December 5, 2018

Dr. Amit B. Singh, President

Dr. Steve Woodard

Edmonds Community College

20000 68th Avenue West

Lynnwood, WA 98036

Dear Dr. Singh and Dr. Steve Woodard,

We, the members of Project Management 270 were tasked with the responsibility of conducting a school wide study to access the current state of advising at Edmonds Community College. Specifically, our focus was to determine in what ways the advising department could be retooled to better sever all its stakeholders.

During Fall Quarter 2018, we developed customized questions tailored for each stakeholder group to identify their needs and expectations. Those groups were: transfer students, advising department administration, faculty union, faculty senate, student senate, professional technical students, professional technical advisors, and academic faculty advisors. After reviewing the various surveys, these are the recommendations that will be explained in depth throughout this document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We are pleased to have prepared this study for your review. Thank you, in advance, for the privilege of your time and consideration of this document.

Sincerely,

Students of Project Management 270

Edmonds Community College

Fall 2018

Enclosure: Advising Feasibility Study Report

Advising Feasibility Study

# Introduction and Background

The advising department plays a critical role in student success in higher education. Edmonds Community College has a diverse set of students, each with unique needs and requirements. A well-functioning advising department can effectively and efficiently manage each student’s educational goals and guide them to a successful college experience. Currently, Edmonds Community College is experiencing low graduation rates, and it has been brought to light that many students never fully utilize the advising department, instead struggling or failing to complete their course of study.

The Project Management 270 class of Fall quarter 2018 has completed a feasibility study concerning the advising processes of Edmonds Community College. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the advising department of Edmonds Community College. From the start of the quarter our class was split into six groups of students. Each group was assigned a unique stakeholder of the advising process, which included key members of administration, faculty members, as well as current students. Over the duration of the quarter, each group has interviewed and surveyed all stakeholders. Our intent was to identify their requirements and needs, and to report back to the rest of the class. We have discovered several areas of strengths and areas of opportunities to better serve the student body.

As we near the end of the quarter, our six groups have collaborated to produce the following study. Our findings are enclosed in this document and are submitted for review.

# Objective

On December 5th, a study analyzing the advising department and its current processes will be submitted to the Edmonds Community College administration. We have explored opportunities for change to enable students to have a successful advising experience. The document puts forth recommendations to streamline the advising process for advisors and students who utilize the services of the advising department.

# Requirements

1. Provide students with an academic plan that matches their academic goal
2. A checklist for advisors to follow on what to cover in an advising appointment.
3. Caseload structure in which students are assigned to advisors whose expertise match the students desired field of study.
4. Flexible advising hours and appointment times to current and future students.
5. Remote advising session support and online appointment that will be provided through various electronic methods.
6. Mandatory Student Success Course that encompasses information to students on how to be successful and where to find information and resources.
7. Edmonds community college must require a mandatory advising appointment within the first year of registration
8. Train advisors in all resources and tools provided to them.
9. Measures the advising success rate of the individual departments and advisors at the college.

# Constraints

# WBS

# Recommendations

1. Provide students and advisors a 3-year academic calendar to aid them in planning their class schedule for their entire stay at Edmonds Community College. Plan the course offerings out for 3 years instead of the 9-12 months as it is now planned.
2. Institute a checklist for all advisors to use when in advising appointments. This list would include discussing majors, planning a degree track for courses to complete degree, scheduled future check in appointments to track the students’ success in completion of degree. Answer any questions the student may have about their time at Edmonds Community College and what the expectations are for completing their course of study.
3. Institute a caseload advising structure for full-time faculty. The current system of 30 hours per academic year for full-time faculty is not functioning effectively. This caseload basis allows faculty advisors to take ownership of the advising experience for a small group of students, rather than seemingly random students each with different needs. Each student will be able to develop a relationship with their faculty advisor, who will be knowledgeable in the student’s degree program.
4. Edmonds Community College has a large online community of students that do not attend class on-campus. The administration is aware that this community will continue to grow and that they need to have an online advising presence. In addition, many students are not able to attend in person appointments. Allowing flexibility in how advising is provided will promote participation and student retention.
5. Use technology to accelerate advising process by connecting with more students via Skype or Facetime. This will help students who can’t make it to campus during regular advising hour get into advising appointments at Edmonds Community College’s Informational Technology department will need to upgrade the school website to make these changes.
6. Each student will participate in a success course within their first two quarters, setting them up for a seamless Edmonds Community College experience. This course will contain information about how to be successful in college, where to find information around campus, and assist students with networking with faculty and other students.
7. Institute a mandatory advising appointment by the end of the student's first quarter that will assist students in gathering the information and assistance their need to map out their college career at the start. This promotes student knowledge of what is required for success and what their Edmonds Community College experience will look like.
8. Provide training to faculty and full-time advisors in specific degrees and paths that students may take. Alternatively, the advising department will have to spend needed resources in order to train staff. By training the advisors, students will receive more accurate information directly related to their academic interests.
9. Implement a tracking system that measures the advising success of full-time faculty with their assigned caseload of students. This system shall grade advisors on the percentage of their students who are on track to complete their program on-time and if the student is taking the appropriate courses. The college then has the tools in place to discover students that are falling behind or at-risk of dropping out and intervene with assistance prior to the student leaving the college. Areas of opportunity are found if there is a department or specific advisor that records less than average performance as well as discover departments or advisors that are very successful. This allows the college to find best practices when it comes to advising and promote those practices to the rest of the college

# Appendices

Group One: Target demographic stakeholders: Advising department, Administration (President, Dean of Student Success, VP of Student Services)

Data Collection Method: In Person Interviews

Interviewees Names:

Dr. Amit Singh - Edmonds Community College President

Elizabeth Bonjean - Assistant Director of Academic Advising

Gina Certain - Career Action Center

Linda Pendergraft - Career Action Center

Nate Goodman - Advisor

Interview Questions:

1. What does advising success mean to you? How do you determine success?
2. How do you determine a student’s path?
   1. How does the academic calendar influence your decision?
   2. How do you handle roadblocks with your plan for the student?
3. Does faculty confer with the advising department? Are there metrics that determine faculty and student success?
4. How does advising differ for prof/tech vs. academic students?
5. What do you think about requiring new students to meet with an advisor?
6. Do you find that there is a correlation between advising and the rate of program completion?
7. We will be polling students to find out about their advising experience. How would you rate the students’ satisfaction level with their advising process?
8. What do you think about a system that mandates new students must meet with an advisor? When should this advising take place?
9. Do you have an opinion on changing the advising requirement for faculty from 30 hrs annually to a caseload of students?
10. How does the school determine how many advisors are necessary?
11. Are there any obstacles the school faces that hinder the advising experience for the student? Is there a way these could be overcome?
12. Nearly half the students take online or hybrid classes. Should there be a separate advising process for these students?
13. What would your ideal advising process look like and does that differ from the current one?
14. If you could change one thing about how advising is done what would it be? Where do you think advising could improve?

Group Two Target demographic stakeholders: Faculty Union, Faculty Senate, Student Senate

Data Collection Method: Survey

Dear Participants,

We are a part of MGMT 270/Project management class 1 for the 2018 Fall quarter here at Edmonds Community College. Our current project is based on finding areas where the Advising Department could be improved.

Due to the fact, that the graduation rate is around 28% currently; part of our project is to learn whether anyone/ the stakeholders, who are seeking advice and support from the Advising Department are receiving a transparent experience, with clear steps for success either academically or professionally.

Since, we believe that your input will be of great value and importance to the project over all, we are hereby kindly inquiring whether you have time to answer a few questions, please. Hopefully, our class will be able to gather good solutions based on your answers and assistance.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances out of our control, our questions are being forwarded to you late; giving you only 36 hours to respond – however, do know that your time and responses are very important to our class project and your time and assistance are much appreciated.

After filling out the questions, please save and close document and forward it to L.andersen4544@edmail.edcc.edu by Wednesday October 25, 2018 at Noon, please!

Sincerely,

Group II/ MGMT270 – Fall2018

Questions from Group II/ MGMT270:

1. In your experience do you think that the Advising Department at Edmonds Community College is doing a good job when guiding students on their educational path? If, so – Why? Or why not?
2. In your experience, do you believe that the Advising Dept. has improved over the last five years? If, so – Why? Or why not?
3. During our course work we have learned that a change in how Instructors are to assist students with advising will possibly undergo a change. Do you believe that the way that Instructors are assisting students currently needs to change – like say from hourly to becoming caseloads instead? If, so – Why? Or, why not?
4. If, you are an instructor – do you believe that a change in the way that you advise students now, will be beneficial for the process in general? If, so – Why? Or, why not?
5. Right now, there are 4 advisors handling 10,000 students and a high turn-over rate among the advisors; do you see a solution to this issue? If, so – Why? Or, why not?
6. Edmonds Community College has a graduation rate of about 28%; Do you think this is directly correlated to the case overload in the Advising Department or do you think it is due to other issues in general at EDCC? If, so – please, elaborate at your discretion.
7. From your position’s perspective, what do you think could add an improvement to the any negative experiences that students may have with the Advising Dept.?
8. Do feel free to add any comments or ideas you may have regarding abovementioned issues, please:

We thank you for your time and assistance with our project in MGMT270/Fall 2018.

Group Three: Target demographic stakeholders: Prof/Tech Students (do not include ISS students)

Data Collection Method: Survey

Academic Advising Survey: Professional and Technical Students

Survey Introduction Letter sent to Technical Students stakeholders at Class CIS 250 Database Theory and design

Greeting CIS 250 students,

This is Naser Elmasry from class CIS 250 Database Theory & Design. I am writing to you to request your participation in a brief academic Internet survey. The survey which is completely voluntary is about the students experience with academic advising at Edmonds Community College.

Why you were selected and what it’s about: This quarter I'm taking MGMT 270 Project Management 1 with instructor Claudia Levi. In this class we are working to address real project on how to improve academic advising at EDCC and how to engage students to seek academic advising. In order to identify stakeholders' requirements, we have designed an online survey to be distributed among professional and technical students enrolled this fall quarter at Edmonds Community College.

How to access the survey: The survey is very brief and will only take about 4 minutes to complete. Please click the link below to go to the survey Web site on Google Forms. No need to enter your Name, E-mail address or specific code.

Clickable Link : Survey Link: Academic Advising Survey: Professional and Technical Students

Confidential and voluntary: Your participation in the survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. All of your responses will be kept confidential. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data.

Contact Information: Should you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me at n.elmasry6563@edmail.edcc.edu

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. Feedback from students is very important to us.

Regards,

Student: Naser El Masry

n.elmasry6563@edmail.edcc.edu

Edmonds Community College

Survey Questions

We are students from MGMT 270 Project Management I class. This project is to enhance academic advising at Edmond Community College, Thank you for agreeing to take part in this important survey on measuring academic advising satisfaction for Edmond Community College. With this survey we will be gaining your thoughts and opinions in order to bettering our advising system. This survey can be completed in 4 minutes. Thank you again for participating and for your time.

Major of Study

1. I know how to access, utilize and interpret degree and certificate requirements on my own
   * Yes
   * No
   * Maybe
2. Do you have any experience with Edmond Community College advising department?
   * Yes
   * No
3. Follow up question: how was your experience?
4. Rate the following factors based on your experience with advising program here at Edmonds Community College where (1) is the most important and (5) is least important.
   * Meeting with an advisor each term is mandatory event, regardless of your student status
   * Have student control over scheduling appointment with advisor
   * Advisors should be more knowledgeable about college policies
   * Increase number of academic advisors
   * Reduce wait time to meet with an advisor
5. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about careers that apply to my eld of study/major. If you chose 'No' please explain
   * Yes
   * No
   * Other
6. How do you prefer to contact and schedule time with an advisor? If you chose other please specify on what you would preferred.
   * Walk-in
   * Email inquiry
   * Online portal to request an appointment
   * Direct with faculty advisor
   * Other:
7. I am given the time I need during my academic advising appointment session and do not feel rushed.
   * Strongly disagree
   * Disagree
   * Neutral
   * Agree
   * Strongly agree
8. I believe that I need to have academic advising to help plan for my courses and degree \*
   * Strongly disagree
   * Disagree
   * Neutral
   * Agree
   * Strongly agree
9. What would you like to see changed to Edmond Community College academic advising?

Group Four: Target demographic stakeholders: Academic Transfer Students (do not include ISS students)

Data Collection Method: Survey

Our target demographic are current EDCC students who have enrolled to obtain the prerequisites which will enable them successfully transfer to a four year college or university. We are interested in this population of students as their views on advising will look different than other demographics.

Survey Introduction

This survey was developed by EDCC students currently enrolled in Project Management 270 (Fall 2018). Our task is to discern the current state of EDCC’s Advising Department through the eyes of the students it serves. To that end, our team would greatly appreciate you taking the time to not only assist us with our project, but also to offer your views as to whether this system did or did not work for you. The culmination of this project will be a series of recommendations to Dr. Signh, EDCC President, and all other affected parties to bring about permanent and systemic change for the better. Thank you for your participation.

This should take out 10 – 15 minutes, depending on the length of your answers.

1. Are you planning to transfer to a four-year college or university following your time here at EDCC?
   * Yes
   * No

If you answered “Yes” please continue with the survey. If you answered “No” you may complete the survey if you wish.

1. Have you met with an EDCC Faculty and/or Advisor regarding your academic plan?
2. Did you follow the plan outlined for you? Why or why not?
3. What were your expectations regarding Advising?
   * Which expectations were met?
   * Which expectations were not met?
4. How satisfied were you with the advice provided?

Not Satisfied Extremely Satisfied

* + 1 2 3 4 5
  + Explain your selection

1. How could your Advising experience be improved?
2. My questions were answered to my satisfaction
   * Not Satisfied Extremely Satisfied
   * 1 2 3 4 5
   * Explain your selection
3. Have you had a follow appointment with your Advisor? Why or why not?

Group Five: Target demographic stakeholders: Faculty Advisors – Academic divisions

Data Collection Method: Survey

Advising Survey

1. What does advising mean to you?
2. Please describe a current advising session.
3. What do you see as the main problem with the current advising system?
4. What do you see that is working well in the current advising system?
5. What tools do you feel are needed to improve the advising process?
6. If you were given the choice, would you want a Set number of hours or Set number of students and why?
7. Based on your answer above, why?
8. Other than hiring more staff, how would you improve the advising process?

Group Six: Target demographic stakeholders: Faculty Advisors – Prof/Tech divisions

Data Collection Method: Survey

Survey Questions

1. Please describe the current advising process?
2. What is your role in the advising process?
3. What do you find challenging about the current advising process?
4. How do you balance your advising responsibilities with your other duties?
5. What changes to the advising process would you like to implement?
6. Have you made improvement suggestions in the past? If so; to whom?
7. What additional resources would you like to have?