

Academic Success Council
Year End Report 2024-2025

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Priority Charge 1. Discuss potential revisions to the Faculty as Mentor program including clarifying the role of the Faculty Mentor, suggesting improvements to the Sophomore Success Plan, making recommendations for good-practice communication strategies with mentees and considering the possibility of a zero-credit sophomore course along the lines of Will Power 101 & 102.

Our work on Charge 1:

Communicate the value of the mentoring program:

- We surveyed department chairs regarding how their faculty are mentoring students in their majors (46% response rate)
- We summarized the information and provided slides to Will Power instructors
- We recommend that WillPower instructors promote the faculty mentoring program to second-semester freshmen using these provided slides
- Faculty mentors were invited to Will.Power. classes in the spring. We recommend continuing this practice.
- Recommend a meet-and-greet with faculty mentors and student mentees beyond the Will.Power. classes; however, to organize this, we need a point-person for the mentoring program

Sophomore check-list:

- We recommend that checkboxes be added to the sophomore check-list for mentees to meet with their faculty mentors once a semester
- Faculty mentors need access to this check-list
- Need to follow up with IT/Brian Public regarding this request

Faculty Mentor training

- We recognize that faculty do not have experience working in Navigate, but Advisors primarily use this software to track student progress
- We recommend that faculty mentors attend a training session to learn how to use Navigate to reach and track student mentees; also how to update the student check-list
- Also, the training session can provide faculty with information about how they can mentor and what a mentor does and does not do

Priority Charge 2. Discuss and make recommendations for improving communication between Advising Center leadership and departments.

Our work on Charge 2:

Improve communication between departments and the Advisement Center

- Suggestion to have departments send information and/or meet with the Advisement Center annually, or more often if major changes have occurred. At the very least, email communication should be maintained between departments, advisors and mentors.
- Recommendation to have departments provide “cheat sheets” about their major
- Suggestion to standardize departmental practices, e.g., have everyone use the online system for ADRs; this will aid Advisors since there are so many majors and departments to keep track of

Ensure DegreeWorks is accurate

- Advisors have noted that DegreeWorks does not consistently match with the course catalog; we acknowledge that some of this is because curriculum changes don’t retroactively apply to previous years; however, there may be other places where updates are needed
- We propose surveying departments to document places where DegreeWorks can be updated to reflect major requirements, then follow up with the Registrar (we can work on this next year if this relates to our charges then)
- Recommend that the Advisement Center and Registrar improve communication and discuss how to handle specific issues (e.g., curricula updates that have not yet been implemented in DegreeWorks for current students and thus require ADRs)

Priority Charge 3. Review retention data and report to the Senate both on trends in student attrition as well as recommendations for improving retention, in particular, for improving junior and senior retention rates on the main campus

Our work on Charge 3: We have reviewed reports, but don’t have immediate suggestions. We’re focused on the above charges.

Priority Charge 4. Collect data on internships such as internship process and student participation. Which students participate in an internship, and when do they do so in their college career?

Our work on Charge 4: We’re not currently addressing this. We focused on the above charges right now.

Suggested Charges for 2025-2026

Suggested Charge 1. Improve and assess the functionality of the Mentorship Program.

- Survey faculty mentors for their feedback and to see what percentage of their mentees they have met with
- Conduct a focus group with seniors in Capstone courses to learn about their out-of-classroom relationships with faculty, why they have or do not have them, what they got out of their out-of-class relationship with a professor (or wished they had if they had one), and any advice they would offer to advance the faculty mentor initiative
- Work with whoever will oversee the Mentorship Program (would this be Dean Andrew?)
 - o Provide communication to faculty teaching 2000-4000 levels courses so they can promote the Mentoring program in their classes
 - o Coordinate Mentorship events where faculty and mentees meet for coffee and snacks (requiring a small budget)
 - o Standardize when new mentees are assigned to mentors over the summer and ensure there is communication
 - o Work with IT to create a website to promote the Faculty as Mentor program
 - o Set up training workshops for faculty mentors to learn Navigate for connecting with mentees and how to best mentor students

Suggested Charge 2. Review WP retention data and related literature to make informed recommendations.

- Examine current WP data for retention trends (working with Miki Cammarata or others who already have insight into this)
- Review the research on how a culture of care might boost retention; provide recommendations to faculty/staff and/or suggest “soft-skills” training

Suggested Charge 3. Ensure academic program information is communicated with the Advisement Center

- Create a process by which academic departments communicate with the Advisement Center regarding newly approved academic programs and curriculum updates/changes (majors, minors, certificates, course number/name changes)
- Survey departments to document places where DegreeWorks can be updated to reflect curriculum requirements, then follow up with the Registrar to implement any possible updates