is unable to complete his or her full term.

Section 2

Organization of Meetings

- A. The membership shall meet at scheduled times as determined by the calendar devised by the Chair. Meetings are generally held biweekly during the academic year and monthly during the summer months.

- B. The Chair is responsible for the preparation of the agenda and manages the list of request and agenda items. Agendas are to be circulated to the membership at least two days prior to scheduled meetings. He/she will convene and conduct all COAA meetings. Individual members shall submit agenda items to the Chair for review. After the meeting, minutes will be vetted and distributed for feedback. Minutes will then be approved at the next council meeting.

ARTICLE VII STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Standing Committees can be chaired and consist of advisors from the campus community. Committee membership will be by open enrollment each August at the Advisor Training Workshop. Committee chairs will be chosen by the members of the committee at the committee's first meeting of the fall semester. The chair will serve on the committee the following year as a member for transitional purposes. A member of the committee will provide a regular report of the committee's activities at the COAA meetings.
- B. There shall be five Standing Committees of the Council, Professional Development and Networking, Campus Affairs/Public Relations, Assessment, Awards and Recognition, and Technology, that will meet a minimum of once per semester.
 - 1. Professional Development and Networking – The purpose of the committee shall be to promote the individual and corporate professional growth of the membership for the benefit of the advisors, students and the University as a whole. The committee shall also plan events to facilitate the development of relationships between advisors.
 - 2. Campus Affairs/Public Relations – The purpose of the committee is to be active in any area within the University community which affects the students of Western Illinois University, the COAA membership and all academic advisors. The CAGAS representative shall serve on this committee. The committee shall facilitate communication of relevant information among advisors on Western's campus and to the university, local communities and media to heighten public awareness of the importance of academic advising at Western Illinois University.
 - 3. Assessment – The purpose of the committee is to establish goals and guidelines for a comprehensive review of academic advising at Western Illinois University. The committee shall conduct annual student surveys and advisor surveys to assess the overall success of the academic advising program. Every three years a complete assessment of academic advising will be conducted.

4. Awards and Recognition – The committee will meet to review, nominate and provide avenues to recognize academic advisors for their achievements. It will make suggestions for the criteria used for the WIU Academic Advisor of the Year award nominations given to the Provost’s Office.
5. Technology – The purpose of the committee is to make recommendations for the use of technology in advising by collaborating with other areas on campus. It will research information about innovations, trends, and critical issues in academic advising technology. The committee will disseminate this information to the advising community and encourage advisors to review the effects of technology with the use of online communication, student information systems and social and connected spaces.

C. In addition, the Chair or Vice Chair may form Ad Hoc Committees as necessary. The same membership rules for Standing Committees will apply.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

Any proposed amendment(s) or revision(s) to the by-laws of COAA shall be made available to the membership electronically and/or at a regularly scheduled meeting at least fourteen (14) days before a vote is taken on the proposed amendment. At any time, a member of COAA may propose an amendment to the Chair. The Chair will then constitute a By-laws Committee on an ad-hoc basis to review proposed amendments.

ARTICLE IX LIMITATION

Through mutual agreement of the Director of University Advising and Academic Services Center and the members of this council, these by-laws represent a statement of agreement on operating procedures. Nothing in this document shall supersede Article 7 Management Rights in the 2010-15 AGREEMENT or any other Board of Trustee Regulation or University Policy.