ADVISING UPDATE
FROM THE VANDAL SUCCESS COALITION

REPORT TO FACULTY SENATE
APRIL 24, 2018
ADVISING COALITION TEAMS

Team 1
Community Feedback

GOALS:
- Determine key anxiety points for current staff
- Understand faculty roles

TOOLS:
- Advisor Survey
- Faculty Survey of Advising

Team 2
Roles & Responsibilities

GOALS:
- Clearly define faculty roles
- Audit current responsibilities of advising staff

TOOLS:
- College Responsibility Audit
- Faculty Survey of Advising

Team 3
Current State, Best Practices, Next Steps

GOALS:
- Gather data on advising current state
- Research best practices in advising

TOOLS:
- Faculty, Advisor, Student Surveys
- Literature/Best Practices Review
WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM STUDENTS?

Most students have good advising experiences, but this varies a great deal across colleges:

- In 2 colleges, over 20% of students said advising was poor or terrible
- Quality of advising differs across colleges for transfer students, too

- Students want advising to be consistent and accurate, ensuring students get the classes they need.
- They want advisors to be available, and they want them to respond in a timely way.
- Students want a personal connection to their advisors, and they want advisors to care about them.
WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM FACULTY?

Faculty want to be involved in advising:

- Advising provides an opportunity outside of class to build relationships with students
- Faculty have insights about careers and how to prepare for them
- Faculty understand their curriculum/course sequencing but sometimes struggle to keep up with general education/core requirements

Most faculty receive no training in advising or mentoring

In most colleges, advising is not rewarded, recognized, or counted in tenure/promotion decisions

A third of faculty say they have too little time for advising
WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM ADVISORS?

Related to restructuring advising, staff advisors are most concerned about:

- Relationships between advisors, departments, and colleges
- Changes in reporting lines/uncertainty
- Communication challenges
- Changing a structure that works well in some areas

Potential benefits of restructuring could be:

- Better communication, collaboration, and sense of community
- Better training and coordination for increased consistency in advising

From audit of duties: There is a wide range of responsibilities for advising staff across colleges (still documenting)
Areas of general consensus

- Students should have access to consistent advising (all advisors need training, and we need better communication and collaboration)
- Advising needs are student-specific; advising should address students’ unique needs
- Good advising requires knowledgeable, well-informed advisors who are responsive and available and who care about students
- All advisors, whether staff or faculty, should be rewarded and recognized for good work
- Advisors should be embedded in colleges; the particular shared model may vary between and across colleges
Barriers to improving advising:

- Fear of change
- Lack of trust, communication, transparency
- Territoriality and silos
- Lack of resources (financial, time, training, software)
- No rewards/recognition for faculty or staff

Strengths we can leverage:

- Knowledgeable, hardworking faculty and staff who care about students
- Commitment to improving the student experience and student success
- Student services teams embedded in colleges
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Determine how resources will be allocated to ensure equity
- Define responsibilities for professional advisors
- Determine what role(s) faculty will have, specific to each college, and how to coordinate with professional advising to create a highly coordinated model
- Create and implement training plan for faculty and professional advisors
- Develop a system for assessing, rewarding, and recognizing advising for professional and faculty advisors