Analysis of Spring 2013 Advising Survey

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Analysis of Spring 2013 Advising Survey

Abstract
In May 2013, 3446 graduate students were sent a short survey asking for their evaluation of the advising they received at ISU. 1836 responses were received for a response rate of 53%. The goal of the survey was to gather information on the current state of advising so we can have a concrete discussion on what can be improved.

Disciplines
Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research | Higher Education
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### 1. Advising

1) At present, how many different ISU faculty members (including lecturers and adjunct faculty) do you rely on for advice and/or guidance about program requirements, academics, and career matters?

- 0: 6.7%
- 1: 39.5%
- More than one: 53.7%

2) Which best describes your relationship with the faculty member you rely on most for advice/guidance? For the rest of this survey, we will describe this person as your primary adviser.

- Do not have a relationship with a faculty member: 1.6%
- Comprehensive or dissertation chair: 10.5%
- Official faculty advisor I chose: 43.9%
- Official faculty advisor assigned to me: 11.2%
- Director of Graduate education: 8.1%
- Faculty member in my program: 23.1%
- Faculty member outside my program: 1.6%

3) In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship with this faculty member?, i.e. with your primary adviser.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
<th>1234</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4567</td>
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4) I am satisfied with the process by which I came to have my current primary advisor.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
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<tr>
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5) I am satisfied with the amount of access I have to my primary advisor.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
<th>1234</th>
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<tbody>
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6) I am satisfied with the quality of guidance I receive from my primary advisor.

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<table>
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<th>Disagree strongly</th>
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LaPorchia Davis, Craig Ogilvie April 2014
7) My primary advisor treats me with respect.

8) I typically meet (call or email for online students) with my advisor

   - more than once per week: 28.7%
   - once per week: 20.1%
   - once every two weeks: 13.3%
   - once per month: 10.9%
   - less frequently than once per month: 21.3%

9) When I ask a question or request my advisor complete a form, I typically get a response

   - that same day: 53.4%
   - within a few days: 38%
   - within a week: 8%
   - longer than a week: 2.7%

10) How helpful has your primary advisor been in terms of progressing toward the completion of your degree?

11) My primary advisor provides information about career paths open to me.

12) What proportion of faculty members in your program seem more concerned with furthering their own careers than with the well-being of the program as a whole?

   - None of them: 22.2%
   - One or two of them: 15.3%
   - Some of them: 20.4%
   - Most of them: 9%
   - Don’t know / Not sure: 33.1%

13) What proportion of faculty members in your program make sexist remarks?

   - None of them: 66.6%
   - One or two of them: 8.6%
   - Some of them: 3.8%
   - Most of them: 0.7%
   - Don’t know / Not sure: 21.3%
At the end of the advising survey, students were asked the following open-ended question:

“Please provide one or two examples that illustrate the kind of advising experiences you have had in your program.”

From these responses we extracted three main themes

- course selections
- career guidance
- advisory help within their department.

We provide some sample quotes from participants to illustrate these key themes. Of the three themes students expressed positive experiences about advice on course selection, but concerns were raised in the other two areas, namely communication and networking towards their career paths, and issues regarding the low engagement of some advisors.
Faculty seem supportive, yet disinterested when it comes to career paths and research interests.

My adviser (and some others in the department) have extensive connections for jobs/etc, but do not like to do much with those connections to avoid impression of impropriety. I'm not sure if this helps or hinders.

I choose all my courses, because my committee has very little understanding of career tracks outside of academia. Instead, I seek advice from other universities and bring that info to my committee. I also get assistance from a faculty member not on my committee.

Advice on relevant classes to take based on how important they are for my research.

Advice on what classes to take that will help me with my research.

Advising me on which courses she suggests or have heard other students liked. Very helpful!
Advisory Help

I did not receive any advising when I was admitted into the program. I did not know of the requirements until the beginning of my second semester. I then had to contact my department chair to find out everything that I needed to do. When I asked her about the "Plan of Study" and my committee board all she said was "You don’t need to worry about that for a while." This was discouraging because I wanted to know the process what I would need to do.

I don't really feel like I have a formal advisor. There is one faculty member that I just normally go to with questions, issues, or career direction. She is always very helpful but not really aware of what is going on outside of the classes she teaches.