A program evaluation of a proactive faculty and peer advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students in the College of Arts and Sciences at a mid-western liberal arts university

Stephen Everett Buckley
Iowa State University

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A program evaluation of a proactive faculty and peer advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students in the College of Arts and Sciences at a mid-western liberal arts university

Buckley, Stephen Everett, Ph.D.

Iowa State University, 1994
A program evaluation of a proactive faculty and peer advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students in the College of Arts and Sciences at a mid-western liberal arts university

by

Stephen Everett Buckley

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
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In Charge of Major Work
Signature was redacted for privacy.

For the Department
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
1994
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INTRODUCTION

Small, private four year colleges and universities, with fewer financial resources, are faced with the challenge of providing improved academic advising services for a more diverse student body (Hodgkinson, 1988). Margaret King (1993), president of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), agreed with this challenge in her recent address at NACADA's 1992 annual conference. In response, she stressed the importance of institutional research that verifies the cost effectiveness of advising services and the positive impact of those advising services on student growth, satisfaction, and retention. In conjunction with this challenge and advice, Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, commissioned research to study the effectiveness of its own newly developed advising services for first-year, open-enrolled students. The purposes of this introductory section are to review (a) Drake's admissions policy for first-year, open-enrolled advisees, (b) efforts to improve advising services, (c) outcomes of the newly developed proactive advising services, (d) the need for additional research, and (e) the twofold purpose of my research.

Drake's Admissions Policy

Drake University is a private, independent, accredited university located in the mid-west. Drake offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of programs including business, pharmacy and health sciences, journalism, education, and law. It has a selective admission of approximately 6,500 undergraduate students with the following guidelines:
1. High school graduates must meet general admission standards for the university by having an admissible GPA, class ranking, ACT or SAT scores, college preparatory courses, and reference letters.
2. After being accepted into the university, students may need to meet additional admission standards in any one of the six colleges. For example, the College of Journalism requires a higher ACT or SAT test score in English than general university admissions standards. First-year students who meet only the general admissions standards are classified as open-enrolled and are assigned to the College of Arts and Sciences. Open-enrolled students are not allowed to enroll in the college of their choice until a qualifying grade point average is established in first-year courses. Students who are accepted into the College of Arts and Sciences but are undecided about a major are also classified as open-enrolled. The combination of these two types of first-year, open-enrolled students numbered 126 in the fall of 1991. They represented the largest category of advisees in the College of Arts and Sciences.

The advising office observed a recurring trend among open-enrolled students attending Drake University. Those who were open-enrolled had a higher attrition rate than those with declared majors (Davidson, 1992). The concern over this attrition problem led to a specific recommendation from the director of advising to the President's 1991 Task Force to Enhance the Quality of the Freshman Experience.
Proactive Advising First-Year, Open-Enrolled Students

The director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences recommended that first-year, open-enrolled students experience a proactive advising program. Regular advising sessions were to be scheduled by trained advisors throughout the advisee's first-year experience (Davidson, 1992). The President's Task Force approved the recommendation in the spring of 1991.

The director of advising selected eight advisors who volunteered to be in the approved program. Advising goals were agreed upon by the faculty advisors in a spring meeting with the director. Advisors were to: (a) help student advisees make the transition into Drake University from their high school experience, (b) give advice and counsel to advisees, (c) make referrals when necessary, and (d) provide information to the advisees related to issues identified on the advising appointment record.

To guide the advising process, an advising appointment record (Appendix A) was given to faculty advisors. It suggested the following fall and spring semester advising activities: (a) informal getting acquainted sessions during the first week of classes, (b) academic planning sessions on progress, goals, and referral needs, (c) review sessions on mid-term grades and spring registration procedures, (d) support sessions for finals and the holiday break, (e) beginning second semester sessions for class schedule adjustments, (f) career goal and decision-making sessions on exploration of interests in different majors, (g) additional academic planning sessions on progress, goals, and referral needs, (h) review sessions on spring mid-term grades and
fall registration procedures, and (i) concluding sessions on summer plans and fall course of study. To accomplish the proactive advising strategy, faculty advisors were expected to initiate contact and spend at least three 30 minute advising sessions per semester with each advisee.

The director of advising recruited junior and senior student peer advisors who were to assist faculty advisors by: (a) making initial contacts with assigned advisees the first week of the fall semester, (b) assisting the faculty advisor in helping first-year student advisees adjust to college life, and (c) helping advisees begin the process of choosing a major. Three peer advisors were assigned to each of the eight faculty advisors. Faculty advisors were given the freedom to delegate responsibilities to each of their assigned peer advisors to accomplish the proactive advising goals.

The director of advising was responsible to select, train, and supervise faculty advisors and peer advisors. She organized monthly meetings with the faculty and peer advisors to provide training experiences that were designed to improve advising efforts. In summary, the advising services had the following program characteristics:

1. The 126 Arts and Sciences' first-year, open-enrolled students were randomly divided into eight groups with 15 to 16 advisees per group.
2. Eight faculty advisors were selected from a pool of volunteers, were trained to advise the first-year, open-enrolled students, and randomly assigned to each one of the eight groups of advisees.
3. Twenty-four carefully selected peer advisors were recruited,
trained, and assigned to five or six advisees based on the advisee's place of residence.

4. Each of the eight advising teams consisted of a faculty advisor, three peer advisors, and 15 to 16 first-year, open-enrolled students.

5. Stipends were given to the advisors for their services, and work study funds were allotted to the peer advisors for their involvement.

6. Faculty advisors were expected to meet with their advisees each semester to discuss suggested topics to promote purposeful interaction.

7. The director of advising in the College of Arts and Sciences met on a monthly basis with the faculty advisors and peer advisors to discuss progress, to promote improved delivery of advising services, and to connect advisors and advisees to other available on-campus services.

As the 1991-1992 academic year began, academic advising services for first-year, open-enrolled students were initiated as planned. Advisors were able to practice proactive advising strategies as recommended. Monthly meetings took place throughout both semesters to encourage continued effort. In the spring, outcomes of the advising program were measured and reported by the director of advising.

**Outcomes of the Proactive Advising Services**

At the conclusion of the 1991-1992 academic year, the director of advising surveyed faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees to assess the merits of the proactive advising program (Davidson, 1992). Faculty advisors agreed on the worthiness of the proactive advising program. Advisors rated the usefulness of peer advisors high when they gave peer advisors specific instructions rather than just
general instructions (i.e., meet twice a month to discuss progress in each academic course or be friendly and available). By giving attention to the advising appointment record, advisors experienced a greater awareness of program objectives. Following suggested activities given on the appointment record improved the advisors' efforts to help students with academic or social needs.

The peer advisors had different perspectives of the program than the faculty advisors. Responses to survey questions revealed several general observations. Peer advisors believed their effectiveness was influenced by how close they lived to their advisees and how informed advisee were about their peer advisor's role. Individual contacts seemed to be more useful and productive than group contacts. Peer advisors saw the importance of their role diminish in the spring semester as most first-year advisees became more independent. Peer advisors believed that their advisees were confused by other peer advising and peer mentor programs within residence halls and various other campus organizations (i.e., athletic teams and honors' programs). Peer advisors suggested that their advising ought to focus on academic needs rather than social needs due to the existence of other peer advising services. Peer advisors perceived the duplication of peer advising efforts to be confusing to advisees. Because of the nature of the quantitative survey, explanations were not given for these observations. Survey results provided a limited understanding, however, of the peer advisors' experiences and perceptions.

Student advisees, who participated in the advising program, were surveyed during spring registration. Only 28% of the advisees
responded. This low rate of participation limited the conclusions that were drawn. Advisees rated their faculty advisor high in scheduling their classes and in being a resource person. When asked how a faculty advisor could have been more helpful, most respondents gave no answer. The director of advising concluded that the first-year advisees' lack of an understanding of what they could expect from the advisor caused such a response to the survey. Because of the nature of the quantitative survey design, information was not available from the responses to explain why advisees had those perceptions. First-year, open-enrolled student retention improved from 72.4% the previous year to 86.7%. No relationship could be drawn between student responses and the apparent increase in student retention because of the small participation rate and the survey design.

The Need for Additional Research

The advising office wanted a qualitative study to assess the overall worth of the newly developed advising services for first-year, open-enrolled students. A thorough review of the advising program was desired to help the director understand the advisees' perceptions of the advising program. The director of advising wanted to know how proactive advising services affected first-year students. What attributes of the newly designed advising service were most useful to the students? As juniors, who participated as freshmen in the advising program, look back on their first year in college, what advising experiences can they point to that were most useful in promoting persistence toward their higher education goals? How worthwhile were the advising services to the advisees, peer advisors, and faculty
advisors? What can be learned from this initial advising effort that could be incorporated into future advising services? The College of Arts and Sciences' director of advising desired answers to these questions in order (a) to better understand the effectiveness of the advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students, and (b) to plan and direct future advising services.

The Twofold Purpose of the Study

Discussions with the director of advising led to the growth of a twofold purpose for this qualitative study. Through interview data collection and analysis of participant perceptions, I proposed: (a) to develop a thorough description of the 1991-1992 program of proactive advising services given to first-year, open-enrolled students entering the College of Arts and Sciences as undeclared majors, and (b) to assess the worth of those services in context with the perceptions of the participating faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. With the support of research findings, assessment, and recommendations, the director of advising desired to lead in the development and delivery of improved advising services to first-year, open-enrolled students. Human subject research approval was secured from Iowa State University and Drake University to promote the ethical and confidential treatment of information from interviewees and documents (Appendix B).

Research findings, assessment, and recommendations will likely be used as feedback for future faculty advisor and peer advisor in-service training sessions. Qualities and characteristics of the proactive advising program will be of interest to the higher education
community at Drake as other colleges within the university setting receive and review the findings and make individual applications to their own advising services. If published, the results and recommendations may assist other campus directors of advising to improve the advising services they offer on their campuses to entering first-year students who do not declare a specific academic major.

Commissioning a study on the proactive advising services in the College of Arts and Sciences supported Drake University's commitment to the success of it's first-year, open-enrolled students. The following literature review describes efforts by other colleges and universities to improve persistence through proactive advising services. Methods of assessing the effectiveness of proactive advising services are also reviewed. Awareness of these advising programs and assessment methods provided a foundation for accomplishing the qualitative study at Drake University.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Proactive Advising Services

Proactive academic programs have been considered to be an improved strategy in meeting the advising needs of open-enrolled, first year students. Glennen and Baxley (1985) described proactive advising programs as follows:

1. Proactive implies that advisors take the initiative to schedule advising sessions with students and require counseling sessions covering specified objectives on a regular basis throughout the semester.
2. Advising signifies facilitative interaction by the advisor that goes beyond course scheduling to meeting developmental needs.
3. Programs refer to systematic, accountable plans of student services provided by faculty advisors with guidelines and objectives for each counseling session.

Proactive advising's positive impact upon student persistence is attributed to the emphasis placed upon improved faculty-to-student advising relationships.

Fielstein (1989) identified the value students placed on a proactive advising relationship. Findings from a questionnaire on advising strategies indicated that students desired both a developmental advising approach and a prescriptive approach. Developmental advising placed emphasis upon a building a personal relationship while prescriptive advising advocated a more traditional presentation of information and direction format. Proactive advisors were encouraged to address both needs in their efforts to provide
improved advising services to diverse student populations. More recently, Frost (1993) reported on the attitudes proactive advisors had in helping their advisees. He found that successful advisors took into account student preferences for a personal relationship while providing academic direction. Advisees valued both how advising services were delivered and what kinds of information were shared in the advising session. Frost concluded that proactive advising, from a developmental approach, demonstrated a caring relationship while supplying accurate academic information for improved decision making.

In his appeal to the higher education community, Ernest Boyer (1991) maintained that the faculty-to-student relationship is central to developing the sense of community on college campuses. The faculty advisor's counseling relationship with the student advisee has been found to be the key ingredient in helping both university and student reach the desired goal of completing graduation requirements (Baer & Carr, 1985). Crockett (1993) of Noel Levitz Consulting Services further supports the principle that the perceived success of advising services depends upon the quality of the advising relationship. He advocates that advising is an extension of the classroom teaching process by trained advisors. Proactive strategies help to reach first-year students before they have an opportunity to experience feelings of failure, disappointment, and confusion. Proactive faculty advising programs improve the advising relationship that encourages the student's adjustment to college life and increases persistence in higher education (Young, 1987).
Quantitative Research on Proactive Advising

Since proactive advising services claim to improve the advisor's impact upon the student's persistence and academic success, assessing the effectiveness of proactive advising is an important activity. As King (1993) pointed out, research is essential to support the financial resources given to advising services. Grite & Kelly (1994) echo the challenge. They maintained that directors need to show the benefits of providing proactive advising services. Administrators need to know (a) how much advising services cost and (b) what financial benefits are gained from offering such advising services. Higher persistence rates translate into more revenue from the additional tuition payments. The expenditures on improved advising services are justified by the revenues generated from these extra funds. The focus of this section will be on quantitative studies that have sought to prove the effectiveness and economic benefit of proactive advising services.

Promoting student persistence in higher education through proactive academic advising has been a goal on many campuses. Western New Mexico is one campus that studied the benefit of offering a proactive advising program for it's undergraduates (Glennen & Baxley, 1985). They recorded the persistence rates of students who experienced the proactive advising services described earlier. A 20% increase in student retention was observed each of the two years Western New Mexico performed the quantitative study.

Other quantitative studies on persistence and proactive advising have been accomplished at larger state universities where greater numbers of participants were available. In one such study, Earl (1988)
related proactive advising of first-year students to persistence. Second semester first-year students on academic probation were divided into two groups. Numbers were not reported, but the group receiving proactive advising significantly improved their grades and their retention rates over the three-semester evaluation period. The success of the advising program was attributed to the ability of the advisor to time intervention when student needs were the greatest. Proactive advising was characterized by an advisor's purposeful interaction with an advisee to help that student cope with the challenges of college life.

Student perception of improved proactive advising services was surveyed at a large public university and reported by Spicuzza (1992). One of the university's departments instituted a proactive, customer service approach with its advising program. The purpose was to increase student satisfaction with advising services and to increase student persistence in higher education. Survey results showed student approval for (a) having greater access to the advisor, and (b) having a greater emphasis on the advisor-to-advisee working relationship. A second feature of the study was the follow-up survey that indicated that students valued the continued contact with their advisor into and through their senior year. This contrasted with the generally accepted notion that advising was most important to student adjustment and development during the first-year experience. In contrast to those advisees who experienced reduced advisor contact and intervention, advisees appreciated receiving continued advising services offered during their junior and senior academic years. The benefit to the
university was an increased number of satisfied graduates. The longitudinal survey study supported the worth of the program, its profitable investment, and its positive impact on student persistence.

The student advising center at Emporia State University conducted a six-year longitudinal quantitative study that measured the retention rates of students who experienced an intrusive (i.e., proactive) advising program (Backhus, 1989). When compared with retention rates several years before the institution of the proactive advising services, increases in persistence were substantial. Before offering the proactive advising services, persistence-to-graduation rates averaged about 55%. After the advising services were in place, the persistence rates jumped to approximately 75%. No other variable could be identified to explain the drastic improvement. The proactive advising strategies were credited with the improved graduation rates. Administrative approval for continued financial support was a logical benefit of the study.

From an administrator's perspective, Farren and Vowell (1993) were able to defend expenditures for proactive advising services by performing a quantitative survey study with students at Emporia State University. They correlated improved proactive advisor perceptions with improve retention rates. The financial benefits of increased tuition dollars and state support from higher full-time student enrollment assured the continued growth and financial support for the proactive advising services.

As advising personnel consider the use of quantitative research methods, Srebnik (1988) provides a useful review of quantitative
surveys and questionnaires. These research tools are grouped into the following categories: (a) student perceptions of advisors, (b) student perceptions of advising centers, (c) student and advisor perceptions of advising using parallel questions for comparative studies, and (d) advisor perceptions of advising. Srebnik recommended using these to help identify strengths and weaknesses in the advising services. As illustrated in previous quantitative study reviews, results from such surveys can be used to validate program expenditures and to motivate improvement in proactive advising services.

Qualitative Research on Proactive Advising
According to Kuh and Andreas (1991), student affairs personnel need descriptive and useful information in their efforts to better understand student behavior and development. Qualitative methods are appropriate if student personnel desire detailed descriptions from participants that thoroughly describe and explain what is happening (Whitt, 1991; Wolcott, 1990). Trustworthiness in the researcher's findings is influenced by the following: (a) the preparation and qualifications of the investigators, (b) the process of sampling, interviewing, and debriefing participants, and (c) the methods of data collection, analysis, and presentation of the findings. The use of qualitative methods to study how well an advising program is serving student needs (i.e., assessment) can effectively link what services are desired (i.e., objectives) to how services are performed (i.e., methods). To improve the delivery of advising services, directors of advising need to have well-designed objectives for the delivery process based on a thorough study of student needs and advising practices.
Kuh and Andreas (1991) identified three important areas of student service qualitative study that included research, evaluation, and policy analysis. They maintained that qualitative research is useful in (a) researching what needs to be known to promote understanding and to help with decision making, (b) evaluating how well a program is performing, and (c) analyzing policy and decision making procedures to see if they translate effectively into useful experiences for college students. In each of these three areas, useful information can be obtained through such qualitative methods as interviews, observations, focus groups, and document reviews. The focus of this section is on qualitative studies and methods used to develop rich descriptions of proactive advising programs.

Results of Georgia State University's Black Freshmen Network (BFN) proactive advising program were reported by Lewis (1986). The goals of the BFN program addressed the following needs of first-year students by purporting to help them: (a) make the emotional transition to college, (b) understand requirements, rules, and regulations, (c) make the social transition to college life, (d) make the intellectual transition to college, (e) set academic career and personal goals, and (f) seek appropriate academic advising.

The BFN program goals were accomplished by the following personnel: (a) one full-time director who managed the operation and selected participants, (b) 45 volunteer faculty and professional staff who served as mentors, and (c) 20 student peer advisors who met personally or by telephone with assigned first-year students. Peer advisors checked five to seven times per semester on needs, problems,
and areas where assistance could be given.

After a year of operation, a qualitative study collected and analyzed student perceptions of the BFN program. Black freshmen responded to telephone interview questions performed by three trained callers. Findings verified (a) the need for the proactive advising network that addressed student needs and (b) the positive image the advising services portrayed. Student persistence improved over the previous year's ratings. The results were attributed to the proactive advising services.

Hanson and Raney (1993) used focus group qualitative research methods to assess and improve the academic advising program at a large university. Focus group interviews were used to collect information on how the students perceived the delivery of faculty advising services. A summary of student comments and answers to open-ended questions described the advising services. The researcher's understanding of the advising services resulted in a thorough description of the services from which advising personnel were able to make improvements in future services.

Kramer (1992) used focus groups to assess the academic support services at Brigham Young University (BYU). Focus group interviews allowed the researcher to collect information from a number of people simultaneously. Members in the focus group varied in gender, academic standing, and cultural background to promote the collection of a wide variety of perspectives. Trained moderators managed small groups of three and large groups of up to 15 members. Discussions developed from predetermined, open-ended questions. The challenge given to the
focus groups was to discuss the merits of recent orientation information given to advisees and to suggest ways to make improvements. Students were excited about the opportunity for involvement. BYU’s orientation and advisement programs were changed because of the information received from the focus groups. The result was a more student-centered approach in the advising services.

Jacobi (1991) also promoted the use of focus groups in researching advising services citing the following advantages:

1. Group members can communicate in their own language rather than being constrained by the questionnaire's language.
2. Focus groups are much less expensive in cost and time to perform than individual interviews.
3. Group members are motivated to participate when they understand the importance of their contribution.
4. Focus groups promote direct involvement by student service personnel as group leaders or observers.

Jacobi maintained that focus group involvement allowed for better question development, data collection, and application of the findings toward the design and delivery of improved advising services.

The qualitative studies and methods that have been reviewed further illustrate the value and influence qualitative research can have on improving advising services. Drake’s College of Arts and Sciences advising personnel wanted to improve their advising services to open-enrolled, first-year students. They wanted an independent, external researcher to describe the characteristics and qualities of the recent 1991-1992 proactive advising program. Their motivation was to
understand what took place to promote the development and improvement of future advising services. My interests in improving the delivery of advising services at my own academic setting motivated me to consider the research opportunities at Drake University. During the 1992-1993 academic year, I had several interviews with the director of advising. Preliminary approval was established to accomplish a qualitative study on the proactive advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students. The director of advising and assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences reviewed the purposes and methods of the proposed study. In the fall of 1993, the design of the research project came into clear focus, and approval was granted by both Drake and Iowa State University. The following chapter presents the methods of the qualitative study used to describe and assess the proactive advising services given by faculty advisors and peer advisors to first-year, open-enrolled students in the College of Arts and Sciences at Drake University.
METHODS

Overview of Methods

In order to thoroughly describe and assess the advising services, the following qualitative research activities were employed and will be reviewed in this chapter:

1. Stake's (1983) responsive program evaluation model was used to identify perceptions of, experiences in, and reactions to the proactive advising services offered to Drake's first-year, open-enrolled students.

2. Documents from the director's office and numerous interviews with advisors and students who participated in the advising program provided useful data.

3. Interview data were collected through a three step process beginning with pilot study interviews, continuing with regular interviews, and concluding with member check interviews to establish an accurate understanding of participant experiences.

4. Data analysis began by using computer software to organize the interview information into three major divisions including faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees.

5. Unitizing and sorting the data into categories resulted in the identification of themes that described the experiences of the participants.

6. Member checks and peer debriefings were incorporated to test the accuracy of the findings.

7. Reporting the findings and assessment to the director of advising culminated the program evaluation process.

This methods chapter will conclude with a discussion of the four
important indicators of rigor including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) which are useful in establishing the trustworthiness of the research findings.

Responsive Program Evaluation

Using responsive program evaluation procedures helped my qualitative research: (a) to focus directly on the advising program's activities rather than just its intentions, (b) to respond to the director of advising's information needs to improve the advising services, and (c) to account for the different perspectives of faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. My emphasis was on collecting sufficient amounts of qualitative information about the proactive advising program through individual and focus group interviews, as suggested by Stake (1983) and others (Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Jacobi, 1991; Whitt, 1991; Wolcott, 1990), to thoroughly describe and assess the proactive advising services for first-year, open-enrolled students.

The events in the responsive evaluation model listed in Figure 1 were useful in guiding me to accomplish a thorough description and assessment of the 1991-1992 proactive advising program. These events describe how information was collected. The events did not need to occur in a clockwise, step-by-step fashion. On the contrary, I was involved with two or three events simultaneously and moved across to different events or returned to a prior event as the evaluation process unfolded.

In order to establish a comprehensive description of the advising services, I practiced qualitative research methods. Through document reviews and introductory interviews, I was able to collect information
Talk with research committee, director of advising, original advisors and students who participated in the 1991-92 proactive advising services

| Assemble formal report for director of advising and research committee | Identify the scope of the proactive advising service |
| Winnow format for audience use, sort data, rough draft findings | Overview the proactive advising services |
| Validate, confirm, attempt to invalidate through peer debriefings and member checks | Discover purposes and concerns that motivated the services to be designed and delivered |
| Thematize the findings in an on-going process | Conceptualize issues and problems that relate to the program of advising |
| Interview and review documents that describe the advising services | Identify information needs and design focus questions to guide interviews and document reviews |
| Select participants and arrange interviews |

Figure 1. Important events in Stake's responsive evaluation process. The events do not have to occur in a clockwise fashion. Involvement in two or three events can take place simultaneously. Movement can occur to different events or to prior events as the evaluation process unfolds.
to improve my understanding of the rationale and intent of the proactive advising services offered by the College of Arts and Sciences to first-year, open-enrolled students. Additional interviews provided more observations and information about the participants' perceptions of the advising services. Figure 2 illustrates the three levels of investigation that were pursued: (a) antecedents dealt with the context of the advising services, (b) transactions included the processes of planning, implementing, and providing the advising services, and (c) outcomes included the products of planning, implementing, and providing the advising services. Important information was collected in the interview process with each group of participants. Interview questions were used to gather participant perceptions about the purposes, activities, and values of the advising program. From these observations, I attempted to fully describe and fully assess the proactive advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students.

Therefore, the purposes of using the responsive program evaluation design were: (a) to assist me in gathering, through qualitative interviews, a description of the advising activities (i.e., intentions and observations) and (b) to help me make a qualitative analysis and assessment of the worth of those services in context with faculty advisor, peer advisor, and advisee perceptions. Preliminary interviews with the director of advising helped develop an understanding of the rationale behind the advising program. By using interviews to investigate the participants' perceptions of how well the services were designed and delivered, I was able to observe important
values possessed by the participants in the advising program.

In the process of collecting and analyzing descriptive information from the participant interviews about the advising services, I sought to establish a logical relationship between: (a) what were the established purposes and design of the advising services and what was to take

Figure 2. Statements and data to be collected in Stake's responsive evaluation model.
place (i.e., antecedents), (b) what was to happen and what was experienced (i.e., transactions), and (c) what were the desired results and what happened as a result of providing the services (i.e., outcomes). In addition, I tried to establish an agreement between: (a) what was intended to happen to the participants (i.e., intents) and (b) what was experienced by the participants of the advising program (i.e., observations). Stake's (1983) responsive evaluation model helped to bring out the complexity of the advising program by considering each of these descriptive elements. On the basis of this thorough investigation of the characteristics of the advising program, a concluding assessment about the advising services with recommendations was made and presented to the director of advising. Thus, Stake's responsive model for program evaluation was a useful tool in helping me fulfill the purpose of the study which was to observe and assess the over-all effectiveness as perceived by advisors and students of the proactive advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled advisees. A journal of the research activity was maintained throughout the research process to further detail how the study was accomplished (Appendix C).

Data Sources

Documents

The director of advising shared several important documents with me that reviewed the background and operation of the proactive advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students. The President's Task Force Report (1991) discussed the development of the proactive advising services. Concern over student attrition motivated
important recommendations in the areas of curriculum, advising, and student life. Administrative commitment was demonstrated as funds were requested to finance the recommended proactive advising services.

Along with the President's Task Force report, a second report was made available for my review. This report was prepared by the director of advising and presented to NACADA's October 1992 National Conference in Atlanta (Davidson, 1992). The director summarized the design, purpose, delivery, and quantitative survey assessment of the proactive advising services that were offered during the previous academic year. The report was reviewed in the introductory chapter of this research presentation. Information from both of these documents was useful in helping me develop a preliminary understanding of the purposes and design of the 1991-1992 proactive advising program.

Interviews

Interview information collected from the original participants of the proactive advising program was my primary data source. Discussions and document reviews with the director of advising provided me with a general understanding of the advising services. From this introductory level of understanding, I developed a set of interview questions that were to be used in the interview process (Appendix D). These questions were open-ended so as not to restrict the qualitative design of the study. They helped me focus the interview process on the respondent's perspectives and experiences (Merriam, 1988). Interview questions were useful because they reminded interviewees to recall their 1991-1992 advising experiences.
As the study progressed, original interview questions were changed and some new questions were added to the list. This helped me to collect relevant information about each respondent's advising experience. By the end of the interview process, a useful set of revised interview questions were identified (Appendix D). Respondents willingly shared advising perceptions and experiences during each 45 to 60 minute individual interview session. Interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed for data analysis. The data collected through this qualitative research interview method provided ample information to describe and assess the effectiveness the proactive advising services.

Sampling

Status Sampling

To determine who would be interviewed, I used status sampling and snowball sampling (Whitt, 1991). In status sampling, I interviewed only those persons directly involved with the 1991-1992 proactive advising program. The director of advising provided a list of original participants, noting those students who had not returned or who had graduated. From this list I was able to determine the status and availability of each person for future interviews. Status refers to the position or place a person had in the advising services (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees). Their perceptions were important to collect as I sought to describe and assess the effectiveness of the advising program from their perspective.
Snowball Sampling

In the interview process, I desired to get as many different views and experiences as possible. Snowball sampling was used to accomplish this goal. In snowball sampling, I concluded individual interviews by asking student advisees for suggestions on future interviewees. Since I was striving to interview every faculty advisor and available peer advisor, I did not ask them for references. Student advisees were helpful in pointing out several other students on my advisee list as future interview prospects with different experiences. For example, some advisees pointed out athletes, dorm friends, or classmates in different fields of study. Others advisees considered the advising experiences that their friends on the list might have had that were different from their own, so they recommended interviewing those individuals. In my future efforts to schedule interviews with advisees, I attempted to contact as many of those references as possible. Snowball sampling of student advisees proved to be helpful in collecting a variety of experiences and perceptions to broaden my understanding of advisees' experiences in the proactive advising program.

Participants

As previously mention, the director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences provided a list of the original participants in the 1991-1992 proactive advising program. All eight faculty advisors were present on campus during the study. Nine of the 24 peer advisors returned as fourth or fifth-year seniors, and two peer advisors were available and working in the area. Of the 126 first-year students who
received the initial advising services, 86 returned their junior year and were potential respondents during this study. Thus, 105 of the original 158 participants were available for interviewing. Thirty-nine of the available participants were interviewed including eight faculty advisors, seven peer advisors, and 24 student advisees. Most of the peer advisors and student advisees were tradition college-age students who had entered college right after completing high school. Many of the students remained single and lived in campus residence halls or nearby fraternities or sororities.

**Data Collection**

In preparation for scheduling interviews, I mailed an introductory letter to each eligible and available participant (Appendix E). This letter introduced who I was, what my study was about, and the opportunity they had in sharing their perceptions about the former proactive advising program. The form letter was a focal point of discussion when I called to schedule each individual interview. It provided another opportunity to review the purpose of the study.

At the beginning of each interview, I used the respondent consent form (Appendix F) to review the purpose of the study, to share how the information was going to be used, and to state how I would maintain confidentiality. Each respondent was given opportunity to quietly read the consent form. Then, I shared a few verbal comments about the purpose of the study, recording procedures, and how confidentiality would be maintained. This process helped to encourage respondents to focus on the advising experiences of the 1991-1992 academic year.
Pilot Study Interviews

Recommendations were received from the director of advising for the pilot study interviews. The intention was to interview participants who had different experiences from each other and who would likely talk about those experiences. As a result, two faculty advisors, three peer advisors, and six student advisees were interviewed: (a) to gather initial information about their experiences in the advising program, (b) to assess the usefulness of the focus questions, and (c) to provide direction for the remaining interviews.

An interview log (Appendix G) and appointment record were maintained so that interview scheduling efforts would not be duplicated. The interview log included the person's status, the location, and time of interview. Interviews were numbered sequentially to help in the data management and analysis process. Respondent names were not recorded with the interview log or research data to maintain confidentiality.

Pilot study interviews were transcribed and information was reviewed to identify any major themes. From this preliminary review of the interview information, interview questions were redesigned and confirmed with the director of advising and selected research committee members. To improve the clarity, understanding, and usefulness of the interview questions, separate sets of questions were constructed for each group of participants (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees). This initial peer debriefing procedure helped me assess my progress and understanding, an important step in qualitative research (Whitt, 1991).
Interviews

Following the pilot study interviews, the six remaining faculty advisors were interviewed in their faculty office setting. Interviews were conducted with four peer advisors to ascertain their perspectives of the advising program. Two of the four had already graduated, so their interviews took place at their office of employment. Interviews with 18 advisees were made using references from the snowball sampling method. Students were very difficult to reach by phone. Many follow-up calls were made to establish interview appointments. Most of the interviews with student advisees and peer advisors took place in the campus library.

With two additional years of college life, these former student advisees and peer advisors were able to speak from experience about their perceptions of the 1991-1992 proactive advising program. Many of the faculty advisors and students who were interviewed compared recent experiences with their former proactive advising experiences. Since the study was on the former advising experience, introductory comments and interview questions helped to keep the interview discussion centered on the 1991-1992 advising program.

The improved design of the interview questions following the pilot study interviews proved useful in facilitating the flow of the remaining interviews with faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. I was able to give more attention to the respondent's input and response since questions were worded to fit their status and experiences. Audio taping the interviews also provided me the opportunity to listen more intently to the respondent rather than
hastily taking notes. The interview process finished before final exams providing me time for data analysis and focus group interviews with respondents to confirm my understanding of their perceptions of the advising program.

Member Check Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were performed with members of each group (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees) at the conclusion of the interview process. Individuals who had participated in earlier individual interviews were selected based on diversity of perspectives and availability for concluding interviews. This helped to verify my understanding of the major themes that were developed from the interview findings. Additional insights from the respondents provided opportunity to correct my understanding and to improve the presentation of the findings.

Focus group interviews were accomplished with the faculty and peer advisors. Three of the five scheduled faculty members attended a focus group interview to review the themes that summarized their interview findings. Four peer advisors responded to the invitation. Two peer advisors were able to meet together to make-up a small focus group. Two other peer advisors met independently with me to review the summary of their interview findings. In each of these meetings, opportunity was provided to discuss their reactions to the findings along with opportunities to respond to the observations of the other two peer advisors.

Two attempts were made to schedule focus group interviews with student advisees. Because of schedule conflicts related to time
restraints at the end of the semester, only three of the seven scheduled advisees came to the concluding interviews. Each concluding advisee interview was a one-to-one basis. As I met with the second and third advisee, I shared the previous reactions of the other advisee to collect additional reactions or responses. This process helped me to review of the interview findings and confirm my understanding of advisee perceptions of the advising program.

The entire interview process was very rewarding. As previously mentioned, eight faculty advisors, seven peer advisors, and 24 student advisees were interviewed. Focus group interviews included three faculty advisors, four peer advisors, and three student advisees. Meeting personally with the advising program participants helped me to appreciate and understand their experiences and perceptions. I was impressed with their accounts which led to a more thorough understanding of their personal experiences after talking with them face to face.

Data Analysis

Making sense out of the information collected in this qualitative study was an on-going process. Events listed in Stake's (1983) responsive program evaluation model (Figure 1) helped to remind me of important data collection and assessment activities. Just as it was important to collect interview information from the respondents, it was also important to sort through those findings, look for emerging themes, and confirm the accuracy of those understandings in future interviews with former participants of the advising program and with peers and research committee members. As preliminary findings from
document reviews, peer debriefings, and pilot study interviews were reviewed, emerging themes were noted and additional interviews were pursued to collect more information to support or reject the initial understandings. This section explains how, after this preliminary understanding, interview data were analyzed following the qualitative design proposed by Marshall and Rossman (1989) including: (a) data organization, (b) theme development, (c) testing for accuracy, and (d) reporting. By following this design, I was able to fulfill the goal of writing a formal report of the findings and assessment of the proactive advising program.

Preliminary Understanding of Emerging Themes

Reviewing introductory documents about the proactive advising program with the director of advising provided a general understanding of the program's rationale. From those reviews and discussions, a twofold purpose of the study emerged. The qualitative research proposed to describe and assess the 1991-1992 proactive advising program offered to first-year, open-enrolled students. The results and assessment of the study were to be used by the director of advising for planning future advising services.

Peer debriefings with committee members provided preliminary direction and focus to the study. An introductory letter and consent form were developed to communicate the purpose of the study to potential respondents. Interview questions were designed to focus the data collection process. These questions were discussed in peer debriefings. Reviewing the appropriateness of the interview focus questions with the director of advising further helped my introductory
understanding of the advising services and the purpose of the study.

Since individual interviews were audio taped, I was able to have the recordings transcribed for further analysis. In addition, handwritten notes were taken during the interview to help remind me of the major topics that were discussed. Preliminary review of the pilot study interview information revealed several emerging themes including: (a) peer advisor's needed more specific direction and accountability, (b) the director's monthly meetings with advisors and peer advisors were highly valued, (c) the existence of multiple peer advising programs was confusing to advisees, (d) advisees and peer advisors valued the advising relationship with their faculty advisor, (e) the timing of the advisee orientation process started with summer orientation and concluded with new student week activities that took place just before the start of fall classes, (f) and some student advisees had advising experiences that did not match Drake's recruitment message because their advisor was not friendly or caring. After the pilot study interviews, I reconstructed the interview questions, I included additional questions to further my understanding of these emerging themes. These questions and preliminary understandings were shared with the director whose response was very positive. We were able to reaffirm the twofold purpose of the study in the process. Plans were made to begin additional interviews that would build upon my initial understandings of the perceptions faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees had of the 1991-1992 proactive advising program.
Data Organization

Three Divisions of Interview Data

As the interview process continued, it became evident that the amount of information collected was going to be a challenge to manage. I was also beginning to realize that, even though each respondent's experience was unique, faculty advisors as a group had common experiences that were different from peer advisors and from student advisees. As a result, I decided to organize the interview information into three divisions, one for faculty advisors, one for peer advisors, and one for student advisees. This strategy helped me to manage the information and to focus on each group separately as I sought to understand that group's experiences in preparation for future interviews.

Most of the emerging themes were specific to each group of participants, as well, because of their specific role or responsibility in the advising program. For example, faculty advisors felt responsible to encourage advisees to explore their interests by taking a variety of electives. Advisees, on the other hand, felt responsible to finish the graduation requirements in four years. Peer advisors identified both with the advisee's need to declare and the faculty advisor's motivation to promote exploration. As these and other emerging themes became evident and were confirmed or rejected in future interviews, I developed a greater understanding of the advising services that were experienced by faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees.
Computerized Interview Data Cards

Three separate computer software files of the Macintosh Data Collector software (Turner & Handler, 1992) were established to manage the transcriptions from faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee interviews. Interviews were stored on computerized data card folders. Some interviews were long enough to need two data cards. The heading on each data card identified the card number, the status of interviewee, the place and date of the interview, and my name. The heading information would prove useful in the future as respondent comments could be traced back to the interview transcription to review their clarify, meaning, and usefulness in the data analysis process. This helped to establish a reliable audit trail for assessing the confirmability of the findings. As the volume of data increased in the interview process, the value of the Data Collector grew, because information could easily be retrieved by accessing the designated files.

Theme Development

Forming Units

In preparation for identifying and supporting major themes within each of the three divisions, I began the tedious process of unitizing by hand the printed interview transcriptions. This was accomplished by (a) reading the interviewee's comments in context to the questions being addressed, (b) dividing the interviewee's expressions into groups of words that expressed single thoughts, and (c) writing a key word, or code word, next to that unit that summarized that thought. Using the Data Collector software, interview information stored on each data
card could be separated into units and coded to match my written notes. This initial step of unitizing the transcribed interviews was very time consuming. Since the Data Collector software was able to recall each code word individually, it was time well spent in the eventual process of developing themes which were supported by those units.

As the interview process drew to a close, I began to work more intensely with interview information stored on the data cards. Since faculty interviews were stored on a separate set of data cards, peer advisors on another set, and student advisees on a third, I was able to work with each group independently. This was important in the process of identifying units, forming categories, and developing themes, because when faculty advisors considered an issue like the usefulness of peer advisors, they usually spoke from a different perspective than student advisees. For example, faculty advisors considered peer advisors to be useful if they checked on advisee academic progress. The advisees considered peer advisers useful if they helped advisees understand certain professors and their teaching styles. Therefore, it was very helpful to analyze faculty advisor data separate from peer advisor data and student advisee data.

For the sake of repetition, the following discussion will consider how faculty interview information was managed to promote the development of themes that described faculty advisors' perceptions of the proactive advising program. Peer advisor and student advisee interview information was managed in the same manner. Copies of the following steps illustrating this theme development process are included in Appendix H.
Forming Unitized Computer Data Cards

Faculty advisor data cards were unitized with code words using the coding menu on the Data Collector software. Information was transferred from handwritten notes on the printed copies of the faculty advisor interviews. An alphabetical list of code words was automatically stored on the software and later printed out. It helped me see the variety of code words that were used in the unitizing process.

Forming Computer Topic Cards

After all of the data cards were unitized, the next step was to establish topic cards. Topic cards were made by using the utilities menu which instructed the computer to find and copy all of the units with the same code word onto a single topic card. Topic cards were made for each code word. Each topic card consisted of all the same units of information earlier coded on each of the faculty advisor interviews.

Topic cards were printed out to provide the opportunity to read and confirm their proper assortment. Any particular units that were coded and sorted onto specific topic cards incorrectly were then re-coded on the original interview data card and re-sorted to new topic cards. Units of information on each topic card were identified by the original data card number and source. This would prove useful in the future as a data card number could be matched with an actual interview number and the respondent's status (i.e., faculty advisor, peer advisor, or student advisee). After data cards were updated, a new set of topic cards were printed for a second check. An additional review was
accomplished followed by a final correction of the data cards and final printing of the topic cards. From this final printing of the topic cards, I was ready to begin sorting the information into major categories and themes.

**Forming Categories**

The printed topic cards were organized in context to each of the key people involved in the proactive advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee. For example, faculty interview information, now sorted into topic cards could be arranged into categories that described the director's contribution, the faculty's view of their responsibilities and advising activities, the perceptions they had of peer advisors', and the observations and perceptions they had about student advisees.

By categorizing the interview information around the key players of the proactive advising program, I was able to have confidence that the faculty advisors' perceptions of the advising services would be organized in a manageable fashion that would be useful to the director of advising. Since her needs included understanding what took place, how well it took place, and what was recommended for future advising programs, I chose to develop categories based on the three groups of people the director worked with, including her own role, in the process of designing, training, and presenting advising services. I wanted the director to be able to understand the perceptions of each group. Therefore, each of the three major summaries from the faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees, included a categorical breakdown that addressed that group's perceptions of the director,
faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee. These categories helped to organize and to make sense out of the vast amount of interview information that was accumulated.

**Forming Themes**

Once the categories were established, some of the major themes noted in the interview process began to surface. Sets of topic cards were arranged in clusters of similar thoughts. For example, the category of topic cards referring to faculty perceptions of peer advisors included clusters of unitized topic cards on the usefulness of peer advisors while others addressed the disadvantages of the peer advising role in the advising program.

As topic cards were arranged and re-arranged, important themes were established and verified by faculty comments. For example, a cluster of topic cards was identified in the peer advisor category that spoke to the faculty's concern for the lack of accountability while another cluster of topic cards addressed the lack of having clear direction. As these clusters of unitized topic cards were arranged within each category, major themes became evident. These themes were arranged into an outline format.

Observations were made about the appropriateness of the unitized information and initial outline format. At times, I realized, that particular topic cards addressed another theme more. Topic cards were re-arranged to address this observation. This shuffling of the data was an important process in helping me: (a) to make sense out of the information and (b) to prepare for a understandable description of the findings.
A concluding arrangement of the topic cards resulted in a outlined layout of information that described the faculty advisors' perceptions of the director of advising, their own role as advisors, the peer advisor, and the student advisee. The organization of the themes within each category was supported by interview information on the unitized topic card. After reviewing the topic cards and sorting them into an outline arrangement, a topic sentence outline was developed in preparation for the member check session with faculty advisors (Appendix I).

Testing for Accuracy

Member Checks

A focus group interview was accomplished with three faculty members to review the topic sentence description from the interview data analysis. This was a critical step in the research process. It helped to confirm the accuracy of my understanding by providing interview participants the opportunity to critique and respond to the findings. Suggestions were received, clarification was made, and an adjustments in the outline were accomplished.

Peer Debriefings

After the focus group interview with the three advisors was accomplished and several adjustments were made to the outline, the director of advising was given a copy to review. This peer debriefing exercise with the director provided opportunity to receive additional input and to make final adjustments in preparation for the formal writing of the findings, assessment and recommendations.
Reporting

The formal writing of the findings from the interview process was preceded by (a) a thorough review of the unitization and sorting of the data, (b) the formation of categories and outline of themes which were reviewed and confirmed by faculty advisor member checks, and (c) a peer debriefing session with the director of advising. This assured the accuracy and understanding of my data presentation. My goal was to fully describe the faculty advisors' perceptions of the proactive advising program.

Interview Findings

The formal report of the findings included a discussion of the major themes supported by quotations drawn from the unitized topic cards. While formulating the rough draft of the report, printed copies of topic cards were available for visual and manual inspection. When the paragraph summary of the findings was eventually typed, computer access to topic cards was made possible by the Data Collector software. This allowed me to copy and paste into the paragraph description useful quotations to support the paragraph presentation. I followed the same process of unitizing, categorizing, theme development, and testing with the peer advisor and student advisee interview information. This helped to produce three separate interview findings of the major themes that described the perceptions of each group of participants. These findings were presented to the director of advising for review and confirmation. They represented my efforts to fully describe the advising services through the eyes of the participants.
Program Assessment

Considering Stake's responsive model of program evaluation (Figure 2), I was motivated to accomplish the second part of my research purpose, assessing the proactive advising program. I prepared my assessment of the proactive advising program, based upon the findings presented in three separate summary reports. Even though faculty advisors viewed the advising services differently from peer advisors and differently from advisees, I began to realize an overriding theme in each of the three separate summaries. Each summary was written in context to the major roles in the advising program including the director of advising, the advisors, the peer advisors, and the advisees. Each participant valued the advising relationship he or she had with the other two in the design of the program. In my efforts to understand the experiences of the participants, I became aware that certain characteristics strengthened the advising relationship and certain characteristics weakened the advising relationship between participants. With all three summaries before me, I identified major characteristics that strengthened the advising relationship or that weakened the advising relationship. Discussing these characteristics and how they supported the advising relationship or distracted from the advising relationship became the focal point of my assessment of the proactive advising program. In this phase, perceptions from each of the three groups were used to support the assessments.
Recommendations

Recommendations were included in the assessment discussion to address those characteristics of the advising program that weakened the advising relationship. Current advising program manuals and brochures were included in the appendices of the final formal report. Many of these examples were collected in a recent national conference sponsored by NACADA. A formal presentation of the assessment and recommendations was made to the director of advising. A peer debriefing conference was held with the director, and the report was reviewed. The findings, assessment, and recommendations were appreciated and conclusions were confirmed. Plans were being made by the director to incorporate some of the suggestions into the advising services as early as this fall.

Stake's (1983) responsive model of program evaluation was useful in guiding my research efforts: (a) to be responsive to interview information by summarizing the data into important themes that told the participants' story, and (b) to be responsive to the director's need for an assessment and for recommendations based on those interview findings to improve future advising services. The assessment provided the director with a description of the strengthening characteristics of the advising program upon which to build future services. Weakening characteristics of the program were also addressed, and recommendations were discussed to help improve future advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students. Developing a thorough picture of the advising program through the eyes of the participants gave the director of advising a fresh appreciation of who
she was serving and how to better serve them in the future.

**Indicators of Rigor**

The qualitative research design of this study was strengthened by giving attention to the four important indicators of rigor including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The following discussion demonstrates how these indicators helped establish the trustworthiness of the findings and assessment of the proactive advising program study.

**Credibility**

Credibility addresses the reader's concerns over the accuracy and trustworthiness of the findings. In order to establish credible results from my qualitative study, I performed the following activities in the data collection, analysis, and presentation process:

1. Triangulation of information among the three groups of advising participants (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees) provided contrasting perspectives of the advising services which helped me to better understand the whole scope of the program. Also, by comparing interview data with earlier document reviews and discussions with the director of advising, I was able to confirm my preliminary understanding of the advising services offered to first-year advisees. This was especially helpful in making sense out of the advising activities that actually took place and those activities each group of participants wished had occurred. For example, understanding the level of importance each group placed upon declaring a major was more fully appreciated by comparing and contrasting each groups perspective during the interview process. Advisors' views were often
different from advisees. Peer advisors had different perspectives from their older student point-of-view than first-year student advisees. Understanding these different perspectives helped me to more accurately describe their advising experiences.

2. Peer debriefings were held periodically with the director of advising and research committee members to review my research progress and check my understanding of the findings. Preliminary findings were reviewed after initial pilot study interviews were accomplished. The design and content of interview questions were critiqued and recommendations were received to improve their use in the data collection process. Discussing the progress and initial impressions with my peers helped me to address the challenge of understanding the diversity of perceptions among the respondents. Peer debriefings also encouraged me to consider the option of presenting the findings in three separate sections rather than one cumulative report. This allowed me to keep each of their accounts separate and understandable to the reader.

3. Numerous interviews with many of the available participants also influenced the credibility of this study. For example, all eight former faculty advisors were interviewed to promote an in-depth description of their view of the advising program. In addition, pilot study interviews provided a preliminary understanding of the advising program. Future interviews were more productive in collecting descriptive information to support or clarify earlier understandings. A wide range of respondent experiences were collected from the interview process to reflect the diversity of viewpoints and
perceptions among and within each of the three groups of participants. This improved my effort to fully describe the advising services from the participants viewpoint.

4. Member checks were performed informally during the interview process and officially after the individual interviews were accomplished. At the conclusion of many of the interviews I would review respondent input to check my understanding. I would also address any earlier perceptions of other respondents in order to solicit a reaction that confirmed or clarified the present interviewee's experience. After individual interviews were completed and data analysis had produced an outline of major themes, formal member check interviews were accomplished to confirm my understanding and interpretation of the findings. Major categories and themes were presented in outline form to these small focus groups represented by several members from each of the three groups of participants. This allowed participants time to judge the quality and accuracy of my findings and to provide feedback to improve my understanding and presentation. This debriefing process was valuable because it validated my understandings of each group's perception of the advising services. Confident assessment and recommendations would rest on the accuracy of these interview findings. Providing participants an opportunity to read and confirm my early attempts to portray their advising experiences improved the credibility of the final report.

5. A concluding series of peer debriefings were performed with the director of advising to review each of the three presentations of interview findings from the faculty advisors, peer advisors, and
student advisees. Based upon those findings, an assessment and recommendations report was presented and reviewed in a concluding peer debriefing session. Questions were addressed and notes were taken to further improve the official presentation of the findings and assessment. This important communication process improved the accuracy of the report and its usefulness to the director of advising.

Transferability

Transferability deals with the usefulness of the findings to the reader. Because this study was commissioned by Drake's College of Arts and Sciences advising office, it was important that the descriptive report of the findings with concluding assessment and recommendations be clearly presented in a useful format to the director of advising. This was accomplished by presenting the findings in three parts to explain the experiences of faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. The purpose of a three part presentation was to assure clear understanding of each group's perception of the advising services and to promote personalized planning, training, and delivery of future services. The assessment and recommendations were presented in a two part presentation in order to communicate both (a) the attributes of the advising program upon which to build future services, and (b) the deficiencies of the advising program with accompanied recommendations to address needed improvements.

The transferability of this research to other campus settings was promoted by my attempt to fully describe and fully assess the advising program at Drake. By developing three separate descriptive accounts
from faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee perspectives, I purposed to communicate the characteristics of the proactive advising program as they were viewed by each group of participants. By presenting this clear distinction between the participants' perceptions of the advising services, I hoped to help the reader make application to his or her own advising program as consideration is given to faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee needs. For example, other advising personnel may be considering the use of peer advisors in their advising program. From this three part presentation, they will be able to review specifically the role peer advising had in Drake's advising program. The assessment and recommendations were also fully developed and illustrated to help encourage the reader to consider how appropriate and applicable those observations are to his or her own academic setting.

Dependability

Dependability addresses the concern that qualitative research be conducted in such a way that resulting conclusions are worthy of consideration. In my efforts to produce dependable results and recommendations, I performed a set of pilot interviews to test the usefulness of initial interview questions and to confirm preliminary understandings of the advising services. Improved question design and better understanding of the participants' experiences helped the interview process to operate more smoothly and effectively. For example, improved question design helped me to focus more on respondent input rather than how to re-word generic questions to fit the respondent's status. This allowed me to be more attentive and
responsive to the interviewees perceptions.

By recording each interview, I was able to have dependable and accurate transcriptions of respondent input for future data analysis. Transcribed interview information was transferred to a computer software file to help me manage all the information that was collected. Once interview data was unitized, information could be efficiently retrieved to support the theme development process.

Confirmability

The confirmability of a qualitative study is the fourth important indicator of research rigor that supports the accuracy and usefulness of the findings. In order to assure that another researcher could arrive at similar interpretations of the interview data, I maintained the following records: (a) a journal of research activity, (b) actual audio tapes of each interview, (c) typed transcriptions of each interview, (d) hard copies of computer files showing data unitization, sorting, theme development, and preliminary outlines for member checks and peer debriefings, and (e) member checks and peer debriefing notes. Maintaining this record of activity represented my effort to establish an audit trail which could be followed by another researcher to confirm the results that I obtained and reported. By giving attention to the credibility, transferability, and dependability, confirmability of the research findings, I was able to strengthen the trustworthiness of my advising program study.

Since this qualitative study proposed to describe and assess the advising program, standards for program evaluation (The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1981) were given
important consideration as the research project proceeded from the development of the proposal through the data collection and analysis phase to its completion and presentation. Standards within each of the four qualities of program evaluation were practiced throughout the research process.

1. Utility standards were followed to insure that useful information was reported to meet the needs of the director of advising.
2. Feasibility standards were followed so that I was able to perform the study in an undistruptive, politically viable, and cost effective manner.
3. Propriety standards were practiced to protect the rights of participants in the study through proper conduct and honest reporting.
4. Accuracy standards were followed so that I produced valid information through sound research methods in order to determine the worth or merit of the advising program.

Research activities to support these standards are listed in Appendix J. Giving my attention to both indicators of rigor and standards of program evaluation encouraged professional research practices during the data collection, analysis, and reporting processes.
FINDINGS
Overview of Findings

An extensive interview process took place to develop a thorough description of the 1991-1992 fall program of proactive advising services given to first-year, open-enrolled student advisees entering the College of Arts and Sciences. Three separate sections have been written to present the perceptions of faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. From qualitative data analysis, major themes were identified to portray each group's perception of the advising services in an effort to fully describe the advising program.

In the following three sections, effort has been made to share from the participant's experience what the context of the advising services was, how those services were delivered, and what outcomes were experienced. Faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee perceptions are presented separately to allow the reader to clearly understand each group's advising experiences. The presentation in each section has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including: (a) the director of advising, (b) the faculty advisor, (c) the peer advisor, and (d) the student advisee.

Though there were some similarities in their perspectives, more often there was a difference in how faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees viewed the advising services and how those services were delivered. For example, the director of advising was viewed in similar ways by each of the three groups of respondents. All three groups viewed the director as a resource person who selected and
trained faculty advisors and organized monthly meetings.

Contrasting perspectives of the faculty advisor's role were noted among the three groups. Both faculty advisors and student advisees agreed that faculty advisors practiced proactive advising, promoted the exploration of academic interests, and promoted non-academic involvement. In contrast, peer advisors noted that faculty advisors failed to establish a working relationship with peer advisors, failed to provide clear direction to peer advisors, and were inadequately matched with peer advisors. Student advisees also felt faculty advisors provided biased course selection advice and were uninformed of general education requirements. Along with these concerns, both peer advisors and student advisees expressed concern about how faculty advisors demonstrated Drake's recruitment message.

When considering the role of the peer advisor, each group of respondents raised different issues which were salient for them. Faculty advisors recognized the assistance peer advisors provided but were concerned about special challenges peer advisors presented in the advising process. Peer advisors acknowledged their role in providing advisee assistance, but noted some disadvantages of being a peer advisor to student advisees and suggested improvements for personal training and establishing accountability. Students acknowledged the peer advisor's role but suggested that better communication of the purpose of peer advising was needed and that peer advisors needed to have earlier involvement with advisees.

As first-year students, advisees were viewed differently by faculty and peer advisors. Faculty advisors noted that students
responded positively to faculty delivered advising services, networked with friends, and developed academically and socially. Peer advisors, in contrast, felt that advisees responded timidly to peer advising, needed assistance with college adjustments, and needed help in deciding on a major. Advisees viewed themselves as new students who varied in degrees of development, responded positively to faculty delivered advising services, supplemented peer advisors with a network of friends, appreciated the potential of peer advisors, benefited from having the faculty advisor as a professor, experienced the application of Drake's recruitment message, suggested faculty advisor accountability and assessment, decided on a major, and needed advisee training.

The following sections, describing how each group of participants viewed the proactive advising program from their individual perspectives, will lay a foundation of understanding for assessing the advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled advisees. Stake's (1983) responsive program evaluation model was useful in helping the researcher investigate and describe the complexity of the proactive advising services delivered to first-year, open-enrolled students at Drake University.

Faculty Advisor Perceptions

The advising services to first-year, open-enrolled students in the College of Arts and Sciences took on a proactive advising characteristic during the 1991-92 academic year. Each faculty advisor was interviewed and willingly expressed their perceptions of the advising program. The following paragraphs describe their experiences
As faculty advisors.

As mentioned earlier, the presentation of faculty advisor perceptions has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee. This will help the reader to see how faculty advisors viewed their own role along with their perceptions of the other people who were part of the advising program.

The Director of Advising

Selected and Trained Faculty Advisors

According to faculty advisors, the director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences selected eight faculty advisors to be involved in the proactive advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students. Each of the faculty advisors was chosen by the director from a small pool of volunteers. The director met with faculty advisors during the summer of 1991 to orient them to their new responsibilities. This initiated the formal advisor training sessions that were to follow in the fall and spring semesters. "Just having the program itself was a motivating factor" according to one particular faculty advisor (42).

Along with student records and fall course schedules, one of the more useful items given to faculty advisors was an advising appointment record (Appendix A). This form was used to record the advising process with each advisee. The recording procedure encouraged persistence, improved performance and accountability. "It gave me some ideas to follow" without feeling "regimented" (18).
Another advisor found it "helpful in that (she) kept referring to it, and it kept reminding (her) of things that would be important to talk about" (1). The advising appointment record provided "a place to keep notes and made (her) think about (events) which (she) wouldn't have thought about" (1). For example, one advisor stated "it never occurred to me that there might be problems at Thanksgiving or Christmas because of going home or getting back in touch with parents" (17). The agenda on the form reminded advisors to check out potential concerns along with academic issues. This proactive tool in the advising program helped improve faculty advising performance.

Organized Monthly Meetings

One of the directors most beneficial contributions to the advising program was the organizing and supervising of monthly meetings for participating faculty and peer advisors. Faculty advisors noted the following four major benefits about these monthly meetings:

1. They created numerous opportunities for advisors to share personal experiences, successes, and frustrations over advising services with the other faculty advisors and peer advisors.
2. They provided supervised opportunities to discuss personal strategies for advising undeclared majors.
3. They gave special speakers opportunities to address specific campus support services (i.e., tutoring, counseling center, career center).
4. They provided time to review how well the advising program was progressing.

Faculty advisors expressed delight with the monthly meetings, because they provided an opportunity to share how well the advising
process was going.

(The meetings) gave me a chance to have a catharsis and gave others a chance to have a catharsis about their feelings. (They shared) feelings of frustration or euphoria, or a sense of accomplishment that helped to bring about cohesiveness in the group, which has helped me to deal better with my feelings. (20)

It was really helpful to me not only to have conversations with other advisors but to have conversations with (the director). (25)

During the meetings, faculty advisors were given ample opportunities to share what they were doing with their advisees. Advising strategies were discussed to address the challenges of assisting open-enrolled students. The advisors appreciated the opportunity "to discuss the kinds of problems that they were running into, and some of the strategies that they were developing (with peer advisors) to try to deal with those problems" (9). "Just having the opportunity to explore with other people (to see what they were doing) in advising..." was a valued experience for faculty advisors (18). The director contributed to the professional development of each advisor by providing these monthly meetings.

Though discussion of advising strategies was encouraged, some advisors felt that more direction could have been offered beyond the discussion and sharing level.

It seemed that at those meetings we kind of bounced back and forth about these two ideas (on what we were doing and on what needed to be done)... I felt that we didn't have a focus (on how to advise). (18)
I think one of the problems with (the discussion approach) is that we are all going to do advising in our own particular ways. What will work for someone else may not work for me. (19)

Another concern expressed by several faculty advisors regarding the meetings was the use of special speakers representing various campus services like tutoring and counseling. Some advisors appreciated the information shared by the counseling center representative who discussed what was available to assist advisees.

I knew they were there, and I knew that they offered counseling, but it was never clear to me until after that meeting. (9) It gave that advisor confidence to make advisee referrals, when appropriate, to those services.

Another advisor, however, stated that "the speakers for the meetings just left (him) cold" (25). When asked about the value of the meetings in regards to information about campus services, another advisor's perception was very informing. She stated:

To be honest, nothing (was gained). Partly because the people coming in and doing presentations. I don't remember a word of them. I dare say that probably no one else remembers those little nuggets of information. I think because what we are doing, we learn in part by doing (not by being told). (19)

As faculty advisors considered the benefits of the monthly meetings, the positive comments far out numbered the negative ones. The value and frequency of the meetings were recognized because of the newness of the program.

Most of (the meetings) were pretty good sessions. I don't know if
you had this program year in and year out that you would need them, because we were being introduced to things that we had never looked at. Once you are introduced to those things, I don’t know that you need to be introduced (to them) every year. (14)

Besides providing opportunities to discuss advising strategies and introductory training, the director also allowed informal assessment to occur. Faculty advisors appreciated the opportunity of "checking to see how (they) were doing compared to others" (18).

It was reassuring that not everyone had done every single thing that was suggested. Some had done more things and some had done fewer. (17)

By providing and leading the monthly meetings, the director was a catalyst behind the faculty advisors' involvement and performance.

**Acted as a Resource Person to Faculty Advisors**

The director was an important resource person to the faculty advisor and the advising process.

(The director) offered some information on advising that was helpful to me. To be honest, advising at Drake has always been something like parenting. No one ever tells you how to do it but you are supposed to be really good at it. Everyone said it was important, but no one gave any tips or hints (like the director did) on how to (advise). (1)

The resource provided by the director encouraged faculty involvement in the proactive advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students. By assisting the faculty advisor with advisee information, advising strategies, advising assistance, and personal input, the
director of advising played a key role in leading the newly developed advising program. Faculty advisors appreciated the input from the director of advising that promoted the development of their advising skills. Having recently been nominated to receive an advising award in the College of Arts and Sciences, the director was recognized for her contribution to the advising services.

The Faculty Advisor

Under the leadership of the director of advising in the College of Arts and Sciences, faculty advisors saw themselves fulfilling four essential tasks in the process of advising first-year, open-enrolled students. Those tasks were: (a) practicing a proactive advising strategy, (b) promoting the exploration of academic interests, (c) encouraging involvement in non-academic interests, and (d) referring students to various campus services. The eight faculty advisors who participated in the advising program represented six different departments on campus. The diversity of academic background and personal advising experiences brought a range of ideas, interests, and skills to the advising program. Even though this diversity existed, each advisor had a clear focus on the over-all proactive strategy of advising first-year, open-enrolled advisees.

Practiced Proactive Advising

Providing proactive advising was considered the primary task of faculty advisors. Many advisors made excellent effort to initiate contacts with advisees regularly during the first semester to establish a helping relationship.

We were urged to be very hands on, very interactive with the
students and where some advisors tend to be much more hands off or wait until the students comes to you with problems or concerns, we were taking a different approach. We were contacting them frequently and we were trying to establish a relationship with them and not waiting for them to want to establish a relationship with us. (1)

If I've learned anything from the program, it might be that there are advantages to being proactive. (9)

One key advantage that came from the proactive advising strategy was that each faculty advisor was being encouraged by the director to initiate early, informal, friendly contacts with advisees to enhance the advising relationship.

Early in the semester, several advisors took their advisees to lunch on campus. Advisors attempted to establish rapport and begin the advising relationship by meeting with several student advisees in small, informal groups. One particular advisor initiated contact with her advisees by having them over to her house for a cook out and get-acquainted time. By her account, the event was very successful.

One of the best things I did (as an advisor), and this wasn't an official part of the program, was that the first weekend that (my advisees) were on campus, I invited them all to my house for a meal. They didn't all come, but those who did come had a good time. They talked their heads off, and I thought that they were not going to go home. The conversation just went on and on. It was about trying to keep track of all the keys that just came into their lives, how to figure out the telephone, how to figure out
their computer, and how to figure out how to live with their roommate. There was a lot of conversation about different family styles. I felt that I got to know a lot about them. There were about 12 of the 18 that came. (1)

These informal gatherings helped new students get introduced to their advisor in a friendly, non-academic, and non-threatening way. The advisor benefited from these proactive approaches because strong bonds with advisees were developed to produce a positive advisor-to-advisee relationship.

Looking back over their advising experiences, many faculty advisors considered the early weeks of the fall semester to be crucial in establishing an effective, proactive advising relationship. Learning from the experience, one advisor appropriately summarized the reasons for early involvement.

How important it is to get in touch right away. It makes so much difference. There is no systematic way to do that. Just call them up and say that you need to see them in the first week. (17)

Several advisors expressed interest in being involved in summer orientation when new students sign-up for first semester courses. They desired to be included in on first semester class scheduling plans.

I always thought that this was were we failed. (Advisees) are signed up for their fall semester courses by a team (of summer orientation academic advisors). We (as faculty advisors) have to live with the results. We probably (would) assign them to the same courses most of the time. It would be nice to (be part of the) decision. (14)
Early summer (would be the best time to meet the advisees initially) when they came to work out their (class) schedule. We should have been a part of that before they had any other distractions. (18)

It was clear that faculty advisors desired to be more involved with advisees at the very beginning of the new student's higher education experience. Any delay in the process interrupted the development of the advising relationship.

(The advising strategy) became better defined (as the semester progressed), but by then the dye was already cast. Really when the freshmen needed the guidance was very early on in each semester, especially the first semester. By the time my group figured out what was going on, it was kind of late. (18)

Since the approval of the open-enrolled advising program was not granted until late spring, many of the advising strategies and procedures came into focus after the fall semester began. Faculty advisors felt that they were learning as they progressed into the fall semester. For some, the learning process was too late and the advising relationship was not developed in time to benefit the advisee. Nonetheless, many advisors believed that practicing proactive advising was what made their advising efforts successful.

Using a proactive advising strategy was also influential in promoting the development of advising skills that led to greater satisfaction in advising and an improved advising relationship.

I learned to keep records. Rather than waiting for the advisee to initiate and come to see me, I now am more proactive and I know
my advisees a little better. I tell all my new advisees that I want them to come in and see me during the first two weeks of class and let me know how things are going. I am not sure I was as sensitive before I got into this program to how much good a good advisor can actually do. (9)

Out of that (proactive advising) process my ongoing relationships with those students (were) much deeper than my relationships had been with general advisees in preceding years. (25)

According to faculty advisors, many advisees viewed the improved advising relationship as a meaningful demonstration of the admissions' office recruitment message. Perspective students were encouraged to come to Drake because faculty personally care about them. When this topic was addressed in the interview process, many advisors acknowledged the proactive advising program's contribution. One advisor compared the open-enrolled advising program with more recent freshmen seminar experiences by stating that "both end up supporting what the recruitment (staff personnel) tell (prospective students) that is going to happen" (25). In contrast to the proactive advising strategy, faculty advisors did not perceive that Drake's recruitment message was supported by the usual advising practices.

Because the college didn't have any expectation on us, there wasn't any reason for me to call (the advisee) and get information. Typically I saw (advisees) only when they needed my signature. (1)

It was encouraging to see advisors relate the proactive advising service to the challenge of fulfilling Drake's recruitment message to
new students.

They judge things here first by teaching, scholarship, and service. The advising should be one of those. In a sense advising should be seen as a goal of a teacher. It should be part of the teachers role. They are not to just give information and knowledge, which is the narrowest vision of teaching, but the advising really ought to be advising/mentor. Usually teachers are remembered more for (advising) then for giving the facts. Teaching is considered the most important, but advising needs to be more a part of it. I think that the relationship is very important. (20)

Relating advising responsibilities to the teaching role was a very meaningful observation. Considering that these advisors volunteered to be involved in the open-enrolled advising program, I was not surprised that they identified with and encouraged the need for improved advising services on Drake's campus to help demonstrate the recruitment message that faculty do care about student success.

Promoted the Exploration of Academic Interests

Promoting the exploration of academic interests was an important faculty advisor task.

I try to help (advisees) identify interests that they have. What kind of things they like to do. Are they a people person? I then try to get them to take a course in something they are interested in because they can learn some general things and also have hands on experience in that field. I think that it is important to help them explore ideas and get them thinking about (a major). (1) I never got the feeling (that declaring a major) was a very
important concern. (We were not concerned with) steering them toward any particular position. That might have been a part of the long term plan, but I didn't get the feeling that this was what I was supposed to be doing. The first two years it is just general subjects (that) students take. I didn't feel that the students were seen as people who needed to start getting their thoughts organized and directed toward a major. I never felt that I had to do that. What I wanted to do was ask the students what courses really interested them. Then we would pick from that. (20)

Sessions with first-year, open-enrolled advisees were focused more on the importance of variety and quality of academic experiences than on advising which major to declare and what required courses to take within that major.

I don't push picking a major as much as picking a direction. I advise them to explore some region instead of being all over the place. (18)

My emphasis was in broadening their experience and getting them exposed to good people and good courses. Choosing a major was never a problem. (17)

Because of this exploratory emphasis in advising, faculty advisors typically saw the need for declaring a major to be a sophomore decision rather than a first-year decision.

I didn't really feel that there was a time (during that first year) when I felt I needed to guide them into making a decision. (20)

Yeah, if they don't select a major until they're sophomores or juniors, that's no big deal to me because most of the majors are
such that even if you started your junior year you could (still finish in four years). Now that's not so true in physics, but you know, it may not be so true in biology because some of the departments have majors where it's very sequential. But in political science and economics and sociology and geography, and to some degree in psychology, in English and speech and communications, and in philosophy, none of that is important. I mean, if somebody doesn't take their first course in sociology until the first semester of their junior year, they still have plenty of time to complete the major. (9)

As a result of emphasizing the exploration of the advisee's interests, faculty advisors usually advised taking general education courses after electives in areas of academic interests were selected.

Keeping current on newly established general education requirements was viewed by advisors as busy work compared to the real task of advising the open-enrolled student through the adjustment process advisees need to make academically and socially. This was supported by the view of one advisor who stated that it was not the "best use of (her) time" (19) to be sorting out the general education requirements. She looked upon the task as being very demeaning as well as very time consuming.

I could talk about something more seriously. As it is, I feel that a lot of my time in advising is used up by my being a substitute clerk of some sort. There are a good many faculty here who probably (a) don't care about the course distribution requirement or (b) have learned that these requirements change every two
years and (we) can't actually keep up with what (those general education requirements) are right now. (19)

Advising open-enrolled students through the general education core requirements was a definite challenge for many advisors. Some of the frustration of advising what general education requirements were for first-year students was due to the advisor's own specialization. Most advisors understood their own program requirements very well. However, they usually lacked an understanding of what the general education core requirements were for Drake students. The other factor that contributed to the challenge of advising which courses to take was the fact that general education core requirements have gone through several changes over the past few years. Without a working knowledge of general education requirements, many faculty advisors chose to encourage the exploration of academic interests in a variety of elective course offerings that were available to most students.

Promoted Non-Academic Involvement

The third task that faculty advisors perceived as important to their advising role was that of encouraging advisee involvement in non-academic activities.

The goal of this (advising) program was more to get the students integrated into Drake University rather than to get them to declare a major. (9)

Faculty advisors encouraged advisee involvement in clubs, intercollegiate sports, intramural sports, concerts, and community activities. Faculty valued these extra-curricular activities for their influence upon the advisee's social and physical development. Through
these experiences, advisors hoped that advisees would also be able to explore their interests and, from those experiences, be able to make better decisions about future choices.

Made Referrals

Faculty advisors appreciated the existence of support services such as tutoring, writing center, and counseling that provided advisees with assistance in areas advisors felt unprepared or unable to help. Advisors felt it was helpful to refer students to various campus services as the need was expressed. Making referrals helped to link the student to campus services and personnel who would ultimately promote student development and academic success. As one advisor summarized:

I have sent people to all of those. I have some sense as to what they are like. Certainly the tutoring center often. (19)

Making referrals to these campus services was likely considered a minor advising function for the advisor, because students usually resisted the suggestion. Campus services were seen as user-friendly by advisors, but some advisors sensed that advisees were not always motivated to make use of them.

Getting students who don't write well to go to the writing center is sometimes a project. Convincing them that the reason they are doing poorly on exams is because they can't write a sentence that means anything. It's not as easy as it looks. They think that they know what they are doing and are often resistant to being told that there is something wrong. (19)

I sometimes tell those students who clearly need some help from
the counseling center: don't be embarrassed about it. They're not going to put you through a year and a half of psychotherapy. They've already talked to hundreds and thousands of students with loneliness, sexual identity problems, feelings of low self-esteem, and they really have some short-cut ways of helping people. So you really get some quick help, but that's because they're experienced at it. (9) Encouraging students to take advantage of the help provided by service centers was a challenging exercise for most faculty advisors. Making referrals, though seen minor in comparison to providing proactive advising and exploring academic and non-academic interests, was an observable outcome of the advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students.

The Peer Advisor

Peer advisors were recruited by the director of advising to assist faculty advisors. The director selected older, experienced students to fulfill this role. Each faculty advisor was randomly assigned three peer advisors. Peer advisors were then randomly assigned to five or six advisees. Each peer advisor was given a small stipend for his or her advising services. The faculty advisors' perceptions of the impact of the peer advising role were twofold: (a) peer advisors were able to assist the advisor from a student's viewpoint, but they often did not perform well, and (b) peer advisors brought to the advising program special challenges for the faculty advisor because of their lack of preparation, varying degrees of motivation, and variety of personal experiences.
Provided Assistance to Faculty Advisors

Faculty advisors openly discussed the advantages and disadvantages of having peer advisors. One of the main advantages of having peer advisors was that they provided an additional contact opportunity to check on advisee progress.

To start with I had three (peer advisors) that helped me very much. (They) immediately made contact with the five students that they had been assigned. I had contact with the (peer advisors), and then I had contact with the students (advisees). So I felt like I knew everyone better. (14)

Faculty advisors valued the ability peer advisors had in relating to the student advisees. Having just recently experienced first-year student adjustment challenges, many peer advisors were able to relate directly to the advisee at his or her level emotionally, socially, and academically. This understanding benefited the advisor.

Yes, (the peer advisor) would keep in touch with me. She would say that (the advisee) isn't catching on, she isn't adjusting well, or she is unhappy in her housing situation. Well then that was a spring board for me to be in touch with her (the advisee) to say, "How is your life going? How are things in the dorm?" This was to see if she wanted to open up and see if we could figure out what to do to solve the problem. (The peer advisor) was much better at identifying with the student. (1)

However, peer advisor efforts to help faculty advisors were not always well received by the advisees. Faculty advisors observed that peer advisors were often rejected by their advisees by being told that
their assistance was not needed. Peer advisors lacked experience on how to deal with this rejection without taking it personally.

When you reach out to try to help students sometimes you don't always get accepted. We can deal with it pretty well, but with some of these (peer advisors), they would visit some of the people they were assigned to work with, and (the peer advisors) in effect got a yawn in the face, or they kept being told (by the advisee) I don't have any problems. You don't have to drop in to visit me, I'm not a child. A lot of (peer advisors) had the experience of finding that their supposed advisees really didn't know them, didn't want to talk to them, and (they) picked other friends. (9)

Even though there was resistance, some peer advisors persisted by making extra efforts to connect with advisees.

(The peer advisor) seemed more interested in really helping the people make a connection. He was willing to go out of his way to find (his advisees). He wasn’t so easily put off by some of their responses. (18)

Many faculty advisors tried to help their peer advisors adjust to this problem of advisee rejection. Peer advisors who persisted provided important assistance to their faculty advisor. However, many peer advisors did not persist in the advising efforts and were not helpful to faculty advisors or advisees as a result.

Presented Special Challenges to Faculty Advisors

Though faculty advisors felt it was a challenge helping peer advisors cope with advisee rejection, three greater concerns were
noted by faculty advisors that influenced how they perceived the effectiveness of peer advisors. These faculty advisor concerns were over: (a) the lack of sufficient training and role clarification, (b) the lack of accountability and guidelines for supervision, and (c) the lack of harmony between peer advisor input and faculty advisor input to advisees.

As one faculty advisor testified, limited peer advisor training and clear definition of the peer advisor's role and responsibilities caused many problems for the peer advisor.

A lot of (peer advisors) are not experienced at (advising), even though (the director) did try to do some training programs for them. But I don't think she could, and I don't think we could at that time, identify all the kinds of skills that these (peers) would need. (9)

The lack of peer advisor training and the lack of having a clear job description resulted in unreliable peer advising performance. This became very frustrating to advisors.

One of the biggest problems that I had in this whole program was trying to motivate some of my (peer advisors) to do their job. That was the biggest deficit in the whole program. (9)

The struggles some faculty advisors had with their assigned peer advisors led them to conclude that peer advisors "were not worth it" (17). These faculty advisors felt that their advising services were as successful without the peer advising assistance as those advisors who had reliable peer advisors.

From my point of view, the whole process was successful without
the peer advisors. With my sixteen (advisees), we would have been just as successful without peer advisors as we were with them. (25)

Many faculty advisors wished that earlier clarification of peer advisor duties had been in place prior to the start of the fall semester. I don't know much about the peer advising program, but my sense of the peer advisors was that they were simply (confused). They just couldn't figure out what they were supposed to be doing. (17) Clearly defined expectations were needed. "Nobody had a clear answer" (17) as to what to expect of peer advisors.

I mean, I was quite frustrated with several of my peer mentors that I felt were close to useless. (9)

My relationship to my peer advisors was almost a zero. (25) Related to these impressions was the advisor's perception that peer advisors lacked supervision guidelines and accountability.

If I were in charge of this program, I would early on meet with the faculty advisors and discuss this problem of motivation and supervision of the peer mentors and I would develop some strategies for sort of management by objectives with these peer advisors. I would make it very clear to the faculty advisors that it is their responsibility to insure that (the peer advisors) that they are supervising know exactly what it is that (peer advisors) are supposed to do, exactly how to do it, without being too authoritarian (as faculty advisors). (9)

The desire to have clearly defined responsibilities and more accountability for peer advisors was expressed. Faculty advisors felt
that the outcome would be improved supervision and improved performance.

The amount of available time to coordinate and supervise their three peer advisors was another factor that concerned faculty advisors. (It was difficult) trying to develop (an advising) relationship (with peer advisors) at the same time (that effort was needed with) new students. It was like a dual job. (The peer advisor) was very hard to catch and I didn't hear much from him. I always felt like I was chasing him to get information. (18)

Such comments reflected the frustration of those faculty advisors who were already giving additional advising time to their assigned open-enrolled advisees. Having to supervise three peer advisors who were not performing well added to faculty advisors' responsibilities.

Several faculty advisors had a suggestion to address this time consuming challenge of supervising peer advisors. Their idea was to match or fit the faculty advisor with familiar peer advisors rather than to randomly assign peer advisors with any faculty advisor.

It might help some if the peer (advisors) already had some sort of relationship with the faculty advisor so you already (had) a rapport with that group. (18)

I know that it would have been easier to work with peer advisors that I already knew. There is a long period of time (needed) just trying to get to know them. Maybe (if) I had (them) as students. (20)

A final concern faculty advisors had with peer advisors was that many of the peer advisors provided academic advice to advisees that
contrasted with the faculty advisor's view.

The only way my two peer advisors could see their job was to replace me and do the advising from a students point of view rather than doing it from a professors point of view. They were thinking that (they) could advise students better than professors could advise them about classes because they knew who the teachers were. They could never see their role as doing anything other than that. So it was almost destined (to failure) from my point of view. (25)

This contrast in advising viewpoints caused the faculty advisor to have a poor perception of the usefulness of the peer advising role in the advising program. It was clear that peer advising expectations needed to be communicated by faculty advisors to peer advisors. This would greatly help to improve the assistance peer advisors could provide to faculty advisors. Though peer advisors assisted in the proactive advising strategy, they received mixed reviews from the faculty advisors. Better training and supervision were needed to improve their potential contribution as peer advisors. An improved working relationship between peer and faculty advisors would likely result from such a change. I was encouraged that faculty advisors were willing to share such suggestions in lieu of the poor perception many advisors had of the peer advisor's contribution.

The Student Advisee

The primary purpose of the newly established open-enrolled advising program was to address the advising needs of first-year students. From faculty advisor perspectives, the advisee responded in
the following ways:
1. The advisee responded to the advising services according to his or her level of academic or social need.
2. The advisee established a network of college friends that supported his or her adjustment needs both academically and socially.
3. The first-year advisee demonstrated greater growth in academic and social adjustment during the fall semester than in the spring semester.

**Responded to Advising Services**

Faculty advisors were encouraged that advisees responded to the faculty advisor initiatives at the beginning of the fall semester. Faculty advisor preparation was perceived to be helpful in promoting a good start with advisees.

It was important to be ready and available at the start... when the students (were) still workable. (18)

(Advisees) are still open to new ideas. After they have been here for a while, they have their own pattern established. They have their own way of finding connections. Where early on, everything is new and they are more open to (advisor) help. (18)

Advisors viewed early intervention at the beginning of the fall semester as a primary advising duty.

There was one woman who wanted to work two jobs. She didn't have a clue. I strongly discouraged (working two jobs). That is one reason why I think this early intervention is important. (17)

Advisees appreciated help if it was needed. When it was not needed, efforts to connect were fruitless. One advisor was sensitive to the intrusive manner proactive advising was to her advisees. Her
response reflected an understanding of how receptive students were to proactive advising.

To some degree, I'm sure, their willingness to come and talk to me depended a lot on their initial impressions. The first time that we met which was probably for about an hour or so at some gathering. I could have told you right then and there who would be likely to come back and talk to me, and who would show up only when they absolutely needed a signature (for course registration paperwork). (19)

Advisees' ability to adjust to the social and academic demands of the college experience influenced their reception of advisor intervention. Some students were "simply resisting the process to come in" after initial contacts were made (25). As time progressed into the semester, students made connections with friends in their dorms and classes and did not see the need for additional meetings with a faculty advisor.

**Networked with Friends**

From faculty advisor perception, student advisees found and made friends with dorm residents, RA's, roommates, classmates, and athletic team members. These friendships became a support group or network of unofficial peer advisors who helped the first-year advisee handle academic and social concerns. One faculty advisor saw this networking process as a useful practice as he commented on the fraternity and sorority systems at Drake.

Their living arrangements at fraternities and sororities are important. Drake doesn't like them, but yet they have to be happy because those students stay at Drake. They really do cement good
relationships. To be honest, they do some of this mentoring and networking in their own system. Nobody should be ashamed of it. (14)

The disappointment over the advising process came, however, when (a) faculty advisors realized that the lack of earlier involvement may have hindered the development of a more productive advisor-to-advisee relationship, and (b) networking replaced the need for their official faculty and peer advising services.

They obviously didn't want us to become a social contact for them. They had by that time integrated into their own social groups. After they registered in the fall, I really thought that this was the end of the program. We tried to have something of a seasonal party around Christmas, and no one showed up. The three (peer) advisors were the only ones who came to it. We were a little put out and crushed by that. (14)

Some advisors viewed networking as an interruption to their efforts to provide proactive advising. Advisees, who had a network of friends, showed little interest in the advisor's efforts to develop a helping relationship.

**Developed Academically and Socially**

How advisees responded to advising services was perceived by faculty advisors as a demonstration of how, as students, they were developing as young adults. Faculty advisors noted that in comparison to the spring semester, the majority of adjustment to college life and academic demands took place during the first semester. Making academic adjustments, building confidence in making decisions, and
developing social skills were promoted by the stresses and demands of coping through first semester experiences.

As I recall, things were much more intense (during) the fall semester. (17)

I'm not sure if by the beginning of the second semester we hadn't accomplished most of what we were going to accomplish. (9)

Advisees were becoming more independent and confident to make decisions on their own.

Advisors felt that they had an important part in that developmental process.

In many ways advising on this campus sometimes has to pick up for and fill in for social needs that are not met well on this particular campus. The number of first-year students who would start to hang around faculty offices and talk to us endlessly about things that didn't have much to do with school. This always suggested to me that they could easily find better places to do that and friends to hang around with. I think there is a real shortage of places to hang out. Space is at a premium and public space has been eaten up. It is hard for first-year students to find those little corners at the right times (and) to know who might be hanging out where. (19)

By being alert to advisee needs for friendship and for advice, faculty advisors felt they played a useful role in the social and academic development of their advisees. How advisees responded to their advisor was often interpreted by the advisor as an indication of the advisee's level of development. Advisee unresponsiveness was
perceived by the advisor to be the result of the advisee becoming more independent. Advisees who had a network of friends were viewed by advisors as being socially developed. Advisee progress in social and academic development was observed by advisors to take place rapidly in the fall semester of the advisee's first-year experience. These developmental activities influenced the advisees use and the need for advising services.

Conclusion of Faculty Advisor Perceptions

Faculty advisor perceptions of the 1991-92 open-enrolled advising program were very informative. How advisors viewed the role of the director of advising and the peer advisor in context to their own performance as faculty advisors influenced their perceptions about the proactive advising program. When a good working relationship existed with the director and the peer advisor, the faculty advisor perceived the proactive advising program as successful and rewarding. If the peer advisor's assistance was not reliable, faculty advisors attributed it to the lack of clear expectations and accountability for peer advisor performance. More importantly, faculty advisors viewed their advising role with advisees as helpful because of the proactive advising strategy they employed. Providing academic advice to explore advisee interests, being available for friendship and support, and giving attention during the early part of the fall semester helped advisors to sense that they had contributed to the advisee's academic success.

Future sections on peer advisor and student advisee input will add to the description of the advising services. Viewing the services from each perspective will help the observer gain a more clear understanding
of the advising program and its influence upon each of the participants. From this understanding, recommendations can be made to improve future advising services.

**Peer Advisor Perceptions**

Older, experienced students were selected to assist faculty advisors in providing proactive advising services to first-year, open-enrolled students. Each student peer advisor who was interviewed shared his or her perceptions of the advising program. The following paragraphs are descriptions of their experiences. The presentation of peer advisor input has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee. This review, coupled with the faculty advisor and student advisee review, should help the reader to compare and contrast how each participant viewed the proactive advising services. When combined, the three viewpoints should present a more complete description of the advising services.

**The Director of Advising**

Peer advisors viewed the role of the director of advising from an older, experienced, student's perspective. As former sophomores, juniors and seniors, they had a different perspective than both faculty advisor and first-year student advisee. They saw the director of advising fulfilling three primary functions:

1. The director of advising enlisted and encouraged peer advisor involvement in the open-enrolled advising program.
2. The director of advising organized and supervised several meetings
each semester for peer advisors to meet in a large group setting with other peer advisors and all eight faculty advisors.

3. The director of advising assisted peer advisors as a resource person in the advising process.

**Enlisted Peer Advisor Involvement**

Twenty-four sophomore, junior, and senior level students were recruited by the director of advising to assist faculty advisors by being peer advisors to the first-year, open-enrolled student advisees. Some peer advisor candidates were contacted by phone and asked to be involved. Others were contacted by letter. The director selected and motivated their involvement. Each of the eight designated faculty advisors were assigned three peer advisors to work with five to six advisees. These upper class students brought to the advising program personal experiences that would help them easily relate to new student college adjustments.

The director of advising was responsible to orient the peer advisors to their new role and assign them to one of the eight faculty advisors. The assignment process was performed randomly. Orientation of the peers occurred in the summer months as plans were made to begin the fall 1991 semester with a new approach to advise first-year, open-enrolled students using peer advisors and faculty advisors in a proactive advising strategy.

**Organized Monthly Meetings**

Peer advisors appreciated the director's role in organizing and supervising meetings with other peer and faculty advisors throughout both semesters of the advising program. Three distinct benefits were
noted by those peers who attended the meetings:
1. The director created numerous opportunities for faculty and peer advisors to share with each other their personal experiences, successes, and frustrations about advising.

2. The director provided supervised opportunities to discuss strategies for advising open-enrolled advisees by reviewing the personal experiences peer advisors had in their earlier years.

3. The director encouraged peer advisors to spend time with their faculty advisor.

During the special meetings for peer and faculty advisors, peer advisors were able to gain understanding on how to better assist advisees. Several peer advisors shared how they enjoyed these experiences.

I think just getting together and sharing what was working well and what we were doing and what questions we had and how to answer them (was helpful). (The advisees) were entering Drake with different requirements than what I had. We had a lot more choice in what we were taking, and now they were required to take certain courses. It was very helpful for me to get that kind of information, otherwise I wouldn't have been able to answer their questions. (10)

My advisor was always at the meetings and was helpful. (30)

The talking at the meetings was very beneficial to me. (13)

The opportunity for peer advisors to observe faculty involvement and have interaction with them was an important experience. One peer advisor noted that her faculty advisor and the director of advising were
"very dedicated to education" (13). It was an important experience that encouraged her "to stay with (the advising program)" (13). The sharing of ideas and of general information was complemented with times of feedback and informal assessment on how the advising program was progressing. Time was designated at the meetings to "meet with our advisor to discuss progress of our (advisees)" (31). Peer advisors appreciated this contact time with their advisor. Peer advisors benefited from recalling their own personal experiences as former first-year students. Sharing their experiences and discussing ways to advisee open-enrolled students with other peer advisors helped those who were less certain to become more confident about dealing with advisees.

We came up with ideas there. The questions we asked were, "How do we want to go about this, and make this experience helpful for them?" It wasn't so much that I had ideas handed to me, and I was supposed to do it. We all came up with our ideas together. (13)

Peer advisors viewed the policy of voluntary attendance to the monthly meetings as a disadvantage because some peers chose not to come limiting the discussion and sharing experience.

I would have benefited more had there been full attendance. I always went because I like to go to meetings. A lot of what was said there was very valuable, but I felt that if everybody were there it would have had a lot better input. (11)

Peer advisors who attended the monthly meetings experienced greater gains. Attendance indicated their motivation, as well, with the
advising program. Were the meetings important?

Yes, I would say that those meetings were necessary. This (was) a privileged spot to be in. Those people who have been selected have the option of either taking that position and realizing the time committed to it. (13)

Peer advisors who attended the meetings felt that the times of discussion and sharing were useful. They were disappointed in their peer advisors who did not attend and believed the lack of interest in the advising program was the primary reason.

Acted as a Resource Person to Peer Advisors

According to peer advisors, the director of advising played a key role in encouraging their involvement, organizing profitable meetings for peer advisors and faculty advisors, and providing additional resource in advising in addition to the faculty advisor.

I probably interacted more with (the director) than I did with my faculty advisor. (24)

The director's role was viewed as vital to the success of the advising program.

The Faculty Advisor

Looking at the proactive advising program through the experiences and perceptions of peer advisors produced two general observations about the faculty advisor's role.

1. Faculty advisors met at the beginning of the fall semester with several of their peer advisors and were available at monthly meetings for additional times of discussion and progress checks. However, many peer advisors felt uninvolved with their faculty advisor, desired more
direction, and felt poorly matched with the advisor.

2. Faculty advisors provided official, academic advice to first-year, open-enrolled advisees and played a key role in demonstrating Drake's recruitment message which communicated we care about you and desire to help you become a successful student.

Some faculty advisors "were (viewed as) very committed" (13), and they provided a positive experience for the peer advisor.

I had a lot of benefits just as a student with my faculty advisor.

We went to lunch several times; I remember talking about student advisees). (13)

These personal contacts strengthened the working relationships between the advisees and peer advisors.

Failed to Establish a Working Relationship with Peer Advisors

Many faculty advisors were not viewed in such a positive light. Less time was given to meeting and developing a working relationship with the peer advisor than was given to the advisee. This influenced the peer advisors' perspective.

My advisor didn't talk to us that much. We met at that first meeting and then another one that I talked to her. I don't really know how much direction she gave me. I think she was more of a contact for the (student advisees) really than (for) the peer advisors. I didn't really receive a lot of direction from my advisor. (10)

Most peer advisors wanted more direction and contact time with their faculty advisor to establish their purpose as peer advisors in the advising program. The lack of good communication influenced the
perception the peer advisor had of his or her contribution to the advising program.

The combination of not being able to get together with the students and a faculty advisor, who didn’t help much, made it seem like it wasn’t working for me. (24)

Peer advisors who experienced these challenges with their faculty advisors experienced a strained working relationship with their advisor.

Failed to Provide Clear Direction to Peer Advisors

Several peer advisors did not receive clear direction regarding their responsibilities with advisees. Limited communication between the faculty advisor and the peer advisor affected the working relationships and performance satisfaction of the peer advisor.

We needed to know what we were doing. (31)

I guess it comes down to not really having a sense of who we were responsible to. (24)

I was wondering what I was supposed to be doing. Was I doing what a peer advisor should? There was not really guidelines as to what I should be doing. It was just kind of answer their questions. I tried to do that, but I wasn’t sure if there was other things that I should have been doing. (10)

Peer advisors struggled to understand how their advising role was different from the faculty advisor’s role. Peer advisors desired to receive from faculty advisors more direction and clarification about their role as assistants in the advising program.

The lack of communication between peer advisors and faculty
advisors caused several peer advisors to be concerned about the need for improved faculty advisor performance. One peer advisor suggested that a faculty advisor should be assessed the same as teachers are assessed, on a semester by semester basis. Additional incentives were suggested to reward quality work.

(Administrators) should reward better advisors, select them for future assignments, provide them with feedback, select the one's with higher ratings, and assign them time for advising. Peer mentors and faculty advisors ought to be assigned and selected; (its) not for everyone; I can't believe they allow certain (faculty) to be advisors. (30)

These comments reflected the impressions peer advisors had of faculty advisors and the need for improved faculty advisor performance. The peer advisor felt that improved communication would have cared for their need for more clear direction from faculty advisors.

Were Inadequately Matched with Peer Advisors

Peer advisors felt they were poorly matched with the faculty advisor to whom they were assigned to assist.

My problem was that I was matched up with an advisor that I was not familiar with, and I think that it might be helpful to put students with advisors that they have had class with. My advisor was in a different department, so it was difficult to get in contact with him about students, whereas if it had been an advisor of mine, it would have been much easier to keep in contact with him or her. (11)

Peer advisors felt it was a mistake to be randomly placed with their
peer advisor. They recommended better planning in matching members of the advising team. Poor combinations in the past usually resulted in poor levels of participation on the peer advisor's part.

**Demonstrated Drake's Recruitment Message in Advising**

Wanting to see better advising performance from faculty members led to peer advisor discussion of how the faculty advisor's role complimented Drake's recruitment message which communicated that teachers care about your academic success. One peer advisor did not think "that the advisor's efforts (with advising services) matched (the recruitment message given to prospective students)" (30). However, several other peer advisors had the following experiences:

For me it gave me a good sense of place and self that I did have these people who did care about me. They were willing to take my academic interests to heart. (13)

I really sense Drake changing in my four years from the beginning. When I was a freshman, we didn't have orientation at the beginning, we didn't have anyone checking up on us to answer questions. We just had to find things out on our own. I am impressed that people were making these kinds of attempts, because I think that is how we can really attract students and make it a little more personal. Then you are truly a person and not a number. I think that this is one of the best things about the program. (10)

It was clear to these peer advisor's that faculty advisors played a key role in advising students and projecting Drake's recruitment message.

Working with the faculty member as a peer advisor was a
challenge because of limited time for interaction and the lack of clearly defined expectations from the advisor to the peer advisor. Peer advisors desired a better relationship with their advisor.

The Peer Advisor

With the challenge of assisting faculty advisors, peer advisors voiced the following observations about their contribution as students in the advising program.

1. As peer advisors, they tried to provide the student advisee advising assistance from a student's viewpoint.
2. Peer advisors considered their academic and campus work experiences as a sophomore, junior, or senior as an advantage.
3. Peer advisors were often frustrated because of limited training and vague direction they received that explained their responsibilities.

Provided Advisee Assistance

Success and satisfaction of the peer advisor's role was usually based upon (a) the willingness of the advisee to take advantage of the input and (b) the available time in the peer advisor's schedule to provide it.

I would say it was a positive experience. I would say that I enjoyed trying to talk to students and get them motivated about school, trying to help them out with things. I think it's a tough transition period. (8)

Many peer advisors were intending to be more involved but were not able to because of time restraints due to work conflicts, campus activities, and second semester off-campus assignments.

It was kind of a crazy semester for me, so I was running about ten different directions. (10)
I wish there was a way (of meeting more), I often though about (that) with my students. Time is such a precious, precious thing in college. Time with friends and time for school as a student in general. There is a (need to be) sacrificing time for both. I think that this is a major conflict and will always be. If there is some way to motivate us to sacrifice that time. (13)

For some peer advisors, personal effort and motivation affected the peer advisors level of assistance and satisfaction.

I didn’t do as much as I would have liked to. There wasn’t 100% commitment by advisors, peer advisors, or the student. Some people met with their people on a regular basis some would call them. I wouldn’t always meet with them, but I would try to call them and leave a message. I didn’t do as much as I think I should have. I should have made more of an effort to have them over. (10)

Experienced the Advantages and Disadvantages of Being a Peer Advisor to Student Advisees

Many peer advisors considered that their own academic and campus work experiences had an impact on the peer advising results.

I think the biggest benefit was just having an upper class student tell them what courses they should take and what professors. With the freshman courses there are general required courses that you need to take and within that required course, there will be six or seven professors. I tried to direct them to the professor that I thought was really excellent. I also give them some information on each professors approach. (10)
Fortunately since I have been working here in admissions for four years I know a lot about what goes on at Drake and all the policies and I know right where to go. (11)

Experience from earlier years of academic success and social adjustments gave most peer advisors confidence to aggressively pursue the advising challenge. Campus work experience was seen as an advantage. However, peer advisors felt that being young and inexperienced as advisors affected their performance in a negative way. The lack of communication skills and counseling skills caused some peer advisors to feel very inadequate in helping first-year, open-enrolled students. Training was desired by several to address these inadequacies.

**Suggested Improvements for Training and Accountability**

Several peer advisors were frustrated with the lack of peer advisor training and the lack of being held accountable to their duties.

I think there needs to be an accountability factor. It is like you are given your five students and these are the people you are in charge of for the semester so go take care of them. Really, no one would have known if you did anything with them or not. You could just be a peer advisor in name only. (10)

Assessment of peer advisor performance was seen as a necessary function to bring about improvement.

As they assess teachers they should do the same for (peer) advisors. (30)

Yeah, just like at Drake they give a teacher's form. They give a survey and you have to rate the teachers. For sure you should rate
the peer advisor. Tell him how he's done. (8)
The motivation to suggest these ideas appeared to be genuinely related
to the desire to have provided better peer advising services during the
Peer advisors struggled in providing consistent advising
assistance. Being somewhat older than their advisees, many peer
advisors had experiences to help them understand advisees, but many
lacked adequate direction regarding peer advising responsibilities.
Monthly meetings with the director and faculty advisors helped to
provide limited direction, but more direction was needed from the
faculty advisor. The quality of the working relationship between the
peer and the faculty advisor likely influenced the perception peer
advisors had of faculty advisor performance. Training and assessment
were recommended to motivate improved performance of both faculty
advisors and peer advisors.

The Student Advisee
Peer advisors had direct contact with their advisees. Peer
advisors perceived that advisees had a timid response to their
proactive advising services. They noted that advisees were more
responsive if the advising relationship was established earlier in the
fall semester. A second major observation by peer advisors was that
advisees needed much assistance in making the adjustment into the
college experience, especially as an open-enrolled. Thirdly, advisees
needed help in sorting out the challenge of declaring a major. These
perceptions by the peer advisors were noteworthy because of their own
recent experiences as first-year students. The following discussion
will elaborate on peer advisor understanding of the advisees experiences and how the advising program helped or hindered their first-year progress. From these perceptions, the reader should be able to sense the characteristics of the advising program that impressed older student peer advisors.

**Responded Timidly to Peer Advising**

The response of advisees to peer advisor input and involvement in the advising program ranged from being "glad to see somebody help them" (8) to "they didn't want to get together to be advised" (30). "I think the advisees realized and respected the fact that (peer advisors) were informed" (11). However, several factors influenced the general perception that advisees were timid to peer advisor efforts.

One factor that promoted a cautious response was that the advisee had a limited awareness of the peer advisor's role.

They wanted to know why we (were) coming to them. (31) Some of them didn't even know that they had a peer advisor, and they didn't know what we were supposed to be doing for them. Why do I need this person? (24)

A second factor that influenced a timid reaction to peer advising was the presence of time restraints upon the peer advisor and level of commitment to meet by all three parties in the advising process.

The thing that I remember feeling undermined in the project, (it was the) time constraint for each of the advisors to chorale the students. That was a big deal. (13) There wasn't 100% commitment by advisors, peer advisors, or the student. Some people met with their people on a regular basis
some would call them. I wouldn't always meet with them, but I would try to call them and leave a message. I didn't do as much as I think I should have. I should have made more of an effort to have them over. (10)

The timing of the advising contact between the peer advisor and the advisee was another factor that influenced how receptive the advisee was to the peer advisor. Peer advisors sensed a poor reception to contacts made in the latter part of the fall semester.

Most of my contacts I made in the fall. (8)

After the first month I didn't feel like I was needed. (30) Peer advisors felt that earlier involvement was more productive than waiting until a month into the semester. As student advisees found their own friends, the peer advisor's help became less necessary and sought after by advisees.

Peer advisors suggested several remedies to address this timid response. Training advisees to be better advisees was considered one particular solution to this timid response to advising. Peer advisors suggested advisees receive orientation on the purpose of advising, the reasons for peer advisors, the types of information to seek from their advisors, and the kinds of questions to ask to obtain that information.

Other peer advisors suggested replacing the required advising relationship, which "was definitely a weird feeling" (24), with a voluntary, available, less structured mentoring relationship. One peer advisor compared the idea to recent experiences in mentoring where "time (was provided) for advising, informally; (where they) could ask questions without having to get all together as a group" (30). It was
"more of a friendship (and I) didn't feel like I had a forced relationship" (30). Peer advisors sensed that advisees desired a less structured, less formal advising relationship with their peer advisor.

**Needed Assistance with College Adjustments**

Peer advisors perceived advisees as needing assistance in making adjustments into the college experience. Peer advisors knew this from their own personal experience and from recent observations with their advisees during the 1991-92 advising program.

The big thing for me when I was a freshman was my room and my things, fitting in to a place and feeling at home. Living space is very significant to college adjustment. You are going into another home. It is an invasion of space. I was an only child, so it was a big adjustment. (13)

It was easy for peer advisors to understand the experiences and needs of first-year students, since they had recently gone through similar experiences. Because of that understanding, peer advice given to student advisees was more on a personal level.

**Needed Help in Deciding on a Major**

When addressing the advisee's concern of declaring a major, many peer advisors encouraged advisee involvement in a variety of experiences related to their interests.

I did not want to tell them that it was not important to have credit toward your major. If you see a direction or directions that you want to go, take those kind of classes so at least you experience the class and are getting credit for it. (13) I encouraged them to do some things over the summer that might
help them to see better what they wanted to do. Like take a
summer class or work a summer job that might pertain to what
they might be interested in. (11)

Peer advisors knew from experience that timing was also a factor. One
peer advisor reflected the importance of this time factor in his
comments about how he went about declaring a major.

I was always advised as a student that you should really know by
the end of your sophomore year. I don't know if that was a
catalog item or whether that was a (director's) item or if that
was my advisor. That was my deadline for myself, so that was
what I conveyed to them. Once you get into your junior year, this
time really needs to be spent dealing with your major or you are
wasting time and it will take you longer to graduate. (11)

Peer advisors identified with the advisees' concern to declare soon
enough to be able to finish in four years.

Conclusion of Peer Advisor Perceptions

The success of peer advising assistance was difficult to sense
from input received. The need for better communication of the peer
advisor's role was acknowledged. Considering how the faculty advisor
and peer advisor relationship was strained because of the lack of clear
direction, it is reasonable to expect the same frustration at the peer
advisor and advisee level. Perhaps if a more clear definition of the
peer advisor's role had been established and more frequent
communication of that role was made to advisees, a greater sense of
success in delivery and assistance would have been achieved. Including
peer advisors in the proactive advising program to assist faculty
advisors has its merits. Peer advisors felt their recent academic experience in the classroom was an advantage to help them relate to advisee needs. Assessment and training to improve peer advising performance were suggested. Though advisees were timid in their response to peer advisors, having an older student's advising assistance was appreciated. Interviews with student advisees indicated these advantages. Had the peer advising been more organized, even more benefit would have been realized.

**Student Advisee Perceptions**

Proactive advising services were offered to 126 first-year, open-enrolled student advisees. Many of these former advisees were interviewed and their perceptions categorized into major themes to help the reader understand how they, as advisees, viewed the proactive advising services. In an effort to describe the advising program, it is important that the advisee's experiences and perceptions be considered. They were the true customers of the advising service. Their perceptions are important to review as consideration is given to understanding the advising program's design and delivery. Advisees' impressions are organized in a way that addresses each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee. This will help the reader to more fully appreciate how each key player influenced the design, delivery, and outcome of the advising program. Consideration has been given to the impressions of faculty advisors and peer advisors. It is important now to consider the recipient of those advising services, the student advisee, for the
purpose of understanding the full impact of the advising services.

The Director of Advising

Acted as an Important Resource Person to Advisees

To the average incoming first-year student, the director of advising may have appeared to be just another adult in the advising offices. But to open-enrolled advisees, the director took on an important role of providing direction and information when needed. Often she provided advising services when the assigned faculty advisor was not available or functioning.

I think I did go there and ask some questions about what exactly that I had to do, and she was very helpful. (32)

(The director) is wonderful. I can go to her. She has probably done more to help me than my advisors. (2)

Advisees had a very positive perception of the director's advising skills and willingness to help.

Provided Continuous Advising Services

As a resource person, the director provided an optional place for important advising information that 1991-92 first-year students still utilize as juniors.

I've gotten in touch with her (the director) a couple of times about different things like if I had questions. Like the first time I ever dropped a class was this year. I didn't know what I was supposed to do with a drop slip or what-not, so I went in there, what do I do? She led me in the right direction. If I had questions about the procedures, she's another person you can go to if you have any questions. (3)
The director's role as a resource person and back-up advisor provided a safety net to catch advisees who may have been struggling with their present faculty or peer advising relationships. Her availability and expertise established her reputation with students that she was approachable and able to help.

I talked to (the director) probably 3 or 4 times and she is like so much more helpful than any of the advisors that I've had. I think in my own mind it would be almost better to have her counsel the open-enrolled (advisees) instead of a professor, because she is so well rounded. She knew all the professors and what their focus is in class. (7)

The Faculty Advisor

As juniors were asked to look back and recall their first-year, open-enrolled advising experiences, many former advisees related the following perceptions about their faculty advisors:

1. The faculty advisor met with them at the beginning of the fall semester to get acquainted.
2. The faculty advisor tried to be available in the fall to assist them through the adjustment process and academic registration for spring semester courses.
3. The faculty advisor advised them to consider the variety of academic experiences available to students who were considering their future academic direction and career choices.
4. The faculty advisor advised them in the spring semester as they signed up for fall, sophomore level courses and as they considered tentative majors.
Established Initial Contacts with Advisees

Considering the fact that there were eight different faculty advisors and input was received from twenty-four former advisees, a variety of experiences were observed. Many advisees remembered their faculty advisor's initial efforts to meet with them as advisees.

Yes, I met him right at the beginning because of new student days. I happened be in one of the programs and I met with him and he told me that he was my advisor. I met with him probably a week later. We spent some time just talking and getting to know each other. (29)

He was very personal. He took the time to get to know me. The first time we met, we didn't really talk about school at all. He asked me where I was from, if everything was going o.k. I appreciated the fact that he really seemed concerned. He always knew my name. (29)

An unusual effort was made by one faculty advisor at the beginning of that 1991 fall semester. She had her advisees over to her home for an outdoor cookout.

It was a neat time to get to know other students. (36)

The faculty advisor invited all the undecided and all her advisees to her house. It showed you that the professor is also a person.

It is very memorable. (39)

These initial meetings provided times for faculty advisors to introduce themselves, address any early questions the advisees had, and help initiate the advisor and advisee relationship. Advisees perceived these attempts to get acquainted in a very positive light. They appreciated
these efforts to meet one another informally and to begin the advising relationship without the pressure of academic concerns.

**Provided Course Registration Advice**

Advisees appreciated the practice their faculty advisor had in posting his or her office hours. Advisors usually "sent out letters to all of his advisees recommending that they make an appointment and come in and see him" about the registration process (2). One advisee was very impressed:

I found him very, very helpful. He contacted me and let me know where to meet him. He arranged a meeting just to sit and talk. He was helpful in being a friendly face around campus. He was someone to know. He was helpful in registration and all of that. (29)

However, some faculty advisors appeared too busy with teaching and other advising opportunities with older, declared students in the advisor's program.

He was hard to get hold of. (21)

I feel like (my faculty advisor) never had time for advising. They were busy with their classes and with what they had to do. I felt that I was bothersome if I called them and asked questions. They never really wanted to contact you to see how you were doing.

You had to call them. (16)

As first-year students, advisees had many questions. They sensed whether or not their faculty advisor was willing and available to advise. Several advisees were disappointed in their advisor's lack of commitment and attention to the advising process.
Provided Biased Course Selection Advice

One of the major roles of the faculty advisor, as perceived by the advisee, was to provide academic advising. Students were advised to pursue their interests as they searched for a particular major. A good number of advisees experienced a biased academic advising approach from their faculty advisor.

A lot of students thought that their advisor was pushing them towards a major. (38)
I felt like he was trying to get me to be in his major. (37)
Because he was a professor in a certain program, those were some of the courses that he sort of pushed. (12)
I had another friend that had him and she is still (in that) major. She just like followed his little track. (37)
I felt that my advisor (pushed) me in the direction that I may not have wanted to be in because I was open-enrolled. (33)
My faculty advisor forced me to take (those) classes; I specifically expressed no interest; I told him I was open-enrolled. I lost ground taking (those) classes as electives and I feel that could have been avoided. (23)
These advisees were obviously disappointed with the advisor's style of advising. It was evident that, even after two years, advisees still had a negative perception of such advising practices.

Were Uninformed of General Education Requirements

Along with receiving biased counsel, advisees experienced inaccurate advice about general education core requirements.

My advisor didn't seem like he knew what was going on. He
always seemed to (be) the dark. He seemed like he had just started (advising). (5)

Providing inaccurate advice on which general education subjects to register for led to further complications in the student's schedule.

The advisor was really not sure of what I could take. He let me take whatever I wanted. The only problem with that is now I'm needing to take a lot of courses I didn't realize I needed to take. I've got a lot of catch up to do. (5)

In this curriculum (taking so many electives in your first and second year) was a bad thing to do. Now I am taking all required (general education) classes in my senior year. I took a whole bunch of general (elective type) classes at the beginning. I didn't start taking upper level courses until the first semester of my junior year. (39)

Advisees who experienced inadequate advice regarding general education requirements perceived their original advisor to be incompetent and in need of training to address advising needs of first-year students.

Advised Open-Enrolled to Explore Interests

As students entered the registration period in the spring semester to sign up for sophomore courses, they perceived that faculty advisors focused more on continued exploration rather than on declaring a major. Many open-enrolled students preferred receiving advice to at least pursue tentative choices.

I would have liked more direction. (16)

I wish he might have given me different options because he pretty
much let me choose whatever I wanted to. This was fine, but if there are some other options, it would have been good to know about them. (26)
The main thing that I know about my advisor is simply that he helped with what classes I took. It didn't really deal with finding a major or anything like that. That was really what I was hoping for. (27)

Advisees did not view the exploration of electives as helpful in their efforts to decide on a major. Outwardly, advisees respected the advisor's approach to look at interests, while internally they desired more direction on how to declare a major.

First-year advisees usually valued the expertise and knowledge of their faculty advisors. However in looking back, many advisees had second thoughts about how effective that first year of advising was for them. Some students were independent enough to have worked out their own schedules and to have had the advisor simply sign-off on their registration forms. Many advisees, however, desired a more caring, personal and knowledgeable advisor with whom they could receive more directed academic course selection advice.

The Peer Advisor

Student advisees viewed the peer advisor (a) as a faculty advisor assistant, (b) frustrated by limited time and unplanned matching with advisees, and (c) as having potential to improve the advising process. Looking back now as juniors in college and comparing the peer advising that they experienced to more recent peer mentoring services, former student advisees gave interesting responses of how they perceived the
their peer advisors. Though many of these student advisees had a negative experience with their peer advisor, they still were able to visualize potential for the peer advisor's contribution to the advising process. As former advisees looked back to their first-year, open-enrolled advising experiences, they had the advantage of now knowing more about what to expect of a peer advisor. Their perceptions are noteworthy as they suggest needs for improving the peer advisor's contribution to the advising process.

**Made Initial Contacts with Advisees**

Many peer advisor's met with advisees in the 1991-92 advising program during the first two weeks of the fall semester. Several advisees appreciated the efforts made by these older students to express interest in their first semester adjustments to college life.

He was a senior. He asked me if I had any questions, like you said. It was kind of nice as a peer. It was nice to have an older person to talk to and kind of lead you in some kind of direction... They knew the inside—they had been through the ropes... they know some of the teachers. So it was a good combination (to have both a peer and a faculty advisor). (3)

On the other hand, many attempts by peer advisors did not develop into year long or even semester long advising relationships. Some peer advisors were only in contact with the advisee at the very beginning and little developed in the way of advising after that initial contact.

I remember meeting my peer advisor and that was about it. She helped me move in and she lived in the same dorm, but that was about all the contact I had with her. (6)
Some advisees were not interested in a structured, required, long-term advisee and peer advisor relationship.

I think more advising takes place between your own social groups not forced peer advising relationships. (23)

The independent attitude several advisees had toward the formal, structured peer advising service also explained the limited response they had toward their assigned peer advisor.

I think some people might want more than one (meeting). For me, the (first) meeting went long, so we got everything said, and if I had any other questions I could call or whatever. (3)

Well, I don't have any regrets about not getting into contact with my peer advisor. I'm not sure I had a need for one. (6)

**Needed to Communicate the Purpose of Peer Advising**

Many advisees struggled understanding the purpose for peer advisors and wondered about the amount of training they had received to do their job.

I didn't really know what they were for. (32)

I don't know if they had any training. If they did, it didn't work and if they didn't, they definitely needed it. (2)

It is kind of funny because I remember sitting there in my freshman classes and all the freshmen looking at each other asking what they use them for. (34)

Advisees came to college with no experience with or knowledge about peer advising. They needed more orientation and time at the beginning of the first semester to understand the purpose and benefit of peer advising.
Had Limited Success with Advisees

From the advisees perspective, several factors influenced the lack of success the peer advisors had with advisees. Time restraints on student schedules (both advisee and peer advisor) prevented many peers and advisees from developing meaningful relationships.

My peer advisor was super busy. (32)

Well, coming in as a freshman you're under the impression that these people were here to help you specifically, and granted, you realize that they are students and they are busy and things like that, but it seems like they would have spent more time with you helping you out because you really don't know what you are doing when you first come in. At that time it just seemed like they were (saying) I'll get to you when I have time. (4)

Multiple peer advising services from different campus offices added confusion to the advising program for some advisees.

I had a faculty advisor. I also had through the honors program a peer advisor, and (my assigned) peer advisor. So I had two students and one faculty. (2)

These students felt bombarded with multiple attempts to help. Having too many advisors meant less time to get to know any one particular person. The less the amount of time spent with a peer advisor the less meaningful the advising relationship was to the advisee.

Advisee and peer advisor matching was another limiting factor because it appeared to be done by chance. The participants had different interests which led to different directions on campus. This further restricted the growth of the advising relationship.
I think they should match you according to how you feel yourself. (37)
(It would be good) if students were given opportunity to say what areas they are interested in and then match them with a faculty advisor and a peer advisor who had similar interests. (They need to) check interests in the application process even before they come in the summer. (22)

**Needed to have Earlier Involvement**

Former advisees felt that earlier involvement with peer advisors in summer orientation and new student week would help establish better relationships with peer advisors going into the fall semester.

It wouldn't have been a bad idea if you could meet your advisor then (during summer orientation).

Like going through the registration process. You don't have any idea about what you are supposed to do. So (it would have been helpful to have) someone sit down with you and show you the stuff you have to take and which appointments to make with whom. (2)

In conclusion, several student advisees reflected upon the challenges they faced and wish there had been a better peer advising system during their freshmen year.

The peer advisor could help out with this transition from high school teacher relations to college professor relations. (2)

The peer advisor is a good idea, I really think it should go on. (7)
The Student Advisee

As college juniors considered their own first-year experiences as an open-enrolled student, they were very descriptive of where they were developmentally, how they responded to the advising services, how they networked with friends to supplement the peer advising system, and how faculty advisors assisted them in their search for academic direction at Drake. These perceptions are presented to help the reader understand the essence of the advising program from the student advisees' perspective. Efforts to improve advising services to that are responsive to student needs must account for advisee perceptions of present and past advising experiences.

Varied in Degrees of Development

Former first-year advisees felt they entered college varying in academic ability and classroom skills.

The first quarter everything is rather overwhelming, but then it gets really exciting and then you get settled in and start feeling the stresses of grades and how to deal with this. (2)

This increased their need for an advisor, and it influenced the response they gave to their advisor's efforts to assist. Those who struggled academically tied their adjustment needs to the advising process. Some advisees were concerned about the counsel they received in the midst of these academic struggles.

I would go and talk to him about my class load that I was taking (18 credit hours). As a freshman, these classes had extensive reading and (that) was hard to do. I ended up failing one of my classes. He got mad that I failed that so I asked him if I could
drop the class. He said no, that it was important. He told me I was trying to take the easy way out. He would just yell at me. We didn’t really get along after that. (21)

Some students were not satisfied with their academic success and adjustment, and they placed some of the responsibility on the advising process.

Developing socially also impacted young people as they entered the college scene. The role of the faculty advisor was appreciated by several students.

(How would I describe myself as a freshman?) Scared, intimidated. I was a big baby six hours away from home. I wasn’t sure why I was there. I needed friendly guidance. (34)

It shows you that professors are available after (classes). I think that is a good thing if you live on campus, that you can just call a professor up and talk, make an appointment, talk about a test. (39)

First-year students experienced a lot of academic and social development because of the newness of the college setting and greater demands with higher education learning and teaching styles.

For open-enrolled students, personal confidence and decision-making skill development also presented an important challenge to address. A wide range of experiences were shared.

I think now (as a junior in college) I'm am more together and completely more self-confident. I have always done well academically. (29)

Students with greater levels of development showed less a need for
advising while those with lower levels of development in personal confidence in decision-making showed a greater need for advising.

As far as the advising, I don't know that (my advisor) did all that much academically. Most of the choices I made were mine. They weren't really based on anything that he had said or done. (29)

Responded to Advising Services

During these developmental times, advisee responses to the advising services were influenced by their own willingness to take advantage of the opportunities.

If I would have been more cooperative I think I wouldn't have been running around like a chicken with my head cut off. I think that (my advisor) could help me with that for sure. He could have told me what to do and what my goal was. I just didn't give him (time). (34)

Making use of the advising services on the student's part was also influenced by the fit, or match, between the student and the advisor.

I was set up. They randomly stick you in slots that they have open. I was set up with a (certain) professor for my faculty advisor. I knew that wasn't what I wanted to go into, but I just kept going with him for a while because I really didn't have any direction. (15)

(It would have been better if the) student were given opportunity to say what areas they are interested in and then match them with faculty advisor and peer advisor who had similar interests. Check interests in the application process even before they come in the summer. (22)
Desiring to be better matched with their advisors, former advisees expressed a solution to remedy the problem by purposefully placing advisees with advisors with similar interests. Advisees felt it was important to remove as many differences as possible to encourage the use of the advising services. Though it would take considerable effort to accomplish a survey of interests and match advisees with advisors based on common interests, one less barrier would be reduced to improve the advisee's response to the advising services.

**Supplemented Peer Advisors with a Network of Friends**

From the student's perspective, networking with friends and class members supplemented or replaced the peer advising system. Advisees linked with other students to establish support groups before the older, peer advisor arrived on the scene.

In your first week you'll know your own groups and you will go your own way. (21)

We helped each other to find out what sort of classes we should be taking. (7)

Basically (I enlisted my own peer advisors). It was a mix. Mostly at that point they were sophomores, a couple juniors, and some freshmen. We were just a group of friends that shared with each other. (2)

(In my network) I had a girl (friend who) was a junior when I came in, and she was going to P.T. (physical therapy) also. Then there was a girl who had already graduated who I called... So that helped. (3)

Successful networking was often based on common interests,
availability, age, and personal tastes; peer advisors lacked this natural fit because of their random placement. Successful networking experiences with other students supplemented the need for peer advising. Advisees did not necessarily reject the peer advisor; they just took care of addressing their needs on their own initiative. The advising program's efforts to provide a formal peer advising service was over-shadowed by the natural tendency new students had to make their own friends within their own circles. With friendships established, the peer advising service was somewhat obsolete in the minds of many first-year students.

Appreciated the Potential of Peer Advisors

Regardless of the absence of the peer advisor for many advisees, the lack of understanding the purpose of peer advising, and the lack of time and appropriate matching, the appreciation for the peer advisor's potential role still existed. Advisees valued having another, older, experienced student's advice on professors, classes, and activities on and off campus.

The (peer advisors) better understand professors. They understand what you are looking for in a class. They give you better information about how a professor teaches. The faculty (advisor) might know the professors but they aren't sure how they teach. You can relate better to the peer. (28)

Advisees valued the successful role model that a peer advisor could provided on reaching academic goals and making career decisions.

I like them being older and having their direction set. Being a role model. If you are undecided, you want them to help you
figure out where to go. (39)

Used Faculty Advising Services

Student advisees responded to specific faculty advising support more so during registration times in the fall than in the spring.

I talked to (my advisor) before we signed up for spring registration, and that was important (3)

(During) my second semester, I knew the people in my classes, I knew a bunch of girls on the team who had gone through (registration) and started to head more toward them. So I didn't need him as much second semester, because I knew people by then that I could go to or that I could ask. (3)

Several other factors affected the willingness of advisees to take advantage of their faculty advisor's services. One important issue that younger, first-year students shared was the matter of being intimidated by a much older, professional, college professor.

I grew up in a very academic family. I think that is one reason that I had a good experience because I am not intimidated by it. I know there are a lot of students who are very intimidated about going to talk to (a faculty member) one-on-one. (38)

This intimidation factor had special ways of impacting the advisee's approach to the advisor and advisee relationship.

I think that it was that I was a freshman and I said okay this is what I need to do, I guess. I think maybe that is why I liked my to make me take this if I don't want to take it. With him I was like, well I guess I'd better take that because that's what he says I should take. (7)
It was evident from these experiences that advisees needed academic advising services, but they were not always comfortable or confident to take full advantage of the opportunity.

**Benefited from having the Faculty Advisor as a Professor**

One of the ways the intimidation factor was resolved for some advisees was by having their faculty advisor as one of their classroom professors. Students responded positively to this experience. The combination of having a professor-to-student and faculty advisor-to-advisee relationship had a definite advantage. It greatly improved the student's perception of the faculty advisor's services.

My advisor was great just because I had him as a professor. He knew who I was and was super helpful. (32)

I had a class with my faculty advisor that first semester, so she talked with me after class to see how things were going in other classes. It was an advantage; to get to know her a little bit better. She was more accessible than just office hours. (36)

Yes, it helped that I was in a class with her. The first semester I took a class with her before I even knew that she was my advisor. She really took a very personal interest in me. I thought it was very helpful. It gave me a chance to get to know her as a person.

I wasn't so afraid to go to this strangers door. (38)

Students appreciated the professor-advisor combination because it helped them to get to know the advisor through the classroom experience which was much less intimidating than a one-to-one, first-time advising contact. Meeting the advisor through his teaching role helped advisees to be more willing to consider entering the advising
relationship.

Experienced the Application of Drake's Recruitment Message

The faculty advisor's role was viewed by advisees as a very critical part in carrying out the recruitment message of Drake which said that professors care about you and your academic success and will help whatever way they can. Fresh out of high school, these advisees had just received the admissions office appeal to come to Drake. Many advisees came in response to that particular recruitment message.

Yes, that is one of the reasons that I chose Drake. There was a positive view toward people who hadn't declared a major. I thought maybe they would take a special interest in me. My advisor was very accessible and she really knew what I should be doing and made sure that I was getting all my general done. (38)

Many agreed that the certain professors did well in portraying this message but not necessarily the faculty advisor.

My advisor, (when I was) a freshman, didn't recognize me outside of her office. That tells me about how much she is interested in me. (33)

Advisees especially looked to their advisor to demonstrate a personal, caring attitude that would demonstrate the recruitment message. Many advisees were disappointed with their advisor's performance.

I came (as a high school senior) once with my dad. (Recruiters) did a good job of reeling my dad in. They are really good at P.R. but they are not good at following through. (37)
Suggested Faculty Advisor Accountability and Assessment

To improve the faculty advisor's role in reflecting the recruitment message, advisees suggested that more accountability and assessment be considered "every semester" (34).

I think that advisors should be held accountable. There should be an easier way for students who are unhappy with their advisor to voice that. This year at registration they had a form. I think that they should have it at every registration. It was anonymous this year, but I really think that the advisors name should be on the form. (38)

Advisees suggested including the following questions on an advisor assessment form:

If you feel pressured by your advisor? Does your advisor present all subject areas equally? Do they seem prejudice toward any area? Do they encourage you to pursue what you are interested in? Do they pursue you to try things that you hadn't thought about? Do they help you monitor the course load that you are taking? Are they well versed in the general education courses? Do you feel comfortable talking to your advisor? (38)

The quality of the advising relationship and personal benefit to the advisee were important concerns for the advisees. Another advisee suggested including data on how the advisor was with "office hours, returning phone calls, promptness, (and) availability" (34). These suggested questions reflect the concerns advisees had of their advisor's performance.

If you are not comfortable with someone, you are going to spend
as little time with them as possible and you won't get the benefits that could be received from (them as) an advisor. (38)

Decided on a Major

Students searched to find direction for future academic choices at Drake and found direction for tentative career and major choices primarily through interesting courses and commendable professors. According to advisees, faculty advisors played only a minor role in the actual process of helping them declare a major.

Taking courses helped me decide on my major. (36)

To be quite honest, I don't really think it was really the advisor part as much as the teachers. I tried to make it so that I had a math class, a history class, a biology class. (3)

For many advisees, the actual faculty member of a particular class encouraged the decision making process more than the advisor's help.

The class itself kind of pushed me over as to this is what I want to do. (27)

Really, I found my major by just taking different classes. (26)

Rarely did an advisee give credit to the advisor who may have suggested taking those classes in the first place.

Advisees were often frustrated by an advisor's attempt to encourage them to explore more interests by taking electives without giving much attention to the challenges of finishing graduation requirements in four years, because "there are certain programs you have to decide early on" (29).

At this university (they) say you can walk on campus without any idea of what you want to study (and take your time) and we'll
help you make that decision. (When in reality) if you want to get out of here in four years, you have to start in most majors on the correct curriculum immediately. I was lucky that I self started on the music on my own... If I wanted to do (music) I needed to get started early in the curriculum if I wanted to get out in four years. (6)

I should have had a direction by (the end of my first year) but didn't have it declared at that time. (I didn't declare until) late fall of my sophomore year... It was starting to get a little unnerving. I was getting a little anxious that I hadn't declared yet. (33)

It was really financial (reasons that motivated me to declare and finish in four) and I had no desire to be here an extra year. (29)

Especially at Drake where it costs so much. (37)

The timing factor of declaring a major was of importance to most advisees. Economically, most of them wanted to finish in four years.

The motivation for advisees to declare a major came from their peers as well.

People ask you what your major is and you haven't decided yet.

They get that look like what are you doing. (27)

Advisees were sensitive to these concerns of finishing in four years and with impressing their friends with a confident reply about their choice of a major.

Needed Advisee Training

As former advisees considered their advising experiences, they were asked to respond to the concept of training advisees to be better
advisees. Their comments were interesting to note.

Nobody ever told us exactly what we needed to do. (As advisees), we didn't know what (advisors) needed to do for us. (34)

Former advisees suggested that advisees ask of their advisors the following questions:

How they got where they (as faculty members) are and how they decided; to get a sense of what it means, what made you decide what interests to go for... Here's what I'm interested in; what can you tell me about this department? Do you know of any students who might be of help to me? What is your perspective of these faculty members who I am thinking of taking courses from? How does the registration process work? (22)

What is offered as (specific general education courses); what choices (do I have); that will help you not loose ground? What other options do I have? Do I have an appeal process? Is this the best thing to take? Am I on track with this as far as my major; will this get me where I need to be to graduate (in four years)? (23)

What teachers to take? What classes? What type of social activities? (Ask) about the diversity on campus, percentages, and activities. (36)

Advisees thought it was important to "take the initiative to ask until you get the answers; faculty advisors might be assuming you know what you are doing, when in reality (they) don't" (23). With two additional years of experience since that first fall semester, former advisees were convinced that had they known better what to ask and
what to expect through advisee training, they would have experienced fewer problems in course selection and in declaring a major.

Conclusion of Student Advisee Perceptions

By the time this study was performed and interviews completed, the original 1991-92 student advisees still present at Drake had all declared majors and were proceeding with their goals of finishing in four or more years. Several spoke of taking summer courses to finish course requirements in order to march on time. One advisee spoke of transferring in order to obtain a degree program at another university, because it was not offered at Drake.

The director's advising services helped advisees especially when faculty advising did not materialize. Many advisees appreciated faculty advisors' early attempts to make informal contacts to initiate the advising relationship. However, advisees were not pleased when advisors were biased towards recommending course selections from their own departments and avoided exploring other options. Faculty advisors also struggled giving accurate advice on general education requirements. Advisor training and assessment were suggested by advisees.

Many advisees did not understand the purpose of peer advisors. Networking with friends replaced the need for official peer advising. Though advisees recognized the value of peer advising, they choose their friends to fill that need.

Advisees were motivated to declare a major to be able to finish in four years while faculty advisors seemed content to emphasize the exploration of electives to check out academic interests. Advisees
desired more specific direction in the exploration process that would lead to declaring a major. Advisees recognized the need they had to be informed on how to function better as an advisee and ask better questions in the advising process. Many advisees felt intimidated by their advisor. Those who had their advisor as a classroom professor appreciated the opportunity to meet and get acquainted with their advisor prior to the one-to-one academic advising interaction.

The advising services received a mixed review from advisees. Some advisees were pleased, others were very disappointed. One can only wonder how much an impact the advising services could have had if many of the limiting factors discussed earlier had been cared for prior to start of the services. Student needs change from year to year. Diversity of student interest, student development needs, and sorting out personal goals would make any new advising program a challenge to initiate and develop. Considering the review of the advising services from the perspectives of faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees, I am now more prepared to make an assessment of the original proactive advising program and recommendations toward future advising services especially as they address the needs of first-year, open-enrolled students.
SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Qualitative Research Study

Providing improved advising services with fewer financial resources is a challenge most colleges and universities are facing in the 1990's (King, 1993). Drake University desired to improve the retention rates for first-year, open-enrolled students by offering a proactive faculty and peer advising program. A research study was authorized to investigate the effectiveness of the newly developed, advising program. A qualitative research design was chosen because of its ability to develop a thorough description and assessment of the advising program (Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Whitt, 1991; Wolcott, 1990). The following discussion reviews the research study's setting, its purposes and methods, and concluding assessment and recommendations.

Proactive Advising Program

During the 1991-1992 academic year, Drake University provided a proactive advising program to address the advising needs of first-year, open-enrolled students. Responding to the President's 1991 Task Force to Enhance the Quality of the Freshman Experience, the director of advising in the College of Arts and Sciences proposed and received approval for implementing a proactive advising program that was designed to motivate improved involvement of faculty and peer advisors with student advisees (Davidson, 1992). To help each of the eight faculty advisors, three student peer advisors were assigned to five or six of the advisor's 15 to 16 advisees. An advising appointment record was used by advisors to suggest discussion topics to promote
purposeful advising interaction. The director of advising met on a monthly basis with the faculty and peer advisors to review progress and motivate continued involvement with the advisees.

The program of proactive advising had an important impact upon faculty advisor performance and student retention. Preliminary findings indicated that retention rates improved from 72.4% to 86.7% (Davidson, 1992). The office of advising wanted a thorough program evaluation accomplished to assess the over-all worth of the newly developed advising services for open-enrolled students (i.e., undeclared majors). By the fall of 1993, a research proposal was approved, and the qualitative program evaluation started.

Purposes and Methods of the Qualitative Study

The twofold purpose of this research was a) to develop a full and rich description of the 1991-1992 proactive advising program offered to first-year, open-enrolled students, and b) to assess the worth of those services as perceived by faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. Findings and recommendations will hopefully promote improved planning and delivery of future advising services.

Important interview data were collected directly from many of the available participants of the original advising program. Each of the eight faculty advisors was interviewed. Nine of the 11 available peer advisors and 24 of the 86 available student advisees were interviewed. From the interview process, qualitative data was collected and analyzed to provide descriptive and useful information to facilitate efforts to better understand and serve student needs (Kuh & Andreas, 1991).
Stake's (1983) responsive program evaluation model was used to help guide the qualitative data collection process. Using the responsive evaluation model helped me to: (a) focus directly on the program activities rather than just its intentions, (b) respond to the director's information needs to improve the advising services, and (c) account for the different perspectives of faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees in the final report.

Important introductory information was collected through a series of 11 pilot study interviews. Pre-designed interview questions were used to collect information that would help describe and assess the proactive advising services. From this initial interview phase, preliminary understandings were reviewed with the director of advising and a research committee member. Interview focus questions were restructured (Appendix D). This introductory exercise prepared me for the remaining interviews.

The second phase of data collection began in the 1994 spring semester. Twenty-eight additional interviews were accomplished. Faculty advisors and students were very cooperative and responsive as they recalled and described their perceptions of advising services. Audio tapes of all the interviews were transcribed. Data analysis was accomplished by using the Macintosh Data Collector software (Turner & Handler, 1992). Units of information were coded and grouped onto topic cards. Printed topic card information was sorted by hand into major categories and themes. Three descriptive outlines representing faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee perceptions were constructed from this qualitative data analysis process.
The third phase of the interview process involved using focus group interviews with faculty and peer advisors. Focus groups helped to provide useful information to confirm the major findings (Hanson & Raney, 1993; Jacobi, 1991). Because of schedule conflicts before spring semester exams, it was difficult to schedule student advisees into a small group arrangement. However, three independent follow-up interviews were accomplished with advisees to review the findings.

Following the focus group interviews with the participants of the advising program, peer debriefings were accomplished with the director of advising and research committee members to provide useful comments that broadened my understanding. Their reactions verified my presentation of the participants perspectives on the original proactive advising program (Kuh & Andreas, 1991; Wolcott, 1990).

Assessment and Recommendations

The following discussion on the characteristics of the advising services fulfills my goal to fully describe and fully assess the proactive advising program offered to first-year, open-enrolled student advisees. Assisted by Stake's (1983) responsive program evaluation model, I have attempted to develop a thorough description of the proactive advising services. What preconceived values existed with the participants about the advising services? What did they appreciate happening? What did they wish would have happened or not have happened? Taking these questions into consideration along with the interview findings from each group of participants, I made a concluding assessment to complete the review of the advising services provided to first-year, open-enrolled students. The assessment is a response to
observations made during the interview process. It provides a final analysis of my observations of the proactive advising program.

The assessment of the advising program identified important attributes that strengthened advising relationships. The assessment also identified deficiencies that weakened those relationships. Attributes of the advising program that strengthened advising relationships included the following: (a) proactive advising strategy, (b) monthly meetings for faculty and peer advisors, (c) faculty advisor as an immediate classroom professor, (d) personal experiences and role model of peer advisors, (e) networking opportunities for advisees, and (f) director's resource services. Deficiencies of the advising program that weakened advising relationships included the following: (a) delayed involvement by faculty and peer advisors, (b) vague direction for peer advisors, (c) the lack of accountability for peer advisors, (d) poorly coordinated advisor and advisee placement, (e) advisors uninformed of general education requirements, (f) biased advising, (g) emphasis on exploration versus declaration of a major, and (h) inconsistency between Drake's recruitment message and faculty advisor performance.

The purpose of the following two sections is to discuss the assessment of the advising characteristics and to provide recommendations to encourage improvement. The recommendations are supported by references to current practices used by other college and university advising personnel to improve advising services.
Attributes that Strengthened Advising Relationships

Proactive Advising Strategy

Faculty-to-student and faculty-to-peer advisor relationships were strengthened by the proactive nature of the advising program. By taking the initiative to purposefully contact students, faculty advisors promoted effective advising relationships that resulted in satisfying advising experiences by those involved.

Improved advisor performance and observed increase in student persistence were evident benefits of advocating this proactive advising strategy. The researcher strongly recommends that continued efforts be made to continue the proactive practices that were initiated in the 1991-92 advising program. The advising appointment record (Appendix A) provided a flexible yet purposeful plan for faculty advisors to initiate and perform advising contacts. Faculty advisors projected a caring attitude by taking the initiative to schedule advising sessions, introducing themselves to advisees and expressing a willingness to help advisees. Communicating interest in the advisee in this way led to a trusting advising relationship that promoted student development and persistence.

Monthly Meetings for Faculty Advisors and Peer Advisors

Strengthening the advising relationship through proactive advising was primarily the motivation of the director of advising. The director organized and facilitated monthly meetings with both faculty and peer advisors to encourage a greater degree of involvement between (a) faculty advisors and their peer advisor assistants, (b) the director of advising and advisors, and (c) the advisors and the student
advisees. The result of the meetings was improved relationships between each of the participants.

The director's leadership effort promoted successful implementation of the new proactive advising program. The very fact that the director organized monthly meetings was in itself proactive. The willingness to motivate faculty and peer advisors to be actively involved in each advisee's academic life was modeled by the director's involvement with the advisors.

Motivating advisors took extra time and effort on the director's part. To assure that such an opportunity would be able to continue into the future, I recommend that the following measures be taken to improve the director's role in designing and directing the advising services offered to open-enrolled advisees:

1. The job description of the director of advising should include leadership responsibilities and opportunities to promote group meetings on a monthly basis with all advisors under her leadership promoting their professional growth and proactive advising performance.

2. Time should be allocated in the director's role to investigate researched strategies of proactive advising that would address further recommendations that will be discussed in part two of this assessment. Recent concern over first-year student persistence from the 1993 fall to the 1994 spring semester illustrates the importance of designing and providing improved advising services. The improvement of Drake's proactive advising services needs to be tied directly to long range planning and student success. This will link the
planning and delivery of advising services to the accomplishment of long range goals. Two models are recommended: (a) The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) suggests a seven step process of program assessment and design (Kuh & McAleenan, 1986), and (b) Celeste Frank's (1993) Integrated Model of Academic Advising Program Development has evolved into an excellent guide for directors of advising. Assessment of program needs is a driving force that helps identify key issues that routinely call for attention in advising program development. Responsiveness to student needs makes these models worth consideration.

3. The director of advising should be given opportunity to play an active role on any official committee that is addressing the issue of student persistence. From this experience, she would gain more knowledge to be able to design the advising strategies for the College of Arts and Sciences to fit more appropriately into the university's master plan for improved student enrollment and retention.

Faculty Advisor as an Immediate Classroom Professor

Several student advisees experienced the benefit of having their faculty advisor as a classroom professor during their first semester of college. As a result, these students were less intimidated by their advisors. Classroom contact with the professor provided time to help advisees understand their advisor. Faculty advisors were perceived as more approachable, and advising was more readily received. The advising relationship was strengthened by the additional time provided through classroom contact.

To take advantage of this strengthening factor in the advising
relationship, I recommend that the director of advising consider matching as many open-enrolled advisees as possible with one of their first semester professors who would act as their open-enrolled advisor. Since summer orientation meetings with advisees help to establish fall class schedules, results could be used in August to determine which advisor would be best suited to advise each open-enrolled student. Pairing students with professors in majors that fit student interests would benefit both the student and the professor. A common ground would exist for beginning a helping relationship as suggested by advisees in this study.

Dr. Ernest Boyer (1991) identified this need for common ground when he suggested that relationships between faculty and students should be an outgrowth of the classroom environment and quality learning experiences. Faculty members, who are assigned as advisors, play a key role in communicating a caring attitude while encouraging academic progress in the classroom. The advantages in developing a faculty-to-student relationship that could be carried into the advising relationship that were illustrated in the testimonies of former first-year student advisees interviewed in this background study. Their faculty-to-student, advisor-to-advisee relationship resulted in a sense of community. To provide these opportunities, more professors would need to be trained to proactively advise open-enrolled students if advisees are placed in their classrooms. An increase in the advising stipend could be given for advising the open-enrolled student as a means of motivating and rewarding faculty advisors to be more receptive to the challenges of advising this particular group of
students.

**Personal Experiences and Role Model of Peer Advisors**

Besides appreciating the faculty advisor more when he or she was one of their professors, open-enrolled students valued having an older, experienced student mentor them through first semester adjustments. Advisees respected an older student's experience that communicated a sense of hope for their own academic careers. Often peer advice was more readily accepted and believed than advice from a faculty advisor who had not experienced current academic classes or the particular teaching styles of other professors. Peer advisors had the personal experience of surviving recent academic challenges. They had earned the recognition and respect of most first-year advisees.

The use of peer advisor role models needs to be continued into future advising programs. Older students can be a tremendous resource to proactive advising programs. Traditional age students, coming to college after high school graduation, are eager to respect and believe one of their own peers who has survived the rigors and demands of Drake academics. It is commendable that recent efforts have been made on Drake's campus to utilize the effectiveness of peer advisors primarily during the new student days at the beginning of the fall semester. Using peer advisors over an extended time will only be as effective as the commitment exists to train and supervise them.

**Networking Opportunities for Advisees**

Along with the respecting peer advisor experience and advice, advisee networking among friends was another positive experience for first-year advisees. Though the advising program was not intentionally
designed to promote networking among friends, advisees were allowed freedom within the advising structure to seek their friends' advice. These contacts proved useful in helping advisees adjust to college life. Many of the purposes of the peer advisor's role were fulfilled by other peers within the advisee's academic, social, or residential circles.

Advisees, peer advisors, and faculty advisors acknowledged the important role personal friends played along with their peer advisor in helping them through first-year adjustments. Peer advisors were keenly aware of this networking process. Several peer advisors viewed their programmed attempts to be in contrast to the networking process. They felt the programmed approach had a negative influence on their advising effectiveness.

Because of the direct relationship between the objectives of formal, structured peer advising and the benefits of informal networking among friends, I recommend the following for future open-enrolled advising services:

1. General orientation of all students, new and returning, should include information that: (a) acknowledges this networking phenomenon and (b) promotes ways students can better assist one another.

2. Specific orientation for older students should promote ways to be more effective in providing informal assistance as opportunities develop in mentoring younger students.

3. Faculty need encouragement and training on how to promote more effective student-to-student networking. Faculty need to educate their students on how to establish helpful kinds of advising networks. Faculty should stress the importance of networking so that students
receive a variety of views to confirm information received from initial sources.

Students need to be encouraged to experience the benefit of helping others as informal peer advisors. Recognizing and promoting networking would enhance the sense of community and compliment the advising relationship advisors and advisees desire to experience (Boyer, 1991).

**Director's Resource Services**

A concluding characteristic of the advising program for first-year, open-enrolled students that strengthened the advising relationship was the provision of advising services by the director of advising. Faculty advisors and peer advisors readily recognized the value of having a trained advisor who would deal with referrals and help advise students with special needs. Providing advice to advisors on how to handle unique problems was an important contribution beyond the provision of monthly meetings discussed earlier.

By providing advising services to participants in the advising program, the director of advising encouraged advisors to be more proactive in their own responsibilities. Availability and capability were both communicated. I recommend that continued effort be made by the director to maintain this reputation of being a resource person. Modeling proactive advising by initiating and maintaining contacts with both advisors and advisees will continue to nurture the development of effective relationships between the faculty advisor and advisee.

Planning director-to-faculty advisor contact time is important and can often be more difficult to accomplish than addressing student
advisee needs. During quiet periods of the semester when orientation and registration times have passed, the director needs to plan and provide ample input to advisors to maintain a healthy working relationship that will strengthen her role as a resource person in the advising program. The result will be improved advising relationships between the director and advisors that then will lead to improved relationships between the advisors and advisees.

Deficiencies that Weakened Advising Relationships

A full description and assessment of the 1991-92 advising services program for first-year, open-enrolled advisees must also include a discussion of program characteristics that weaken advising relationships. Constructive suggestions and recommendations were collected from the participants in this study. Current practices of advising are integrated into the recommendations. The focus of this section will be to identify areas that need improvement and to make recommendations that will improve the proactive advising services offered to first-year, open-enrolled students.

Delayed Involvement by Faculty and Peer Advisors

Advising relationships began as advisors introduced themselves to their assigned student advisees. Initial contact with advisees typically occurred after, rather than during, the new student days. Both faculty and peer advisors recognized the need for earlier involvement with advisees. Peer advisors agreed on the importance of earlier intervention before fall classes begin to help establish a foundation for building a future advising relationship.

Faculty advisors viewed this need for earlier involvement with
lessor concern than peer advisors, but still acknowledged its value. Because of not being able to meet earlier, advisors were frustrated by the poor development of the advising relationship. As a result, the advising relationship was difficult to establish because little or no opportunity to initiate a relationship existed at the very start of the semester. It was clear to the researcher that both faculty and peer advisor understood and valued the purpose for earlier involvement with their assigned advisees which was to provide opportunity for advisors to begin an advising relationship with advisees promoting the delivery of future services.

The foundation for a good advising relationship needed to be established during the first week of the first semester. Therefore, it is recommended that faculty and peer advisors meet face to face with small groups of assigned advisees for at least thirty to forty-five minutes. This would provide adequate time to get acquainted, to review important registration and orientation procedures from the advising relationship point-of-view, and to answer any questions advisees may have. This initial meeting would not need to be formal. It is suggested that a relaxed, informal contact would be more useful in starting out an advising relationship.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) advocates small group advising to reach more students with orientation information and provide opportunities for involvement (Blackstone and Walburn, 1993). Tips, techniques, and plans are illustrated in UAB's Academic Advising Handbook (Blackstone, 1993) providing directors of advising with useful group advising ideas. Their use of small group sessions merits
consideration in Drake's advising services because of the limited time in advisors' and advisees' schedules and because of large advisor-to-advisee ratios.

During initial meetings with advisees, it is recommended that advisors communicate friendliness, availability, knowledge of course selection opportunities, and an understanding of student development to promote the growth of the advising relationship. Individual advising sessions should be scheduled at that first meeting to promote follow-up on advisee progress and to promote growth in the advising relationship. North Carolina Wesleyan College suggests a three session strategy to help open-enrolled advisees (Cerjan, 1993). These sessions help to prepare the student for fall and spring registration. More importantly, the sessions provide purpose and direction in promoting the development of advising relationships. First-year, open-enrolled students typically lack the confidence to reach out and develop new relationships, especially with older adults. The advising relationship can be a place where this could be practiced and modeled in a non-threatening manner.

Advisors could gain a better understanding of first-year student adjustment needs by considering student development models. The following examples are given to provide useful suggestions to improve the advisor's understanding of first-year, traditional age students:

1. Wayne State University's advising services have attempted to apply Chickering's model to the advising process (Carter, 1993). Valuable checklists and surveys are provided in their advising handouts to motivate advisors to understand and address important developmental
needs of student advisees.

2. UAB's Academic Advising Handbook (Blackstone, 1993) includes several excellent topics that address advisor information needs. Section III About Students provides input on freshmen needs, students with academic difficulty, being undecided, and Perry's and Chickering's developmental theories. UAB's presentation on developmental models is useful because the manual provides ideas to increase advisor understanding and application to the advising process.

3. The University of Delaware (UD) has a faculty advisor training model that is worth considering (Fischer, Bradley, & Jeffery, 1993). In the training process, the assessment of student development is reviewed. This particular activity could be applied to Drake's advisor training experiences.

4. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) has promoted developmental advising in its recent draft of the Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising (Frank & Rubner, 1993). It is highly recommended that the director of advising encourage future advisors to consider these core values to improve their working relationship with advisees and to promote a sense of community on the Drake's campus.

First-year students need to be informed by the advisors as to the special purpose the advisor can have in their adjustment to college life and the academic challenge to come. Many students came to Drake without any idea of what to expect from their advisors. Communicating these expectations needs to occur very early in the advising relationship, and therefore, it is tied to this theme of advisors needing earlier involvement to develop advising relationships.
The training of faculty and peer advisors on effective communication and relationship building skills should precede the initial contacts advisors have with advisees. The director of advising can not assume that faculty advisors know how to best build an advising relationship. The director should lead in the development of these skills by interacting with advisors during their own orientation before new student days. Suggested guidelines for initial advising sessions and ways to build the advising relationship should be printed and distributed to help influence advisors to have better communication skills and to promote effective advising experiences.

Two such advising programs are highlighted to illustrate what could be taking place on Drake's campus in this important area of advisor training.

a) UAB's Academic Advising Handbook (Blackstone, 1993) Section II About Advisors and Section IV About Communication provides excellent suggestions for advisors to improve their communication and relationship building skills.

b) The University of Colorado at Boulder (CU-Boulder) offers another worthwhile model for advisor training (Imel & Sullivan, 1993). Through a special luncheon series, advisors learned advising skills to improve their effectiveness with advisees. This innovative format was very appealing to advisors. Many attended and benefited. Counselors from Drake's counseling center could be recruited to provide training sessions on building relationship and communication skills. These training experiences are needed to improve the advisor's ability to establish an advising relationship upon which future advisor-to-
advisee interaction can occur.

Vague Direction for Peer Advisors

Another frustrating experience for participants in the advising program was the poor working relationship that existed between the peer advisor and the faculty advisor. The director's and faculty advisor's lack of providing clear direction to peer advisors regarding their responsibilities resulted in unfulfilled expectations for both parties producing a very unsatisfactory working relationship between faculty advisors and peer advisors.

Faculty and peer advisors suggested several excellent recommendations to resolve this lack of clear direction for the peer advisor's role. Faculty recommended establishing a structured job description for peer advisors. The director of advising needs to have a key part in developing this job description and training faculty advisors to exercise more leadership in promoting the faculty-to-peer advisor relationship. Though the monthly meetings were useful in promoting the sharing of ideas and discussing advisee progress, earlier faculty and peer advisor orientation was needed to establish specific expectations for peer advisors.

To improve the clear communication of peer advisor responsibilities and expectations, the following suggestions are made:

1. Workshops before new student days need to provide faculty and peer advisors with specific relationship and communication skill development opportunities. This orientation time would help faculty and peer advisors establish their own advising relationship before shifting their focus of attention to the student advisee. More emphasis
was needed in preparing peer advisors to understand their purpose and contribution.

2. Regular sessions between faculty and peer advisors need to occur throughout the semester to encourage each to review with others their progress, responsibilities, and expectations. These sessions would address the peer advisor's need for continuous communication and direction.

3. The introductory section found in UAB's Academic Advising Handbook (Blackstone, 1993) offers faculty and peer advisors important information that clarifies the advisor's role and expectations. Application could also be made to the peer advisors' role.

4. Clearly communicating the role of the faculty advisor and the peer advisor to new students during new student days is also recommended. Students need to know what the purpose is for peer advising.

Clarifying what expectations advisees should have of both peer advisors and faculty advisors is needed. Misunderstandings resulted in unfulfilled expectations. This led to a breakdown in the advisee's confidence in the advising program design. For the advisee, the perceived success of the advising program was directly related to the understanding they had of the faculty advisor role and the peer advisor role. A better understanding of those roles would strengthen the advising relationship they had with their faculty and peer advisor.

The Lack of Accountability for Peer Advisors

Since peer advisors were not given clear directions by faculty advisors, faculty advisors were not able to hold them accountable for their performance. Though several faculty advisors were frustrated
with their peer advisor's performance, some advisors were motivated enough by peer advisor contribution to the advising process to recommend the following: (a) meet in advance with the director of advising to determine what would be the best way to motivate and supervise peer advisors, (b) determine in advance what responsibilities would be expected of peer advisors, (c) train faculty advisors to meet early with the peer advisor to establish clear directions and ways to measure performance. Holding peer advisors accountable to clear expectations would greatly care for the challenge of motivating peer advisors to perform more effectively. Much planning and implementation are needed in this area to improve the peer advisors effectiveness in the advising process. Earlier recommendations which focused on improving faculty advisor communication skills need to be applied to improving peer advisor performance. Faculty advisors and student advisees acknowledged these needs. They also recognized the value peer advisors could have to the advising relationship, and they spoke in terms of wishing things could have been better. By improving working relationships with their assigned faculty advisors, peer advisors could add to the quality of the advising services rendered to first-year, open-enrolled students.

Poorly Coordinated Advisor and Advisee Placement

The random placement of peer advisors with faculty advisors and advisees resulted in ineffective advising relationships. Many were uncomfortable with having to make the working relationship function without any prior acquaintance or rapport. Several peer advisors experienced difficulty in creating an advising relationship because no
consideration was given to matching advisor with advisee based on common interests. Because proactive advising advocates the development of advising relationships, I recommend the following:

1. The director needs to match peer advisors to advisees based on common interests (i.e., hobbies, recreation, academic interests) that are surveyed before new student week. Placement efforts need to consider characteristics that participants have in common upon which to build an advising relationship. The College Interest Inventory (The Psychological Corporation, 1994) is one such exercise that could be given to students to help better match peer advisors with advisees. The Myers Briggs Personality Inventory is another well-known survey that could be used in the advising program to fit peers with advisees to promote a more successful relationship based on understanding and common interests (Rogers, 1993).

2. Matching peer advisors with faculty advisors needs to be based on familiarity, departmental experiences, prior or present classroom experiences, availability, and accessibility. Certainly the match should be a collaborative effort on the part of both parties to encourage a better fit.

Attending to these essential matters would promote the working relationship among the advisors and peer advisors, thus making them more effective with advisees. Proactive advising requires more relationship building activity. If there is a weakness at any given point in this triangular relationship between faculty, peer, and advisee, the quality of advising services is diminished, especially in the eyes advisee.
Advisors Uninformed of General Education Requirements

The advisor's lack of understanding about which courses were general education requirements and which courses were pure electives caused many advisees to have problems with their schedules during their junior and senior years. Several advisees voiced this concern as they looked back as juniors and considered the counsel they had received. Because they took too many electives their first year, they had to plan taking more general education requirements their junior and senior year. This prevented students from taking electives in their major area of interest as they approached graduation when their interests and preparation needs were even greater in that field of study.

Advisors need to be knowledgeable and current in their understanding of academic requirements. First-year students placed a great deal of trust in their faculty advisor's counsel. Breaking that trust by giving faulty advice influenced the perception advisee's had of the advisor's quality of service. The director of advising has an annual challenge to keep advisors current with their understanding of academic requirements. Assessing their performance through student surveys would help address this challenge (Srebnik, 1988). Just as peer advisors should be held accountable for their performance, faculty advisors ought to also be accountable.

Biased Advising

Just as advisees were concerned about receiving inaccurate counsel on course selection, they were also concerned about receiving biased advise. Many advisees were intimidated by advisors who
strongly promoted course selection from their own academic department. The researcher found this to be very uncharacteristic of recommended advising practices (Frank & Rubner, 1993).

Orientation and in-service training are recommended to train advisors to be more balanced in their advice. I suggest advisor assessment and accountability be part of the program to improve services to student advisees. Assessment surveys have been developed and proven by other colleges (Fischer, Bradley, & Jeffery, 1994; Ford, 1993; Talbot, 1993). Their timely use would help the director of advising to identify specific advisors who need additional training on providing academic advice that fits the student's interests and abilities rather than advice that appears to be biased to the advisor's academic department.

The quality of faculty advisor performance should be a key concern for the director of advising. Besides the use of outcomes based surveys mentioned above, focus group assessment is recommended to improve the director's ability to measure the quality of faculty advising during the planning, delivery, and conclusion of the advising services.

Focus groups (Jacobi, 1991) would include small groups of two to five faculty advisors, peer advisors, student advisees, or combination of the program participants. The discussion and interaction could be led by the director of advising. An outline of focus questions and topics could be discussed providing direction to the meeting. Members would be given the opportunity to express their concerns in their own language without being constrained by a quantitative survey or
questionnaire's language and format. Usually, focus groups are less expensive to perform than surveys. Motivation to participate is usually high because direct involvement with advising leadership is provided. Question development is improved as information is collected during the discussion. Important topics are reviewed from the participants point of view. The process is much more user friendly and user focused since the participants in the program are the ones discussing the issues and making suggestions to improve the delivery of services. Rewards for involvement could include a special luncheon at the expense of the advising office. Typically, more effective and relevant survey items are identified from this qualitative approach in preparation for future campus wide quantitative assessments.

The focus group model is recommended because groups are smaller and more representative. Participation and interaction are encouraged. Suggestions and recommendations are usually more focused on addressing current problems. Improvement of advising services would be a natural outcome (Hansen & Raney, 1993; Kramer, 1992). Continuous assessment through the use of focus groups could facilitate efforts to improve faculty advisor performance. Understanding and communicating findings from such an assessment processes could provide convincing arguments to faculty members to increase their own understanding and desire to change. Findings could also add support for future program improvements as services are related to increased retention rates. Research results could provide administrators with the confidence and knowledge needed to approve the expenditure of additional funds toward improved advising services.
Emphasis on Exploration versus Declaration of a Major

Many student advisees were frustrated by faculty advisors who excessively stressed the taking of elective courses to explore interests without focusing on taking required general education classes and declaring a major. It was apparent that faculty advisors did not realize the degree of concern students had about declaring a major in order to finish in four years. Student advisees valued having more emphasis placed on the importance of declaring a major. Students were wanting to finish their undergraduate requirements in four years because of financial pressures.

I recommend that faculty advisor orientation specifically addresses this tension between (a) the advising program goal of advising students to explore their interests and (b) the advisor’s need to be attentive to the student’s concern over fitting that advice into a four year plan. Faculty advisors frequently need to be reminded about the stress of financing Drake’s expensive academic studies and about the desire students have to finish in four years. The advisor appointment record could include printed reminders and instructions to check student progress on financing school bills and accomplishing graduation requirements. This would remind advisors to address advisee concerns over finishing in four.

Related to this time factor, faculty advisors and advisees had different views about how to choose a particular major. Faculty advisors thought it was important to explore different electives. Students thought the decision to declare was greatly influenced by the
experiences of a particular class and professor. In discussing how they decided on a major, students rarely gave credit to the advisor's counsel to explore electives. The purpose for promoting the exploration of electives was to help the advisee to find a particular area of interest in which to major. Advisors were not very successful in helping advisees make that connection.

I recommend that advisors communicate the importance of both exploration and declaration each time they meet with an advisee to protect misunderstandings from developing on the advisee's part and to strengthen the advising relationship. The advisor appointment record could note the need for this communication in the advising process each semester. This parallels Fielstein's (1989) findings which showed the importance of providing both a developmental approach and a prescriptive approach in the advising process. Drake advisors need to balance their efforts to help the advisee understand and explore interests while providing direction and advice on important course selection information for a four year plan (Frost, 1993).

To improve understanding and appreciation for the advisor's counsel, training also needs to be provided to help students to become better advisees. Orientation of advisees on a semester by semester basis would be most beneficial. Several universities have taken the initiative to train students what their advisee expectations and responsibilities are in the advisor-to-advisee relationship.

1. Winona State University (WSU) was awarded a special grant to initiate an advisee training program focusing on improving advisee skills (Brown, 1993). High school graduates typically come to college
without any idea of what it means to be a successful first-year student or advisee. Winona State's model merits much consideration as Drake considers placing more emphasis upon the student for taking the responsibility for his or her successful adjustment to college life. WSU student advisees were more prepared and organized for faculty advising services as a result of being better informed of their advisee responsibilities. Faculty advisors were impressed and encouraged because students came more prepared to advising services. The advising relationship was significantly improved as students were trained to have realistic expectations.

2. Two other universities are cited for their efforts to inform advisees of their responsibilities. The College of Arts and Sciences' Undergraduate Handbook (1993-1994) of the University of Delaware lists the rights and responsibilities of advisees. South Dakota State University produced a comprehensive list of goals, rights, and responsibilities for advisees and advisors on a one page, front and back handout (Erikson, 1993). These forms of communication helped students become better advisees as they sought advisor assistance with realistic expectations.

Looking back over their past academic and advising experiences, Drake advisees suggested that faculty advisors of open-enrolled students encourage advisees to explore particular majors during their early years in college through already established out-of-class activities primarily designed for juniors and seniors. These activities included departmental meetings, seminars, guest lectures, and clubs. Peer advisors agreed and considered these activities as excellent
opportunities to learn about certain majors without having to take time out of their academic schedule of general education requirements. Students desired to experience more of these departmental experiences sooner in their four-year program. Some suggested that earlier involvement in a variety of departmental activities would have helped them become more acquainted with potential majors and more confident in the decision-making process.

To improve the advising services that address decision-making concerns about declaring a major, the following recommendations are given:

1. Virginia Gordon of Ohio State University encouraged connecting academic advising with career decision-making experiences (Gordon, Steele, & Kennedy, 1993). One emphasis of the advising strategy was to motivate students to conduct information gathering interviews with employees and employers. This resulted in first-hand involvement in areas of interest promoting improved decision-making skills.

2. Central Connecticut State University's student affairs office promoted active involvement on the advisees' part. Advisors motivated them to go beyond the classroom experience and volunteer or work on the campus or in the local community (Hansen, Engwall, & Hicks, 1993). This model of experiential learning encouraged hands-on learning opportunities to help students check out potential interests in future careers. The result was improved awareness of one's personal motivation and aptitude for particular majors offered at the university.

Drake's first-year, open-enrolled advisees could benefit from participating in one or more of these activities to prepare them for
making important decisions about declaring a major or, at least, consider heading into a tentative direction as they begin their sophomore year. If tentative direction was not taken during the beginning of their sophomore year, finishing in four years could become a major challenge. This was especially true if advice was given to explore electives not related to the eventual major that was chosen.

Several advisees were offended by the advisor's emphasis upon exploration without attending to the concerns about declaring to be able to finish in four years. Several students took summer school to earn enough credits to graduate in four years. Some were frustrated because they had to take general education requirements during their junior and senior years rather than desired electives in their field of study. Earlier involvement in career related experiences could help address this need they had to declare soon enough to take advantage of desired electives and also finish the degree work in four years.

In conclusion, I recommended that monthly meetings with open-enrolled advisors be continued in order to provide the director time to help advisors remember the balance needed between exploration and declaration. This important part of advisor training needs to be continually addressed to promote more effective advising relationships and student persistence. Administrators equate persistence as a measure of program success, so advisor training efforts become essential in the effort to verify the existence and importance of advising services (King, 1993).
Inconsistency between Drake's Recruitment Message and Faculty Advisor Performance

Peer advisors and student advisees expressed concerns over inconsistency between Drake's recruitment message and faculty advisor performance. Prospective students were encouraged to come to Drake because it offered the educational opportunities of a large university on a small campus setting with faculty who care about student academic success. Some advisees did not experience the fulfillment of this recruitment message. Several peer advisors agreed with advisees' perceptions. The effect of not experiencing a caring attitude from faculty advisors in the advising relationship was noteworthy. Students desired (a) to be recognized by name, (b) to have an opportunity to visit at the advisor's home with other advisees, (c) to have a friendly, approachable advisor, and (d) to be able to freely visit without feeling the advisor was being interrupted by or distracted from more important things such as research or teaching responsibilities.

One of the eight faculty advisors agreed with this assessment as well. He recognized the tension between (a) teaching and research responsibilities and (b) advising duties. While stressing the connection between teaching and advising, he encouraged elevating the value of advising by having it become a teaching related responsibility. He suggested that teacher evaluation should include advising performance along with classroom performance. This recommendation is noteworthy. Faculty advisor performance would likely improve if advising responsibilities were tied directly to the teaching tenure assessment process. His testimony supports the contention that the
teacher-to-student, advisor-to-advisee relationship is central to a university's existence (Boyer, 1991).

I also learned from this faculty member about the Madelyn Glazer Mentor Award (Gitenstein, 1994). A faculty or staff member who demonstrated excellence in advising was soon to be honored with a $2,500 stipend. I recommend that much more frequent honor and recognition be given to reward those who excel in advising. Such recognition would help elevate the importance of advising and would help improve how faculty view their responsibilities.

To identify recipients for advising awards, more assessment would need to occur. This would help to provide important comments on the progress of faculty advisor performance. Assessment and recognition would greatly help to improve advising services which would in turn harmonize the recruitment message with what advisees experience during their first year of college. Administrators would need to take the lead in this effort to improve faculty advisor performance. Improved satisfaction with the advising services would result in improved persistence as a customer service approach was practiced (Spicuzza, 1992).

Summary of Findings Using Stake's Model

Applying Stake's (1983) responsive model of program evaluation to the data collection and analysis process was useful in identifying both attributes and deficiencies in the 1991-1992 advising program. Interview information from faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees provided three distinct viewpoints about how advising services were designed and delivered. Generally, faculty advisors, peer
advisors, and student advisees agreed about program intentions and activities that were experienced. However, on some topics, they did not agree, nor did they share similar values. Two such topics were how advisors and students viewed advisee networking and declaring an academic major.

With regard to the first, neither the director of advising nor faculty advisors planned or intended for networking with friends to be a matter of consideration in the advising program. However, it was observed that networking was a significant consideration for students, and both faculty and students acknowledged its value. Peer advisors recognized the networking phenomenon, but they noted that they felt replaced by advisee friends, class members, or residence hall contacts.

The assessment made in response to these observations was that networking with friends improved advisee adjustment to academic challenges and the development of decision-making skills. In additional, social skills were developed and a sense of community was enhanced. Faculty advisors benefited by having their advisees receive additional academic information through contacts with friends.

It was recommended that faculty advisors and peer advisors have a key role in promoting the networking process for first-year students. Earlier involvement at the very start of the semester would improve the peer advisor's opportunity to develop a more effective advising relationship with assigned advisees. Encouraging the networking process and linking it directly to the advising program would (a) promote a sense of community on Drake's campus and (b) help students adjust to and persist through first-year academic challenges.
Stake's model was also useful in developing a clear understanding of how faculty advisors and student advisees viewed the process of declaring a major. The intended advising strategy for faculty advisors was to promote the exploration of interests by advising students to take one or more of the available electives. Students, however, came to college with the intentions of finishing in four years. In the context of financing a private education, taking first-year electives to explore interests caused some students to have to enroll in summer school courses in order to finish graduation requirements on time. The outcome was dissatisfied advisees.

Student advisees valued declaring a major in time to finish in four years, but they rarely gave their advisor any credit in helping them choose a major because of his or her emphasis upon exploration. Faculty advisors felt they had done well to encourage exploration but did not realize how students were reacting to their counsel. By considering both experiences, I was able assess the differences that existed between faculty advisors and advisees and provide recommendations for improving the advising relationship.

In terms of recommendations, clear communication is needed so that students understand the importance of exploration to improve decision-making skills. Likewise, faculty advisors need to stay alert to the financial pressures motivating students to want to finish in four years. The advising appointment record should include reminders to advisors to consider these concerns. Each advising session should address both the importance of exploration and the need to declare a major in context to the student's personal interests and academic
goals.

In conclusion, the assessment and recommendations suggest the need for (a) advisor training for better communication and understanding between the participants in the advising relationship, and (b) more assessment to improve accountability of those providing the advising services including peer and faculty advisors. The success of advising services hinges upon the quality of the working relationship between the advisor and the advisee (CAS Standards, 1986). The director's motivation and effort to improve the advisor-to-advisee relationship will greatly influence the success of Drake University's commitment to promote "excellence in teaching and student advising" as it "fosters the development of personal abilities, stimulates creativity, and encourages a sense of community" (Drake General Catalog, 1992-94, p. 6, 7).

**Director's Response**

The description and evaluation of the advising services were presented to the director of advising for review. The director of advising shared the following observations in our concluding conference that verified the accuracy of my understandings of my assessment:

1. The director found it useful to have the faculty advisor, peer advisor, and student advisee perceptions of the advising services presented in three separate sections. The director was able to understand the over-all impact of her role as director of advising with each group of participants. Considering future direction and interaction with these three groups, she felt more able to personalize
her plans, preparations, and delivery of future advising services to address the needs of faculty and students.

2. The discussion of the attributes that strengthened the advising relationship and the deficiencies that weakened the advising relationship with accompanied recommendations motivated the director to consider her own pivotal part in the success of the advising services.

3. The timing of the report was very much appreciated. Many of the recommendations and hands-on examples that accompanied the report were found to be very useful in her plans for advisor training sessions this academic year.

4. The director was impressed with the scope and depth of the descriptive findings and concluding assessment of the advising services. She shared that over one-half of the total number of first-year advisees in the College of Arts and Sciences are open-enrolled this semester. With this program evaluation input, she felt a more effective delivery of advising services could be planned to address the increased number of open-enrolled students.

5. In our discussion about advisor training, we discussed the challenge of motivating faculty to improve their advising skills. Training has been offered, but voluntary attendance has been low. Featuring computer training on registration procedures as part of the experience was discussed as a way to motivate faculty advisors to attend. While they are present, other important information could be presented to improve their working relationships with advisees.

6. As the director and I discussed recommendations to improve future
advising services, I was impressed with her heightened awareness of how important her relationship is with faculty advisors and students. The director acknowledged her need to better understand and communicate with each group. The importance of improving her working relationship with advisors and students harmonized with the primary finding of the study that advising is perceived as beneficial if an effective working relationship exists between the advisor and advisee.

**Limitations of the Study**

Undertaking the study of Drake's open-enrolled advising services proved to be a very challenging and rewarding experience. It is important that the reader consider the limitations discussed in this section to help put the findings and assessment into proper context. The following factors provided particular challenges to the research process: (a) my primary role as the human instrument in the interview data collection process, (b) the amount of time devoted to the study, (c) the quantity of interview information and how it was managed, (d) the ability of the participants to recall advising after two years of prior experiences, and (e) the uniqueness of Drake's higher education experience.

In this qualitative study, an important limiting factor that is readily acknowledged is that the evaluation of the advising program was accomplished by only one person. Though qualitative methods of data analysis included member checks and peer debriefings to confirm my understanding, it still relied on my understanding and interpretation. Several times I realized I was interpreting information
from my own personal reference. Member checks with advisors and students helped to correct my view of their experiences when I was mistaken.

A research team would likely produce a more accurate review of the same interview data. Individual members on a team could investigate more aspects of the campus to collect related information to further explain the context, process, and outcomes of the advising services. Collaborative work in collecting, analyzing, writing and editing would help produce a more accurate description and assessment of the program. One individual can only do so much and can bring only so much experience and ability into a research project of this magnitude. Using an evaluation team approach merits consideration and is recommended for future qualitative studies.

Planning the proposed study so that it could be completed over a ten month time period appeared adequate at first. However, it became evident by early spring that additional time would have been useful to allow the researcher to investigate participant experiences beyond the interview process. More time was needed to explore related issues. Topics needing additional observation time included: (a) the residence life the promoted networking among friends, (b) the faculty advisor's office routine and advising style, (c) the support services such as tutoring and career guidance centers, (d) the director's planning strategies, office procedures, and advisor training efforts, and (e) the campus leadership structure and strategic planning process. These issues affected advising services and are part of the bigger picture. More time was needed to investigate these related issues.
The reader should be aware that an audit was not performed by an independent researcher to confirm how accurately data was unitized and how resulting themes were developed. However, original recordings, transcriptions, unitized data, data cards, topic cards, and resulting outlines of major themes have been maintained to provide an audit trail to confirm the findings of this study. The challenge of dealing with this vast amount of input was addressed by sorting the data using computer software. Because only so much information could be viewed on a computer monitor at once, topic cards were printed out and sorted by hand. This process was very time consuming because of the amount of data.

To manage the data analysis process and produce a clear presentation of the findings, I choose to establish a three part presentation of the findings. Prior to analysis, I separated interview information into the three groups of participants including the faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees. This helped the director to understand the perspectives of each group more readily as they were presented separately. However, presenting the findings in three separate sections caused the report to be expanded in order to adequately cover the perceptions of each group. The thorough review of each group's perception provided a thick description of the advising program as experienced by faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees.

In addition to the amount of interview data that was collected, the reader should also be aware that the respondents were asked to recall experiences which occurred nearly two years ago. I had to
remind participants that the study was about the initial program of advising offered in the 1991-1992 academic year. Often advisors and students would hint to or directly comment about present experiences. The comparisons were helpful in understanding how they viewed the past, but my primary focus was upon the original program rather than on a comparison study.

Several questions were addressed entering into the study. Would participants be able to recall? Could they remember significant events that would help me reproduce an accurate account of how the advising services were designed, how well they were received, and what impact they had upon the student advisee? Interview questions helped to keep the discussion focused on the original advising program. Though the findings do rest on the accuracy of the respondent's memory, the resulting input was based on an older, wiser, more experienced respondent who could look back and comment on what was experienced in light of what was now known about academic advising an older, college student.

The study is also limited in its application, because only Drake students who had persisted in their college experience were interviewed. Students who had stopped-out, dropped-out, or transferred were not available for interviews. What impact would former students have on the findings? Research information was collected from students who had persisted. They were traditional students who entered the Drake experience as first-year students right after graduating from high school, remained single, and lived in the residence halls. As advisees, they had persisted to their junior year.
The peer advisors, who were interviewed, were close to graduating or had graduated. With this understanding, the reader must verify for himself or herself after reading the presentation whether the findings and assessment can be applied to his or her own setting.

Another limiting factor is that the Drake experience is unique, and its impact upon college students differs from other higher education institutions. Another higher education setting may have fewer financial challenges. Admission policies may result in undeclared students being processed differently in the advising process. Hopefully, the thorough description of the advising program will help the reader to be able to assess to what degree the findings can be transferred to his or her own setting. It is my hope that other advising directors will be able to benefit from this study and its presentation. The credibility of the findings and assessment will be measured by how well they impact Drake's advising services and program development. Other higher education settings may also be encouraged by the findings and assessment as the information is found relevant to their particular needs. As this research report is considered, the reader is encouraged to consider additional research to improve the delivery of future advising services to first-year students.

**Theoretical Implications of the Study**

Proactive advising places special demands upon faculty advisors. By taking the initiative to schedule advising sessions, advisors seek to purposefully interact with advisees to promote student development during their higher education experience. Understanding student development needs can make planned intervention more meaningful for
both the advisor and the advisee (Rogers, 1993). Findings from this study are compatible with several student development theories.

For example, in this study I found that faculty advisors took the initiative to schedule advising sessions with first-year student advisees to get acquainted, review academic progress, discuss academic goals, and encourage involvement in the Drake's higher education experience. The advising appointment record suggested a variety of discussion topics to remind advisors of developmental issues. This aspect of the advising program exemplifies the application of the early stages of Chickering's (1968) student development model. Advising activities focused on encouraging advisees in the following areas: (a) achieving academic competence through improved study and time management skills, (b) managing emotions with new interpersonal relationships on campus and in residence halls, and (c) becoming autonomous as an independent college student away from home and responsible for decisions about social and academic choices. Faculty advisors viewed themselves as facilitators of student development, working with advisees to clarify academic goals while also signing course registration forms typically associated with the faculty advisor's role.

This study also focused upon open-enrolled, first-year students who entered the Drake experience without declaring a major. Student advisees, who were undecided as they began their first semester, exemplified the ego-identity development model of Erickson as articulated by Marcia (Gordon & Kline, 1989). The following four developmental identity statuses are reviewed in relationship to open-
enrolled advising experiences:

1. Diffusion status includes students who have not experienced the crisis of deciding on a major nor have made any commitment or decision to identify with any one particular choice. As advisors exercised proactive advising strategies, they provided personal and academic information to encourage diffused students to consider exploring available options within Drake's academic offerings.

2. Foreclosure status denotes those students who are not experiencing a decision-making crisis, because they made the choice of a major before they came to college. Since open-enrolled advisees were first-year students who had not declared a major, they were not typically observed in the foreclosure status.

3. Moratorium status relates to those students who were busy with the challenge of exploring choices without making any one particular choice. They were encouraged by advisors not to make rash decisions but rather check out their interests and academic abilities so that a wise choice could be made.

4. Identity achievement status signifies students who have survived the crisis of searching for a particular major. Furthermore, they have decided upon and identified with their choice of a major. By the time the first-year advisees were interviewed in this study, they were juniors. Most of these students had achieved the status of being confident about their choice of major, demonstrating the identity achievement status. Several students had changed their major illustrating that this status is not static but rather dynamic. Commitment and resolve to graduate in four years was evident as
students approached their senior year.

Because students were at various levels within each identity status, advising skills were put to the test. Many advisees desired continued support from the advising relationship to further confirm their academic direction. Faculty advisors who provided accurate and unbiased information on academic requirements and who provided a caring attitude in the advising relationship promoted first-year student development through this period of uncertainty and academic adjustment. Such advising performance encouraged the growth of the advising relationship and promoted student development during the student's first-year experience (Frost, 1991).

Recommendations for Further Study

After considering the limitations of this particular study, it is natural to follow-up with recommendations for further research both at Drake and at other higher education settings. The following recommendations are presented for consideration:

1. Further qualitative study needs to be accomplished through individual interviews and through the use of focus groups. The major themes discovered in this study could be reviewed with current students at each academic level including first-year students, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and graduate students. The purpose would be to identify advising needs and perceptions that are unique for each specific academic level. Current perceptions and experiences could be observed to verify and confirm the findings of this recent study. Advisor training and delivery of advising services could be tailored to address student needs at each academic level.
2. More research time needs to be devoted to the study of how advising services influence student development. Women and men have different developmental experiences. Gender specific studies are recommended to identify new or support existing student development theories. From such studies, recommendations could be made to address student needs unique to men and to women in order to promote persistence and successful college experiences. Data collected in this recent study could provide supporting information for such studies since the data could be sorted by gender prior to further analysis. Analysis of this data by gender categories could generate new research questions worthy of exploration.

3. Based upon this recent study, follow-up quantitative studies could be performed by developing surveys and questionnaires that account for the major themes that have been identified. A hypothesis could be formulated from the findings and tested among a representative population on Drake's campus or at other university settings. Resulting statistics could be useful in motivating administrators to approve more financial support to advising services. Results from quantitative studies usually identify how many, what relationship, or to what degree the findings are relevant to the present advising program needs. Focus group interviews could be used to discuss the meaning of such quantitative research findings in order to make sense out of the data for future planning and decision making opportunities.

4. The following qualitative studies are suggested: (a) How do faculty perceive their role as advisors in an academic setting where teaching and research are higher priorities? (b) How do administrators view
faculty advising as it relates to the teaching and research function? (c) How can advising be improved to help students persist in higher education? (d) What makes the combination of the classroom professor and faculty advisor role a strengthening characteristic in the advising relationship? (e) How can students be trained to be better advisees, and (f) How can the advising relationship be improved? Qualitative studies provide additional insights as to why the results occurred. They try to make sense out of what has taken place, and they consider the whole versus one of the distinctive parts.

The value of further research cannot be overstated. Those interested in improving the delivery of advising services will desire to know more about student developmental needs through the research process. Findings and assessments will promote better decisions and better planning for the future. Financial resources will be more available to programs which can defend their existence through such research (King, 1993).

Conclusion

Advising can make a difference. The perceptions of the Drake's proactive advising program held by faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees helped to identify the attributes and deficiencies of the advising services that strengthened or weakened advising relationships. The more effective the advising relationship between advisor and advisee, the more successful the services were perceived. The challenge of improving identified deficiencies rests with those providing the advising service. Students are expected to be responsible to take advantage of the services designed to meet their needs.
Directors of advising services and faculty advisors need to understand those needs by performing additional studies. Designing and delivering improved services will encourage student development and persistence in higher education (Backhus, 1989). Efforts to strengthen advising relationships between participants will likely result in more satisfying advising experiences for students. With research from program evaluations, such as this one, future efforts at Drake should be more productive in improving the design and delivery of advising services to first-year, open-enrolled students.
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APPENDIX A

ADVISING APPOINTMENT RECORD
ADVISER APPOINTMENT RECORD

Student

Advisor

Major

• Please review recommended discussion areas  
• Enter dates and summaries of meetings

### Fall 1992

#### 8/24-8/28 Get Acquainted Meeting
- Review of fall schedule
- Discuss academic policies (Drop/add, etc)
- Provide your office address and hours

#### 9/1-9/30 First Academic Planning Session
- Review academic progress, anticipate problems & strategies
- Begin discussion of academic/career goals
- Encourage time management
- Introduce referral sources (tutoring, counseling, RA's)

#### 10/1-10/16 Pre-Fall Break Review, Preliminary Scheduling
- Review academic progress
- Continue discussion of goals/decision-making
- Discuss campus adjustment and/or problems
- Begin planning spring schedule, encourage to attend Gen Ed explanatory meeting
- Instruct in registration procedure
- Refer if needed (instructors, tutors, counseling)

#### 10/26-30 Pre-Registration Appointment
- Review student planned schedule
- Register through appropriate procedure
- Discuss mid-term grade report and student actions and reactions

#### 11/14-12/20 Holiday Support/Stress Reducer
- Continue reviewing academic progress
- Provide support during finals and pre-holiday excitement

### Additional Notes:

Adapted from a form prepared by the Office of Advising Service, St. Mary's College of California
SPRING 1993

1/18-1/22 FIRST WEEK OF SEMESTER
- Adjust schedule to repeat failed classes or routine drop/adds
- Discuss Academic Probation Policy if appropriate

Feb. DECISION-MAKING/CAREER PLANNING
- Continue exploration of goals, personal strengths, career options
- Refer to Career Center for testing/information gathering, if desired
- Refer to various departments or Dean's office to explore options for majors

3/1-3/21 PRELIM. PLANNING FOR SUMMER and FALL 1992
- Review semester's academic progress
- Discuss campus involvements and activities
- Preview plans for summer 1993 (job, school, ?)
- Refer if necessary
- Instruct in pre-registration procedure and schedule planning

3/29-4/2 PRB REGISTRATION FOR FALL 1993
- Review mid term grades
- Schedule classes for fall 1993, summer 1993
- Refer if necessary

May WRAP-UP
- Discuss summer plans, approve courses from other institutions if necessary
- Fill in change of major form or change of advisor form as appropriate, discuss advising in next year

ADVISOR: __________________________________________
STUDENT: ________________________________________
APPENDIX B

APPROVAL FOR HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH
Information for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

Iowa State University

(Please type and use the attached instructions for completing this form)

A Qualitative Study of the Faculty and Peer Advising Program for
at Drake University

1. Title of Project: Undeclared First-year Students in the College of Arts and Sciences

2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are protected. I will report any adverse reactions to the committee. Additions to or changes in research procedures after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review. I agree to request renewal of approval for any project continuing more than one year.

Stephen E. Buckley 10/8/93
Typed Name of Principal Investigator
Date
Signature of Principal Investigator

Higher Education N232 Lagomarcino 294-7358
Department Campus Address Campus Telephone

3. Signatures of other investigators Date Relationship to Principal Investigator

Sitney E. Hake 10-11-93 ISU Faculty Research Advisor/Committee Chair
Maggie M. Davidson 10/7/93 Drake's College of Arts and Sciences Director of Advising

4. Principal Investigator(s) (check all that apply)

☐ Faculty ☐ Staff ☐ Graduate Student ☐ Undergraduate Student

5. Project (check all that apply)

☐ Research ☑ Thesis or dissertation ☐ Class project ☐ Independent Study (490, 590, 690, etc.) project

6. Number of subjects (complete all that apply) at Drake University

☐ # Adults, non-students ☑ # ISU student ☑ # minors under 14 ☑ # minors 14 - 17 ☑ other (explain)
Faculty Advisors 15 student peer advisors
# ISU student 30 student advisees
# minors under 14
# minors 14 - 17

7. Brief description of proposed research involving human subjects: (See instructions, Item 7. Use an additional page if needed.)

Attached

(Please do not send research, thesis, or dissertation proposals.)

8. Informed Consent: ☑ Signed informed consent will be obtained. (Attach a copy of your form.)
☐ Modified informed consent will be obtained. (See instructions, item 8.)
☐ Not applicable to this project.
9. Confidentiality of Data: Describe below the methods to be used to ensure the confidentiality of data obtained. (See instructions, item 9.)

Participants will be given a code number to ensure confidentiality of interview data. A person's name will not be used in the analysis process or reporting documents. Tape recordings of interviews will be erased by September 30, 1995.

10. What risks or discomfort will be part of the study? Will subjects in the research be placed at risk or incur discomfort? Describe any risks to the subjects and precautions that will be taken to minimize them. (The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to subjects' dignity and self-respect as well as psychological or emotional risk. See instructions, item 10.)

Very minimal risks are involved in this research. Faculty advisors, student peer advisors and student advisees will be interviewed individually and in small focus groups of 2 to 5 people. Participation is voluntary and individuals can withdraw at any time. A preliminary letter will introduce the study and interview opportunity. A telephone call to set-up an interview opportunity will address any questions. A consent form will also explain the purpose and method of the study.

11. CHECK ALL of the following that apply to your research:

  - A. Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
  - B. Samples (Blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
  - C. Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
  - D. Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
  - E. Deception of subjects
  - F. Subjects under 14 years of age and/or Subjects 14 - 17 years of age
  - G. Subjects in institutions (nursing homes, prisons, etc.)
  - H. Research must be approved by another institution or agency (Attach letters of approval)

If you checked any of the items in 11, please complete the following in the space below (include any attachments):

Items A - D Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions being taken.

Item E Describe how subjects will be deceived; justify the deception; indicate the debriefing procedure, including the timing and information to be presented to subjects.

Item F For subjects under the age of 14, indicate how informed consent from parents or legally authorized representatives as well as from subjects will be obtained.

Items G & H Specify the agency or institution that must approve the project. If subjects in any outside agency or institution are involved, approval must be obtained prior to beginning the research, and the letter of approval should be filed.

H. Application for Drake University's approval for human subject research is attached. Notification of approval will be sent to ISU upon receipt.
checklist for Attachments and Time Schedule

The following are attached (please check):

12. [X] Letter or written statement to subjects indicating clearly:
   a) purpose of the research
   b) the use of any identifier codes (names, #’s), how they will be used, and when they will be
      removed (see Item 17) (first three numbers of their social security number)
   c) an estimate of time needed for participation in the research and the place
   d) if applicable, location of the research activity (on Drake’s campus)
   e) how you will ensure confidentiality
   N/Af) in a longitudinal study, note when and how you will contact subjects later
   g) participation is voluntary; nonparticipation will not affect evaluations of the subject

13. [□] Consent form (if applicable)

14. [□] Letter of approval for research from cooperating organizations or institutions (if applicable)

15. [X] Data-gathering instruments (Interview Questions) be sent to ISU.

16. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:
   First Contact                                      Last Contact
   ________________________  ________________________
   Month / Day / Year        Month / Day / Year

17. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or audio or visual tapes will be erased:

   ________________________
   Month / Day / Year

18. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer:       Date: ________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   Department or Administrative Unit

19. Decision of the University Human Subjects Review Committee:
   ________________________  ________________________  ________________________
   Project Approved          Project Not Approved       No Action Required

   ________________________
   Name of Committee Chairperson: ________________________
   ________________________
   Signature of Committee Chairperson: ________________________
Name of Principal Investigator: Stephen E. Buckley

Department: ISU Graduate Student, Higher Education - Student Services

Title of Proposed Project: A Qualitative Study of the Faculty and Peer Advising Program for Undeclared (open-enrolled) First-year Students in the College of Arts and Sciences at Drake University

Proposed Starting Date: 11/8/93 Duration: 9/30/94

Estimated Number of Human Subjects Involved in Project: 7 Faculty Advisors, 15 Peer Advisors and 30 Student Advisees

I. Characteristics of Subjects (check as many boxes as appropriate)

- Minors
- Disabled
- University Students (Peer Advisors; Advisees)
- Adults
- Pregnant Women
- Secondary School Pupils
- Prisoners
- Legally Incompetent
- Elementary School Pupils
- Others (specify) Faculty Advisors

II. Consent and Withdrawal Procedures, Notification of Results

A. Consent obtained from: 
- Individual
- Institution
- Parent/Legal Guardian
- Other (Specify)

B. Type of Consent: 
- Written (attach copy of consent statement)
- Oral (explain reason for not using written form and attach a verbatim statement of oral request to the subject)

C. Subjects are informed of withdrawal privileges (attach copy of statement)

D. Subjects notified of results: 
- Mail
- Individual Consultation
- Group Meetings
Use additional sheets to respond to each of the remaining portions of this form.

III. Risks: Briefly describe the risks (physical, psychological, social) to the subjects, and indicate the degree of risk involved in each case.

IV. Benefits: Briefly describe the benefits (physical, psychological, social) to the subjects and/or humankind in general.

V. Methodology/Procedures
   A. Briefly describe the methods used for selection of subjects/participants.
   B. Briefly describe all other procedures to be followed in carrying out the project.
   C. Attach a copy of orientation information to subjects. Include questionnaires, interview questions, tests, and other similar materials.

VI. Submit three copies of the proposal you are filing.

VII. Agreements: By signing this form, the principal investigator agrees to the following:
   A. To conform to the policies, principles, procedures, and guidelines established by the Drake Committee on Human Subjects Research.
   B. To supply the committee with documentation of selection procedures and informed consent procedures.
   C. To inform the committee of any changes in procedures which involve human subjects, giving sufficient time to review such changes before they are implemented.
   D. To provide the committee with any progress reports it may request.
   E. To obtain appropriate clearance or written permission from other institutions or agencies involved in the research.
   F. The signature of the faculty advisor is required for all student research.

__________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Primary Investigator  Date

__________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Primary Investigator  Date
To be completed by the Investigator:

Date Submitted: 10/8/93
Proposal Title: A Qualitative Study of the Faculty and Peer Advising Program for Undeclared (open-enrolled) First-year Students in the College of Arts and Sciences at Drake University
Investigator: Stephen E. Buckley

Faculty research advisor: (for student research): Dr. Mary Huba
Return to: Stephen E. Buckley
Name
1705 E. 32 Street
Street Address of Campus Office
Des Moines, Iowa 50317
City, State, Zip (if off campus)
(515) 266-2727

To be completed by the Human Subjects Research Review Committee Member:

Date received: 10-20-93

Decision:

Approval, no risk

Approval, minimum risk

Approval, subjects at risk, but benefits outweigh risks

No approval. Subjects at risk or proposal does not adequately address risks, benefits or procedures.

Reasons for Disapproval:

Suggested Changes:

Chair HSRRC
Reviewer: Karen Cooner
Date: 11-2-93

Final Notification
RESEARCH JOURNAL

The following journal entries describe the sequence of events that occurred during the qualitative study of Drake's 1991-92 first-year, open-enrolled advising program. Beginning in the fall of 1993, the following entries provide the reader with an understanding of how the research project was accomplished. Several preliminary meetings took place in the fall and spring of the 1992-93 academic year with the director of advising at Drake. From those initial discussions, the researcher designed a proposal to meet the needs of both the director and the researcher.

Oct. 8 - Requested approval for human subject research from both ISU and from Drake.

Oct. 29 - Received approval of proposal by ISU research committee; Dr. Huba acknowledged Dr. Whitt as Co-chair due to Dr. Huba's overseas assignment in the Spring and Summer of 1994 and due to Dr. Whitt's expertise in qualitative research design.

Nov. 2 - Received approval for human subject research from both ISU and from Drake.

Nov. 8 - Reviewed proposal and information letter with the Director; re-edited letter (first-year students; clarification on how students are classified as open-enrolled).

Secured names, address labels and mailing procedures for potential respondents.

Obtained references from the Director of Advising for initial pilot study interviews.

Nov. 10 - Prepared mailing of information letter to faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees.
Nov. 12 - Mailed information letter to all potential respondents.

Nov. 15 - Edited proposal using input from committee and director.

Nov. 17 - Collected information on software to sort data: Macintosh HyperCard 2 and Data Collector.

Confirmed compatibility of IBM TEXT file with Mac Link Software by transferring data from IBM to Mac using Mac-Link.

Nov. 19 - Made appointments with first two interviewees. The telephone conversations usually began with a brief review of the research project through Margie Davidson's office as stated in the information letter. I shared my available days (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and afternoons (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays) and left the meeting time open for respondents to choose so that it complimented with their schedule. The faculty member's office and the Cowles Library were standard meeting locations. The Arts and Sciences lobby on the second floor was also available. If a phone message was left, a brief statement was given about the research project and a request to return the call in order to arrange an opportunity to participate in the background study.

Nov. 22 - Accomplished first two interviews (faculty advisor and student advisee); focus questions were helpful; both respondents were talkative and productive.

Asked student advisee for references of other advisees whose story might be unique (snowball sampling procedure).

Nov. 23 - Initiated transcribing process with personal secretary.

Maintained confidentiality by not including personal names:
Referred to respondents by code: STF/STM for student female or male; PAF/PAM for peer advisors; and FAF/FAM for faculty advisors; I for interviewer. If respondent used a personal name in the interview, the name was changed during the transcription to match the role of that person (i.e., advisor, student, peer advisor, professor, counselor, director, etc.).

Coded each interview by #, date, and respondent (1-11/22/93-FAF).

Filed respondent consent forms and record of calls separately from the data collected. This procedure kept the names of participants confidential and separate from the data analysis process.

Nov. 24 - Accomplished the third interview with another advisee.

Established Interview Notebook to help organize and present necessary information during the interview process including: sample information letters, respondent forms, interview focus questions, approval forms for the research study, copy of research proposal, and journal pages.

Nov. 26 - Established official files to organize data collected from interviews:
- Names, Addresses, Phone Numbers of Faculty Advisors, Peer Advisors, and Advisees
- Signed Respondent Consent Forms
- Interview Summary Forms
- Transcriptions of each interview
- Research Proposal

Nov. 29 - Experienced first two no-shows (note records on Interview Log - Appendix E)

Dec. 1 - Experienced second set of no shows; developed plan to start making reminder calls the evening before the scheduled appointments to reduce no shows.
Dec. 3 - Accomplished four interviews with student advisees; one before noon and three in the afternoon. Much helpful information was collected but the process was very exhausting. Recommend limiting interviews to two each morning or two each afternoon.

Dec. 6 - Accomplished additional interviews

Dec. 10 - Finished pilot study interviews just before Exam week and Winter Break.

Submitted remaining tapes to secretary for transcribing process which has been going well.

WEEK OF:

Jan. 10 - Researched plans to secure Macintosh Quadra 610 (8 megabit drive) hardware and software for managing research data; confirmed that IBM had nothing comparable to match Mac's software for qualitative research analysis.

Jan. 24 - Finalized plans and secured Mac and software.

Finished reading through transcribed interviews and noted new issues and questions that needed to be addressed in future interviews.

Feb. 1 - Revised questions for the interview process.

Developed three separate lists of focus questions for each of the three groups - advisees, peer advisors, and faculty advisors.

Feb. 21 - Initiated telephone contacts to begin interviews with potential respondents. My free days in the Spring Semester were Tuesday and Thursday with late afternoon interview times available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
Mar. 2 - Began interview process (note Interview Log which records the sequence of accomplished interviews).

Mar. 7 - Continued progress on scheduling and accomplishing interviews. Two new themes began surfacing: 1) the importance of the advising relationship and 2) the connection between Drake's recruitment message (being personal and caring) and the role advisors play in demonstrating that message to first-year, open-enrolled students.

Mar. 11 - Met with Director to discuss new interview questions and developing themes.

Clarified my understanding of the advising process for new students - summer orientation in July, new student days in September, early registration for Spring courses in November. Discussed the perceptions faculty and peer advisors had of the organized meetings with the Director during the fall and spring semesters of the new advising program. Pilot study proved very helpful in setting the tone for the Spring interviews to come.

Mar. 14 - Met with Dr. Whitt (ISU) to review progress, discussed themes and Drake's advising and retention concerns. Recognized important link between the present concerns over retention and strategic planning and the findings from this background study. Reviewed and revised schedule; discussed my potential relocation for next fall as well as Dr. Whitt's potential relocation. Plans were in the making for Dr. Whitt to maintain co-chair status and assist in the completion of the research project by phone and by mail.

Developed the following revision in the time schedule plan to accomplish the research by Fall 1994.
Revised Time Schedule for Spring Semester:

March/April '94 finish interview process and data collection

April/May validate data through follow-up interviews, member checks and debriefings
finish interview process with focus groups
accomplish peer debriefings with primary stakeholders and select committee members

May begin final analysis
confirm findings through peer debriefings with primary stakeholders and select committee members
complete data analysis
prepare initial report for primary stakeholder

June confirm formal report through peer debriefings with primary stakeholders and select committee members
initiate rough draft of dissertation

July/August polish rough draft

Fall 1994 present final dissertation

Mar. 14 - Reviewed potential plans for maintaining advising role with Dr. Whitt which included mailing rough drafts over the summer months in preparation for next fall's final presentation.

Mar. 21 - (Drake Spring Break)
Began to note transcripts with initial coding for software input.
Continued data entry into computer
Mar. 28 - Resumed the interview process with additional focus on the networking theme.

April 4 - Continued the interview process.

April 11 - Sorted faculty interview data to develop an outline of major themes for an upcoming faculty advisor member check/focus group meeting. Outlined major themes under the key roles of the advising program (i.e., Director, Faculty Advisor, Peer Advisor, and Advisee).

Initiated telephone contacts with selected faculty advisors to schedule a member check/focus group meeting.

Sorted interview data with Macintosh Data Collector software package in the following manner:

1) Coded units by hand on printouts of transcribed interviews.
2) Loaded data from secretary's IBM discs onto Macintosh MSWORD; then copied onto Data Collector; data cards were established for each interview. For example Card 1 would have site (Drake), setting (office), type (FAF-1), date (11/22/93), and researcher (Buckley). This procedure maintained the confidentiality of the respondent by not referring to the person's name and exact location of interview.
3) Separated interview discussion into units and entered code words onto text using the Data Collector coding menu. An alphabetical list of code words could be viewed during the coding process and could be printed out for further review.
4) Copied text for each code word onto Topic Cards using the find and copy option in the utilities menu.
5) Printed each Topic Card. Topic Cards were listed in the Topic Index for future reference.
6) Checked Topic Cards and noted coding that was questionable referring back to original transcription if necessary. Updated code words in the Data Collector Card file. Copied text for each code word change and printed updated Topic Cards.
7) Made first sorting of Topic Cards by hand.
8) Developed first outline of major topics.
9) Reviewed and sorted Topic Cards into a second arrangement.
10) Outlined major topics into a second format.
11) Wrote a topic sentence outline from the second sorting in preparation for the member check interview session.
12) Met with members to confirm understanding and accuracy.
13) Noted recommended changes and updated statements.
14) Held peer debriefing with Director to confirm her understanding and agreement with the information.
15) Updated topic sentence outline after receiving Director's input in preparation for the paragraph description of the data.
16) Used Data Collector Topic Index to access quotations on the Topic Cards. Units were copied and transferred to the paragraph description text on MSWord.

April 19 - Accomplished faculty advisor member check (three of five showed).

Collected several significant reactions and updated information on faculty advisor input for Director's review.

April 21 - Attended NACADA at Ames and shared faculty summary with Director

April 22 - Received helpful feedback from the Director on the faculty advisor summary. The director expressed interest in receiving recommendations to address the findings. Assured her that recommendations would be coming as planned at the formal conclusion of the study.

Began sorting peer advisor interview data for peer advisor member check meetings following the same format which was practiced for faculty interview data sorting and outlining.

April 26 - Began peer advisor member check meetings.
April 26 - Began peer advisor member check meetings. Met with two and received good feedback.

Updated input for upcoming meetings with two additional peer advisors at separate meeting times. Difficult to get students together in small groups because of their busy schedules. After individual responses were received, I shared with each respondent the input and reaction received from previous peer advisors to provide opportunity for each to respond to other peer advisor reactions.

May 3 - Finished peer advisor member check meetings.

Updated peer advisor information for Director's input and reaction.

Began sorting advisee interview data for advisee member check meetings following the same format which was practiced in the faculty and peer advisor sorting process.

May 5 - Began advisee member check meetings (note member checks on Interview Log). Due to the time of the semester and to busy schedules, each meeting was on a one-to-one basis.

An attempt was made to meet in groups but several no-shows occurred and resulting in individual sessions. As with the peer advisors, previous points of discussion were reviewed after the advisee gave his or her initial reactions. Input was noted and ideas were included in revised outlines.

May 10 - Finished advisee member check meetings.

May 12 - Provided updated peer advisor and advisee input to the director for her review and feedback.

May 16 - Received Director's input (both were found acceptable with no questions or reactions).
Initiated writing of formal report for the Director's input which will include researchers recommendations.

May 26 - Continued writing of report for Drake input.

June 3 - Finished Initial Chapters of Drake input with revised outlines.

June 17 - Checked with Dr. Whitt at ISU to confirm progress on study, structure of research outline, and plans for this summer to complete formal rough draft of the research project.

June 20 - Completed draft for Drake input for director's review.

Submitted interview summary input to Dr. Whitt for her review.

June 21 - Initiated survey among committee members for best possible dates for Orals and Research presentation

June 23 - Initiated plans with the director of advising to formally present and review Drake input by telephone conference.

From this process a final draft will be accomplished to present to Drake for their input towards future planning and improvement of advising services.

Week of:

July 11 - Held telephone conference with Dr. Huba on progress of the study and proposed dates for Orals.

July 18 - Communicated specific plans to committee members on the date, time, and location of Orals.

Continued writing formal conclusion for Drake input which including a summary and recommendations of the key strengths and weaknesses of the advising program.
July 25 - Began revising opening chapters for rough draft input for Dr. Huba and Dr. Whitt.

August 8 - Began writing the conclusion of the research report.

August 15 - Established telephone conference for September 6 with director to formally review Drake input

August 22 - Finished rough draft of summary and recommendations. Mailed interview summaries to Dr. Huba for her review.

August 29 - Mailed final input to Drake in preparation for telephone conference re-scheduled for September 15.

Sept. 5 - Mailed rough draft of beginning chapters to Dr. Huba and Dr. Whitt including Introduction, Purpose, and Methods.

Began polishing the final conclusion of the research report.

Sept. 15 - Completed telephone conference with the director of advising. Received important reactions and input on the assessment section of the final report. Revised portions of the report for additional input to the director and began preparing final draft for ISU input. Instead of referring to the strengths and weaknesses of the advising services that affected the advising relationship, I referred to the characteristics of the advising services that either strengthened or weakened the advising relationship. This change helped me to better describe the findings and recommendations.

Sept. 19 - Confirmed with Dr. Huba that Dr. Whitt would be providing the major input on rough draft checks in preparation for the Orals. Discussed potential of finishing Orals this semester; a December date could be used if late November would be too soon.

Sept. 22 - Finished revising the Summary and Recommendations sections and submitted input to Dr. Huba and Dr. Whitt.
This portion represented the Results Chapter of the research study. Also submitted Conclusion and Abstract.

Sept. 24 - Began to format paper for formal presentation.

Sept. 29 - Received input from Dr. Huba and revised rough draft. Moved assessment and recommendations to final chapter on Summary and Discussion. Strengthen discussion of Stake's responsive program evaluation model in the Methods chapter, the Findings and Summary & Discussion chapters.

Early Oct - Received additional input from co-chairs and revised rough draft.

Mid-Oct. - Submitted first draft of research to ISU research office in preparation for Orals.

Early Nov. - Received feedback from ISU research office, revised research report and forwarded copies to each committee member in preparation for the Oral presentation and defense. Input from this meeting will be used to polish final presentation of paper for ISU research office.
APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
QUESTIONS FOR PILOT STUDY INTERVIEWS

Introductory questions have been constructed to guide the initial interviews. At the beginning of the interview, I plan to give a brief description of my research and have the interviewee sign the respondent consent form that outlines the purpose of the research, how findings will be reported, matters of confidentiality, and the respondent's voluntary participation.

General interview questions to all participants (i.e., advisees, peer advisors, faculty advisors, and director of advising) include:

1) Describe the open-enrolled advising services you experienced/delivered in the 1991-1992 academic year. What was most helpful about these services? What was least helpful? Why?

2) What activities in the original advising services would you suggest continue into future services? . . . change? . . . discontinue? . . . for what reasons?

3) If funds were unlimited, what suggestions would you give to improve the advising services? Why?

4) What advising issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the first semester? Why?

5) What issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the second semester? . . . for what reasons?

6) If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently? . . . for what reason? . . . when?

7) If you had to do it all over again, what was useful to you that would encourage you to want to repeat the experience?
what services would make you think twice about wanting to repeat the same experience? what services would make you not want to repeat the experience?

8) If you were in charge of designing a new advising program for open-enrolled first-year students, what would you suggest to include? to not be concerned about? to avoid?

In addition to the general questions, the following are specific interview questions for advisees:

1) Looking back on the freshmen experience, what advising experiences can you now point to that have been most useful to you in promoting your academic success? least useful?

2) What part do you feel your faculty advisor played in helping you succeed to this point in your college experience? Your peer advisor? others?

3) Of the other advisees who participated in the original open-enrolled advising program, could you suggest two or three that I might want to be sure to interview because their experiences may have been different from yours? This will help me to collect as many different perspectives as possible to produce a complete picture.

In addition to the general questions, the following are specific interview questions to faculty advisors and peer advisors:

1) What kinds of advising services were most useful to the students in promoting their persistence in college? least helpful? please explain.

2) Describe what your role was in the advising services?
3) What materials did you use that helped you accomplish your responsibilities? Which were most useful? . . . least useful?

4) Describe how the advising office assisted you in advising students? In what ways was the advising office most helpful? . . . least helpful? How might the advising office improve its assistance to you as advisors?

5) How would you describe the impact you had on a student's persistence compared to faculty advisors, peer advisors, other mentors or peer advisors, faculty, staff, parents, peers?

6) Did you sense that first semester was more productive and useful in providing advising services as compared to second semester? Why?

7) What activities did you find most beneficial in helping you prepare for your advising responsibilities? . . . deliver. . .? . . . assess. . .? . . . improve. . .?

8) As you recall your advising experiences, what were things that you did during that time that were different from previous advising practices? How were they helpful or not helpful to you as an advisor? . . . to the advisees? Which practices would you strongly recommend or not recommend to be included in future advising services? . . . why?

Additional Introductory Interview Questions for Advisees, Peer Advisors, and Advisors. The following questions can be asked of all three groups. They are worded to be asked to advisees:
1) What kinds of advising services did you receive when you first came to Drake in the Fall of 1991? Do you remember your advisor's name? . . . your peer advisor's name?

2) Where did you receive advising? How were appointments made?

3) What topics were addressed in the advising sessions? How were these topics relevant to you as a first-year student?

4) What advising experiences were most useful to you during your first month as a first-year student? . . . during your first semester? . . . during your second semester? Why?

5) What advising experiences were least useful to you during your first month? . . . during your first semester? . . . during your second semester? Why?

6) How did peer advising differ from faculty advising? Which did you prefer? Why? What topics did peer advising cover? How helpful were the peer advisors?

7) What about the advising process would you like to stay the same for first-year students? . . . to change? Why?

8) If you were an advisor/a peer advisor what services would you have provided to first-year students like yourself?

9) Is there something else I need to know? Is there something I should have asked but did not?
QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY ADVISOR INTERVIEWS

At the beginning of the interview, I plan to give a brief description of my research and have the interviewee sign the respondent consent form that outlines the purpose of the research, how findings will be reported, matters of confidentiality, and the respondent's voluntary participation.

Interview questions to faculty advisors:

1) Describe the open-enrolled advising services you delivered in the 1991-1992 academic year. What do you remember about the peer advisors who assisted you? ...your advisees? What was your role? Where did you give advising? How were appointments made? What general and specific concerns were covered in the advising process?

2) What expectations did you have of advising services when you began? How did they compare to what you actually experienced? What did you find that was most helpful to the advisees about these services? What was least helpful? Why?

3) What topics were addressed in the advising sessions? How were these topics helpful to first-year students?

4) How would you describe the difference, if any, between your role as a faculty advisor and the role of the peer advisor in assisting the new student? In what areas do you feel you were more effective in advising? In what areas do feel the peer advisors were more effective?

5) What role did the advising office/director of advising play in helping you accomplish your advising responsibilities? ....in helping your peer advisors? ....in helping your advisees? How did the advising office/director assist you in advising students? What activities, meetings, and materials were most useful? ...least useful? Please explain. How could the advising office/director of advising improve its assistance to you as a faculty advisor?

6) What part did the group meetings play in your effectiveness as a faculty advisor? What was their purpose? How did they help you prepare for your advising duties? ...assess your advising? ...improve your advising? Were there any other activities that helped you address the above issues related to your advising services?

7) What advising experiences were most useful to you/to the peer advisor/to the advisee? ...during the first month? ...during the first semester? ...during the second semester? Why?

8) What advising experiences were least useful ... ...during the first month? ...during the first semester? ...during the second semester? Why?
9) What activities in the original advising services would you suggest continue into future services? ...change? ...discontinue? For what reasons?

10) Did advisees receive advising assistance from any other individuals besides the assigned faculty advisor and peer advisor? If so, how useful was this assistance? Who were the individuals that assisted (by title or office, not name)? How did advisees connect with them? What about yourself as a faculty advisor, did you receive any assistance from others besides the assigned peer advisor or director of advising?

11) What part did the career center, learning center, and other types of student services play in your advising? Did you recommend them to the advisee? How useful were they?

12) As you recall your advising experiences, what were things that you did during that time that were different from previous advising practices? How were these helpful to you as a faculty advisor? ....to the advisees? ... to the peer advisors? Which practices would you strongly recommend or not recommend to be included in future advising services? ...why? ...why not?

13) What characteristics about your working relationship with the director of advising promoted your involvement as a faculty advisor? What direction did the director of advising provide? What was most useful? ...least useful? Do you have any recommendations to improve the working relationship between the director of advising and faculty advisor? ...between peer advisors and the faculty advisor? ... between the peer advisor and the advisee? ...between the peer advisor and the director of advising?

14) If funds were unlimited, what suggestions would you give to improve the advising services? Why?

15) What advising issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address during orientation? ...during first semester? Why?

16) What issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the second semester? ...for what reasons?

17) Was the fall semester more important than the spring semester? Why?

18) How important was it to advise the student to decide and to declare a major? Explain.

19) How did peer advising differ from faculty advising? Which was more effective? Why? What topics did peer advising cover? What topics did faculty advising cover? How helpful were you as a faculty advisor? How effective would you have been without the peer advisors?
20) How could we improve the peer advising process? How could we improve the faculty advising process? How could we improve the readiness of advisees to respond to the advising given by peer advisors and faculty advisors?

21) What about the faculty advising process would you like to stay the same for first-year students? ....to change? Why? What about the peer advising process....

22) If you were the director of advising what services would you have provided to the faculty advisors and peer advisors? What questions would you ask a first-year student if you were the peer advisor? What concerns would you definitely want to be sure were addressed?

23) If you had to do it all over again, what was useful to you that would encourage you to want to repeat the experience? ...what challenges would make you think twice about wanting to repeat the same experience? ...what challenges would make you not want to repeat the experience? ...what kept you from doing what you really wanted to do or thought you could have done better? ...please explain.

24) If you were in charge of designing a new advising program for open-enrolled first-year students, what would you suggest to include? ...to not be concerned about? ...to avoid?

25) Looking back on the freshmen experience, what advising services can you now point to that have been most useful to students in promoting their academic success/persistence in college? ...least useful?

26) What part do you feel your peer advisors played in helping you succeed as a faculty advisor? ... your director of advising...? ...others(?)....?

27) Is there something else I need to know? Is there something I should have asked but did not?

(focus quests faculty advisors)
QUESTIONS FOR PEER ADVISOR INTERVIEWS

At the beginning of the interview, I plan to give a brief description of my research and have the interviewee sign the respondent consent form that outlines the purpose of the research, how findings will be reported, matters of confidentiality, and the respondent's voluntary participation.

Interview questions to peer advisors:

1) Describe the open-enrolled advising services you delivered in the 1991-1992 academic year. What do you remember about the advisor you assisted? ...your advisees? What was your role? Where did you give advising? How were appointments made? What concerns were covered in the advising process?

2) What expectations did you have of advising services when you began? How did they compare to what you experienced? What did you find that was most helpful about these services? What was least helpful? Why?

3) What topics were addressed in the advising sessions? How were these topics relevant to first-year students?

4) How would you describe the difference, if any, between your role as a peer advisor and the role of the faculty advisor in assisting the new student? In what areas do you feel you were more effective in advising? In what areas do feel the faculty advisor was more effective?

5) What role did the advising office/director of advising play in helping you accomplish your advising role? ....in helping your faculty advisor? ....in helping your advisees? How did the advising office/director assist you in advising students? What activities, meetings, and materials were most useful? ...least useful? Please explain. How could the advising office/director of advising improve its assistance to you as a peer advisor?

6) What part did the group meetings play in your effectiveness as a peer advisor? What was their purpose? How did they help you prepare for your advising duties? ...assess your advising? ...improve your advising? Were there any other activities that helped you address the above issues related to your advising services?

7) What advising experiences were most useful to you/to the faculty advisor/to the advisee? ...during the first month? ...during the first semester? ...during the second semester? Why?

8) What advising experiences were least useful ... ...during the first month? ...during the first semester? ...during the second semester? Why?
9) What activities in the original advising services would you suggest continue into future services? ...change? ...discontinue? For what reasons?

10) Did advisees receive advising assistance from any other individuals besides the assigned faculty advisor and peer advisor? If so, how useful was this assistance? Who were the individuals that assisted (by title, not name)? How did advisees connect with them? What about yourself as a peer advisor, did you receive any assistance from others besides the assigned faculty advisor or director of advising?

11) What part did the career center, learning center, and other types of student services play in your advising? Did you recommend them to the advisees? How useful were they?

12) As you recall your advising experiences, what were things that you did during that time that were different from previous advising practices you had experienced in the past? How were these helpful to you as a peer advisor? ...to the advisees? ...to the faculty advisors? Which practices would you strongly recommend or not recommend to be included in future advising services? ...why? ...why not?

13) What characteristics about your working relationship with your assigned faculty advisor promoted your involvement as a peer advisor? What direction did the faculty advisor provide? What was most useful? ...least useful? Do you have any recommendations to improve the working relationship between peer advisors and faculty advisors? ...between peer advisors and the advising office/director of advising? ...between the peer advisor and the advisee?

14) If funds were unlimited, what suggestions would you give to improve the advising services? Why?

15) What advising issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address during orientation? ...during the first semester? Why?

16) What issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the second semester? ...for what reasons?

17) Was the fall semester more important than the spring semester? Why?

18) How important was to advise the student to decide and to declare a major? Explain.

19) How did peer advising differ from faculty advising? Which was more effective? Why? What topics did peer advising cover? How helpful were you as a peer advisor?
20) How could we improve the peer advising process? How could we improve the faculty advising process? How could we improve the readiness of advisees to respond to the advising given by peer advisors and faculty advisors?

21) What about the advising process would you like to stay the same for first-year students? ....to change? Why?

22) If you were a faculty advisor what services would you have provided to the first-year students you advised? What questions would you ask a first-year student if you were the faculty advisor? What concerns would you definitely want to be sure were addressed?

23) If you had to do it all over again, what was useful to you that would encourage you to want to repeat the experience? ...what challenges would make you think twice about wanting to repeat the same experience? ...what challenges would make you not want to repeat the experience? ...what kept you from doing what you really wanted to do or thought you could have done better? ...please explain.

24) If you were in charge of designing a new advising program for open-enrolled first-year students, what would you suggest to include? ...to not be concerned about? ...to avoid?

25) Looking back on the freshmen experience, what advising services can you now point to that have been most useful to students in promoting their academic success/persistence in college? ...least useful?

26) What part do you feel your faculty advisor played in helping you succeed as a peer advisor? ... your director of advising...? ...others(?)....?

27) Is there something else I need to know? Is there something I should have asked but did not?

(focus quests peer advisors)
QUESTIONS FOR ADVISEE INTERVIEWS

At the beginning of the interview, I will give a brief description of my research and have the interviewee sign the respondent consent form that outlines the purpose of the research, how findings will be reported, matters of confidentiality, and the respondent’s voluntary participation.

Interview questions to advisees:

1) Describe the open-enrolled advising services you experienced in the 1991-1992 academic year. What do you remember about your advisor? ...your peer advisor? Where did you receive advising? How were appointments made?

2) What expectations did you have of advising when you came to college? How did they compare to what you received? What was most helpful about these services? What was least helpful? Why?

3) What topics were addressed in the advising sessions? How were these topics relevant to you as a first-year, undeclared student?

4) What role did the director of advising play in your advising process? ...in helping your faculty advisor? ...in helping your peer advisor? ...in helping you?

5) What advising experiences were most useful to you during orientation? ...during your first month as a first-year student? ...during your first semester? ...during your second semester? Why?

6) What advising experiences were least useful to you during orientation? ...during your first month? ...during your first semester? ...during your second semester? Why?

7) What activities in the original advising services would you suggest continue into future services? ...change? ...discontinue? For what reasons?

8) Did you receive advising assistance from any other individuals besides your assigned faculty advisor and peer advisor? If so, how useful was this assistance? Who were the individuals that assisted you (by title, not name)? How did you connect with them?

9) What part did the career center, learning center, and other types of student services play in your advising needs? Did you use them? How useful were they? What/Where were they?

10) If funds were unlimited, what suggestions would you give to improve the advising services? Why?

11) What advising issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the first semester? Why?
12) What issues were more appropriate and/or more important to address in the second semester? ...for what reasons? How important was the need to declare a major to you? How did the advising process help you?

13) How important was declaring a major to you? How did advising help in the process?

14) How did peer advising differ from faculty advising? Which did you prefer? Why? What topics did peer advising cover? How helpful were the peer advisors? ...faculty advisors?

15) How could we improve the peer advising process? How could we improve the faculty advising process?

16) What about the advising process would you like to stay the same for first-year students? ...to change? Why?

17) If you were an faculty advisor what services would you have provided to first-year students like yourself? What questions would you ask a first-year student like your self if you were the faculty advisor? What concerns would you definitely want to be sure were addressed? (same questions in peer advisor context)

18) If you had to do it all over again, what was useful to you that would encourage you to want to repeat the experience? ...what services would make you think twice about wanting to repeat the same experience? ...what services would make you not want to repeat the experience?

19) If you were in charge of designing a new advising program for open-enrolled first-year students, what would you suggest to include? ...to not be concerned about? ...to avoid? ...for the advisees? ...for the peer advisors? ...for the faculty advisors?

20) Looking back on the freshmen experience, what advising experiences can you now point to that have been most useful to you in promoting your academic success? ...most useful to other students in promoting their academic success? ...least useful?

21) What part do you feel your faculty advisor played in helping you succeed to this point in your college experience? ...your peer advisor...? ...others(?)...?

22) Is there something else I need to know? Is there something I should have asked but did not?

23) Of the other advisees who participated in the original open-enrolled advising program, could you suggest two or three that I might want to be sure to interview because their experiences may have been different from yours? This will help me to collect as many different perspectives as possible to produce a complete picture.

(focus quests advisees)
The director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences, Margie Davidson, has asked me to accomplish a background study on advising services to open-enrolled students. My focus will be upon the open-enrolled advising program that was initiated in the 1991 fall semester. As a faculty advisor then, you had an important part in the delivery of those advising services. I would like to interview you this fall or early next semester with a primary focus upon the following questions:

1) What attributes of the 1991 open-enrolled advising program were most useful in helping open-enrolled first-year students persist in college and eventually declare a major?

2) What can be learned from the advising program that can be incorporated into future first-year advising services?

Findings from the study will be presented to the director of advising to assist in the planning, designing, and delivery of future advising services to entering first-year students. Qualities and characteristics of the advising program will be of interest to the higher education community at Drake as other colleges within the university setting receive and review the findings to make individual applications to their advising services. If published, the findings may assist other campus directors of advising to improve their advising programs.

This month or in mid-January, I will be contacting you by phone to address any questions you may have regarding the study and to arrange a brief, voluntary interview (approximately 45 minutes) about your perceptions of the advising services experienced in the 1991-92 academic year. After interviewing individuals, I will be returning to several faculty advisors and requesting participation in an additional focus group interview to help review and confirm my preliminary findings.

Your willingness to participate in the interview process will greatly improve the outcome of the study. Information will be confidential, and names will not be used in the reporting process. Results will be presented next Spring near the end of second semester. Thank you for considering this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Steve Buckley
Research Student, Iowa State University

Margie M. Davidson
Director of Advising, College of Arts and Sciences, Drake University

Mary Huba
Research Faculty, Iowa State University
APPENDIX F

RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM
RESPONDENT CONSENT FORM
for Individual and Focus Group Interviews

PURPOSE of Research:

The purpose of this study is to develop a full and rich
description of the advising services given to open-enrolled
first-year students who entered the College of Arts and Sciences
during the 1991 fall semester. Faculty and peer advisors who
delivered the advising services and students who experienced
receiving the advising services will be confidentially
interviewed to examine their perceptions about the services.
Data collected from the interview process will be analyzed to
develop a thorough description of the qualities and
c characteristics of the open-enrolled advising program.

Findings from the study will be presented to the director
of advising to assist in the planning, designing, and delivery
of future advising services to entering freshmen. Qualities and
c characteristics of the advising program will be of interest to
the higher education community at Drake as other colleges within
the university setting receive and review the findings and make
individual applications to their advising services. The
researcher will be using the study to accomplish his
dissertation assignment at Iowa State University. If published,
the findings may assist other campus directors of advising to
improve the advising services they offer on their campuses to
open-enrolled first-year students.

I, ____________________________ understand that:
a) the information obtained during this interview will be used
for the purposes of accomplishing a written report for the
director of advising and the researcher's committee.
b) the recordings and notes obtained in this interview will be
held in complete confidence. Names will be kept separate from
the data and will not be used in the reporting process.
c) my participation in this study is voluntary. I may withdraw
at any time and information collected from the interview will
not be used in the report.
I agree to participate in this research according to the
preceding terms.

(Respondent's Signature) (Date)

I agree to conduct this research according to the preceding
terms.

(Investigator's Signature) (Date)
INTERVIEW LOG

KEY: ST - student advisee  F - female  
PA - peer advisor  M - male  
FA - faculty advisor  
NS - no show

Office - campus faculty office.
Off-cp Off - off-campus office at respondents employment site.
Library - Cowles Library on campus:
  ground floor lobby until construction began;
  2nd floor's conference room during construction;
  eventually ground floor's new conference rooms.
F/A Lounge - second floor lounge of Fine Arts building.
Olm Center - Olmsted Center Conference Room.

Fall 1993 Pilot Study Interviews:
(2 Faculty Advisors; 3 Peer Advisors; 6 Student Advisees)

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APPENDIX H

THEME DEVELOPMENT STEPS
Examples of Theme Development

page topics

226-233 **Unitized Computer Data Card** of interview FAM-17

234 Alphabetical List of Code Words used in coding units on data cards of faculty interviews

235-237 **Computer Topic Card: D - mtgs - pos.** Showing all the units that were coded with faculty positive references to the Director's monthly meetings

238-240 Faculty Advisor Interview Data Analysis - 1 showing categories and topic card assortment under identified themes (first sorting)

241-244 Faculty Advisor Interview Data Analysis - 2 showing categories and topic card assortment under identified themes (second sorting)
I- We are thinking back to the 91-92 faculty advising for undeclared majors. I would like for you to reminisce about what you remember about that experience as your role as a faculty advisor. What did you experience?

[advising undeclared majors] FA - There are two things that stand out to me about the experience. One is that I found that the interactions with most of the students very helpful.

[advisee devel - decision making][advising undeclared majors] FA - There was still a broad range. There were several students who participated almost not at all. They were fully capable of managing their own lives. Much of their idea of being undecided was more like choosing between two majors.

[advisee devel - decision making][advising undeclared majors] FA - There were a few people with whom I had very extensive contact with. One student for at least two years. I found that early intervention, the first and second week before class registration, extremely helpful. Of all the things that we did, that was the thing that stood out the most.

[academic adjustments] FA - The most helpful thing was that you talked to people early about what was going on in their classes. We could talk to them about their lives and help move them along.

[p.a. waste] FA - The second thing was the peer mentors. They seemed to be more or less worthless. Through no fault of their own. It wasn't that they didn't try to do a good job, but they didn't have any particular job to do that made much difference.

Those are the two things that stood out to me: the early contact and the worthlessness of the peer mentors.

I- So the early contact was probably right after the orientation week?
[F.A. initial contacts] FA - Right. What I tried to do was get everyone to come in. I didn't get everybody, but I got almost all of them. Almost all of them came in to see me in the first two weeks.
I- And the ones that were the most challenging were the ones that just didn't have any direction.
[adv challenges 1st 2wks] FA - Most of them didn't have any direction. There were few that did. They didn't want to come in. They didn't want to bother.
I- Anything in that advising experience from your perspective that you found useful to them as students?
[adv challenges 1st 2wks][advising undeclared majors] FA - Sure, several things in fact. One is giving them choices that they didn't know that they had. Particularly when they first came, they didn't realize that they could switch sections or the courses they were in didn't have to be the courses they were in. They were having some trouble or they weren't clear about something, not all of them knew what to do about them. Some of it was just getting people in touch with their instructors. In one circumstance all I had to do was call up and say that so and so wants to talk to you. That was just something the student didn't do. Something that hadn't occurred to them to be easy or productive to do that.
[tutoring services] FA - Then I got a number of people tutors as the semester wore on, and we talked about specific problems of the students.
[academic adjustments] FA - Three students had academic problems. One of whom dropped out early. He just didn't belong. Another one who struggled hard and ended up eventually not here for reasons that are not entirely clear to me. He was a marginal student and an extremely nice guy. He clearly had trouble because of his fraternity his first year. His fraternity and his father especially put tremendous pressure on him.
I- You mentioned tutoring services.
FA - He had a lot of tutors.
I- Is this an office on campus?
[tutoring services] FA - Yes, Student Services. Any student can get a tutor provided by Drake. It doesn't always work quite as smoothly as it should because there isn't enough tutors for every single class. But it works well. The third case was this other guy who had a great time and was continually telling me how he was going to get done with the work and never did. There were two classes. One I remember the most was German class. We talked after he got a mid-term low grade slip. He said he was going to buckle down and that he had it under control. All that happened there is that he
had a good time. He was much too into the socializing and never did do the academic work. Even when he knew what he had to do and was given the work to do. So those were the three and all three of them ended up not succeeding.

I- The role of the peer advisor, as I talked with advisees, some have said that they don't even remember it existing. I sense you are saying the same thing.

[p.a. waste] FA- I had three peer advisors. One dropped out right away. About the only thing they did was contact some of the students and say that they needed to go see their advisor which was helpful, but I could have done that myself.

[p.a. assignments] [p.a. qualities] FA - It was much easier for the one who lived in the dorm than the one who lived in the sorority. She was closer to them and had more time. She was more accessible. They were both nice.

I- They didn't really seem to help out much?

[p.a. advisee relationships] [p.a. duties] FA- I didn't have anything in particular that I wanted them to do. The students didn't see them as important.

I- Any suggestions that you might give to improve the peer advising role.

[p.a. suggestions] FA- One of the things that they have done since then is instead of having separate contacts for orientation and special problems, they have put it into one thing. That is much more helpful, but I sort of think that this is not a big deal. I don't think that peer advising is likely to get what people want from the relationship.

[p.a. suggestions] [p.a. advisee relationships] FA - It seems to me that surely during orientation it is appropriate thing to do, but you don't give people a friend by saying - here, help this person out. Most of the time they don't have trouble anyway. If they were going to have trouble the peer advisor wouldn't help much. If they don't have trouble the peer advisor doesn't help much. So it is kind of an awkward situation. It just doesn't seem to be much help. My suggestion would be just to not use that part of the program.

I- Looking back at that first semester, how would you compare the beginning of the first semester with around November/December when there is registration for spring courses - mid October?

FA- That would be fine. That is standard. It helps some to have had contact earlier. At least with several of them, I knew some things about them.

I- How did you keep track of that set of freshmen? Did you have records that you kept?

[advisee information] [advisor form] FA- Yes, the director gave us a check list which I found quite helpful. That was one of the parts of it that were very helpful. For
each of my advisees, I had a set of information that told me were they were from, what sorts of activities they were in. I had a copy of their transcript and a check list. I didn't talk to everyone at all of those times, but it gave me a place to keep notes and made me think about spots at which I wouldn't have thought about. It never occurred to me that there might be problems at Thanksgiving or Christmas because of going home or getting back in touch with parents. Apparently that is a very high stress time for the first semester. That hadn't even crossed my mind. I don't remember that from my own experience.

I- Any critique on that check list? Ways to improve it?

FA- It's too many, of course. You don't do all of this. It makes you feel like you should. It puts some guilt on you. It is too many things to do by plan. But one of the things that it did do, each time I met, I would make an appointment for the next meeting. Some of them were better about it than others, and certainly there was much more contact in the Fall than in the spring.

I- Spring students are much more on their own.

FA- There are few students who come in to chat.

I- What about the group meetings that you had with the faculty?

FA- Those were always fun. I don't recall anything that stands out. It was fun to hear other peoples stories. It was reassuring that not everyone had done every single thing that was suggested. Some had done more things and some had done fewer.

I- Would I say that was an essential part of the program and really contributed to my effectiveness? Probably not.

FA- You already felt comfortable with what you were doing? There were some peer advisors who went to that. Did you sense that was a benefit to them?

FA- I don't know much about the peer advising program, but my sense of the peer advisors was that they were simply confusing. They just couldn't figure out what they were supposed to be doing.

I- They lacked a clear job description or an ability list?

FA- Sure. To what am I supposed to do, nobody had a clear answer.

I- I know at that point it was really under construction.

FA- I think that it is the same way now. I think that they felt like they were doing something wrong, like they should have known what they were doing.
I- The challenge that you brought out was the idea that it is difficult to imagine forcing a relationship, advisor/advisee, to happen. Like here is a friend. You can't make those happen.

[p.a. advisee relationships] FA- If you need an authority figure, you will probably go to your RA. If it is academic you will probably go to your advisor. Beyond that, what is there? I still have a feeling like I must be missing something, like there is something that I don't know about all of this. I just don't see it.

I- I am looking at this from the advisees view, too. They have ways of finding out their own peer advisors. They enlist their own help.

FA- I might add that sometimes the faculty advisors find that helpful and sometimes they find it unhelpful.

I- It can be intruding or contradicting?

[F.A. concern over peer guidance] FA- I don't want to take that course. It is too hard. I heard that this person is really good. There is a certain competition for some people is very powerful. Particularly those people in fraternities. They come in and say that they want these courses, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, and I say what fraternity are you in. There are three or four courses there that I recognize it right away. They are not chosen for their academic value they are chosen for entertainment value or because they are supposed to be easier than other courses. That certainly wasn't true of all of them.

I- Getting back to the group meetings, did you sense any purpose in those meetings in the area of assessing how you were doing or how the peer advisors were doing?

[D - mtgs - pos] FA- Well ya, the value for me was sort of a check. Like telling stories, so I kind of found out what other people were doing. I never felt like people were looking at my performance and saying are you doing this well, or you could be doing this instead. I never felt like that. It was more of a self check.

I- Did you find any references or special people that were brought in useful to you?

FA- I don't remember.

I- Some people said that they really needed the career center information. That helped them become more aware of it.

FA- That is something that I have always done.

I- So it didn't stand out to you as vitally important because you had already been aware of it?

FA- Right.

I- You are the first one to mention tutoring services.
FA- Is that right? I send students to tutors all the time.

I- It could be that it was just starting up then and they weren't thinking back that far, or they just didn't use it. I might go back and see if they did. I'm trying to see what level of use these services have been referred to.

[F.A. early involvem suggs] FA- To me what stands out is early intervention. How important it is to get in touch right away.

I- Find out where they are at.

[F.A. early involvem suggs] FA- It makes so much difference. There is no systematic way to do that. Just call them up and say that you need to see them in the first week.

I- They sign up for their courses in the summer and then they came through a week of orientation. Did you see them early enough or did you feel like they are already on track and now I am bumping into their life and crowding their schedule?

FA- The first week was fine.

I- So you didn't feel uncomfortable about seeing them too late?

[F.A. early involvem suggs] FA- No, I wanted to see them after they had been in their classes. The ideal time for me to see them was at the end of the first week.

I- So you wanted to see them after they had gotten their feet wet?

[advising undeclared majors] FA- I wanted to talk to them about their classes. You can't say that you should switch from this class to that class if you haven't been in the class yet. We can also find out what doubts people have or what surprises they found out about. We can discuss options that they don't know that they have. I especially liked the pre-registration talk. Were you are talking about the things of registration before registration.

I- Then they have another process in the spring semester?

[fall vs spring sem] FA- Right. As I recall, things were much more intense the fall semester.

I- As far as declaring a major, was that a big process with them?

FA- I didn't push any of them until some of them got into their sophomore year and they weren't even thinking about it. Most of them would come in and say that they declared a major.

I- Anything that comes to mind as the motivating factor of declaring.

[declaring major- values][declaring major] FA- I don't know. Some of them had some sense of where they were going from the beginning. Several of them went into journalism. My emphasis was in broadening their experience and getting them
exposed to good people and good courses. Choosing a major was never a problem.

I- Did you find yourself referring them to a professor or a course that they expressed interest in?

[F.A. referrals] [F.A. expectations] FA- That is what I always do (referring them to a professor or a course that they expressed interest). Part of my role as advisor is that I know more about Drake than they do, so I can give them advise about things. Some may be afraid of particular professors, and sometimes I can talk to them about it. I can look for fits with classes and professors.

I- What about the advisee? Is there anything that the advisee needs more of during the orientation week or the summer sign up week?

[advising undeclared majors] [F.A. expectations] FA- I have an agenda. I think that we frequently do not serve those students well because they come in thinking that they have to take those particular courses. What I try to stay away from is the generic courses. Intro. to . . . . Those are the places that people are going to say why bother?

I- So when you say small courses you are talking smaller discussion?

FA- Ya, like 20 people. All the courses don't have to be twenty people, but if none of their course engage in texts and ideas and being put on the spot themselves by writing and talking then we are not doing our job and they are not as likely to become students. So when you talk about summer advising, that is my agenda.

I- Yes, I think it is very forced with what courses they are put into.

FA- That doesn't have to happen.

I- Would you do it again?

FA- Oh sure. I would do it for nothing. I think advising is important.

I- Do you advise primarily declared majors?

FA- Ya, although I have a lot of open majors. I do pre-law so I have a smattering of students. I have a mix of declared and undeclared.

I- Anything that you want to add that I haven't asked?

[advising undeclared majors] FA- One of the things that I try to do with open enrolled people is to let them know how I feel about it. I encourage it. Everyone is going to switch. Eventually there are going to be changes. I see it as flexible. I try to take the pressure off of them. I think that is the way it should be. I think that they are better off not having a declared major. They can't possibly know what they major is going to be before they experience it. They have no idea the options that they have.

I- Technically we are talking an 18 or 19 year old.
I- How do you view that as an issue with them in the undeclared status?

FA- The only difficulty with the age group (17-18) is that they may have other priorities, either social or work. That is the only place where there is ever trouble. There was one woman who wanted to work two jobs. She didn't have a clue. I strongly discouraged that. That is one reason why I think this early intervention is important.
academic adjustments  F.A. volunteers
academic advising vs soci fall vs spring sem
academic performance  gen ed challenges
adv challenges 1st 2wks  in-class advising advantage
adv deve  late start for FA
adv deve - aca skills/expe lunch mtgs with advisees
adv deve - social  newness of advising progra
advisee devel - decision m open house w/advisees
advisee information  p.a. accountability
advisee networking  p.a. adjustment
advisee receptiveness  p.a. advisee relationships
advisee resistance  p.a. assessment
advising - retention  p.a. assignments
advising - teaching role  p.a. benefits
advising declared majors  p.a. characteristics
advising undeclared majors  p.a. communication
advisor form  p.a. duties
advisor questions  p.a. experiences lacking
advisor training  p.a. hassels
assessment  p.a. lack of clear direction
athletic advisees  p.a. lack of commitment
career center referrals  p.a. misconception of roles
counseling center  p.a. personal problems
D - input  p.a. qualities
D - monthly mtgs  p.a. social functions
D - mtgs - emotional  p.a. suggestions
D - mtgs - negs  p.a. training
D - mtgs - pos  p.a. unfulfilled respons
D - mtgs - sharing soluts  p.a. waste
D - mtgs assessment  peer advisors - characteri
declaring major  proactive
declaring major - values  prog activities
Drake advising  prog goal
F.A. accountability  rapport w/advisees
F.A. advising hassels  recruit msg/adv foil thru
F.A. advising values  retention
F.A. as advocate  spring vs fall
F.A. concern over peer guid structure of program
F.A. development  tutoring referrals
F.A. early involvem suiggs  tutoring services
F.A. expectations  uncertainty of adv prog
F.A. initial contacts  undeclared stigma
F.A. referrals  value of career center
F.A. relationship with advit
F.A. relationship with P.A.
Card Number 6: Drake; Office; 3/10/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I would say that those were valuable to me, because I was finding out some of the things I was experiencing were happening to others, also.

Card Number 6: Drake; Office; 3/10/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - It impressed me to hear some of the ideas and some of the theories of some of the faculty members.

Card Number 6: Drake; Office; 3/10/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I think those meetings helped to keep the momentum going.

Card Number 6: Drake; Office; 3/10/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I never got the idea that it was manipulated. Maybe she had the idea to get things accomplished. It was generally all part of the bigger plan to get together and keep up to date on what was going on.

Card Number 6: Drake; Office; 3/10/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I recall that one lady came in, maybe more than once. The one that she gave I thought was very useful about the way freshmen think and the problems that they see. She gave ideas on how to help the student through those times. Naturally if it was a large problem, it should be referred elsewhere. This is good in that they are trained to do this, and also.

Card Number 7: Drake; Office; 3/29/94
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - Ya, right. I got her to do that, but . . . It was really helpful to me not only to have conversations with other advisors but to have conversations with Margie which were part of these ongoing meetings which we were able to do that. It was helpful as far as the particular agenda.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - and then periodically those of us who were the mentors who were the special advisors would meet with Marjorie and sometimes we would just have a program, an educational program, say from somebody in the counseling service. Sometimes we would just talk over with one another strategies that we were using to try to help our undeclared advisees adjust to the Drake University environment, to move it along toward the selection of what kind of program they were going to finally select, to get them in touch with other services that they might need. That might be counseling, or get them to take some of the courses that are testing and reading skills centered, whether that be speed reading or test taking skills, things of that nature. So that went on for the full year. So those are the kinds of things that I did.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - So I would say that the one, the kind of things that were most useful to me were the meetings with other faculty members and peer group mentors to discuss the kinds of problems that they were running into, and some of the strategies that they (with peer advisors) were selecting, developing to try to deal with those problems.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I don't know what I could say beyond what I've said. I mean, it was a sharing of experiences.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - The only thing maybe I haven't said that I could say, in addition to sharing the experiences that both the faculty advisors and the peer mentors were having, that helped me, but remember we were also sharing solutions to problems. And I guess the only other thing
that I could say that maybe I haven't said is that I suppose a few people, and I'm trying to think, I think (another FA) was one person who is now retired, although I think he may be teaching part-time, I don't know if he's on your interview.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - I think he (another FA) was especially good, and I may be wrong in my memory, about talking about feelings. In other words, you know that I suppose it's just as possible for faculty members to get feelings of frustration with the peer mentors who aren't doing their work, and how to deal with that. Like a catharsis.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - sharing soluts] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - You know, maybe the sharing of feelings about what we were doing was useful as well as sharing the cognitive stuff about the problems we were running into and the strategies that we developed. It might have helped. That would be the other advantage I would see in those group meetings.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - cohesiveness] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - That it gave me a chance to have a catharsis and gave others a chance to have a catharsis about their feelings--their feelings of frustration or euphoria, or a sense of accomplishment that maybe helped to bring about cohesiveness in the group, which has helped me to deal better with my feelings, and maybe helped others, I don't know.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - So I would say that again, analytically speaking, those group meetings had some of the following functions: they had an emotional function and they had some cognitive functions.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - A cognitive function would be to identify goals and to identify strategies for the program, concrete goals, and some concrete strategies.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - In fact, even some people maybe had tried certain strategies that didn't work and we could explore those--why didn't they work, and if I was convinced they weren't going to work under any conditions, why try?

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - pos] FA - Just like if I was having trouble in the classroom, and you were an experienced teacher and I went to you and I said what could you share with me that could help me deal with some racial tension in my classroom of this type, or I've got three or four people who are liberation theologians and all they're doing is preaching to the rest of us. How can I handle this without seeming to suppress people's freedom of expression? I'm trying to talk about the sociology of education and they keep wanting to talk about liberation theology.

Card Number 8: Drake; Office; 12/10/93
[D - mtgs - sharing soluts] [D - mtgs - pos] FA - What could you tell me? Do you have any experiences that could help me with this? So that was one of the useful things that came out of those group sessions.

Card Number 2: Drake; office; 3/8/94
[D - mtgs - pos] [D - mtgs] FA - Just having the opportunity to explore with other people. What do they do in advising? Just to participate in conversation with other advisors.

Card Number 1: Drake; office; 11/22/93
[D - mtgs - pos] [counseling center] [D - mtgs] FA - We would also have meetings with Marqie
throughout the term where we could identify concerns that we had and she would maybe bring someone in. That was an important learning part of it for me. For instance, she brought in some people from the counselling center who talked about the various kinds of services that they offered. I knew they were there and I knew that they offered counselling, but it was never clear to me until after that meeting.

Card Number 4: Drake; Office; 3/3/94

[D - mtgs - pos] I- It gave you maybe confidence to refer students to them? FA- Right.

Card Number 4: Drake; Office; 3/3/94

[D - mtgs - pos] FA- We might have gotten ideas from others on how we should be doing something. I- So it was more of getting ideas from each other? FA- Right, that is how I felt about it, especially early in the year.

Card Number 5: Drake; Office; 3/8/94

[D - mtgs - pos] FA- Those were always fun. I don't recall anything that stands out. It was fun to hear other peoples stories. It was reassuring that not everyone had done every single thing that was suggested. Some had done more things and some had done fewer.

Card Number 5: Drake; Office; 3/8/94

[D - mtgs - pos] FA- Well ya, the value for me was sort of a check. Like telling stories, so I kind of found out what other people were doing. I never felt like people were looking at my performance and saying are you doing this well, or you could be doing this instead. I never felt like that. It was more of a self check.
Faculty Advisor Interview Data Analysis - 1

**Director of Advising**

**Faculty Involvement**

F.A. accountability

**Monthly Meetings**

D - monthly mtgs
D - input
D - mtgs - sharing soluts
D - mtgs - pos
D - mtgs - emotional
D - mtgs assessment
assessment
D - mtgs - negs

**Faculty Advisor**

**Proactive Strategy**

proactive
F.A. initial contacts
open house w/advisees
lunch mtgs with advisees
academic advising vs social
F.A. as advocate
F.A. development
advisor training
F.A. advising values
advising - teaching role
rapport w/advisees
recruit msg/adv foll thru
retention
advising - retention
F.A. relationship with advisees
in-class advising advantage
F.A. volunteers
Drake advising
F.A. advising hassels
prog activities
F.A. early involvement suggs
structure of program
uncertainty of adv prog
newness of advising program
late start for FA
advising form
advisee information

Advising Open-enrolled
F.A. expectations
advising undeclared majors
advising declared majors
advisor questions
declaring major
declaring major - values
undeclared stigma
prog goal
gen ed challenges
p.a. duties

Referrals
F.A. referrals
tutoring referrals
tutoring services
counseling center
career center referrals
value of career center

Peer Advisors

Advising Assistance
p.a. assignments
peer advisor - characteristics
p.a. qualities
p.a. benefits
p.a. social functions
p.a. communication
p.a. advisee relationships
p.a. characteristics

Challenges
F.A. relationship with P.A.
p.a. hassels
p.a. waste
p.a. lack of clear direction
p.a. unfulfilled respons
p.a. personal problems
p.a. lack of commitment
p.a. experience lacking
p.a. adjustment
p.a. accountability
p.a. assessment
p.a. training
p.a. suggestions
p.a. misconception of roles
F.A. concern over peer guidance

Student Advisee

Response
advisee receptiveness
advisee resistance

Alternate Networking
advisee networking
athletic advisees

Student Development
fall vs spring sem
spring vs fall
adv challenges 1st 2wks
adv deve
adv deve - aca skills/expe
academic performance
academic adjustments
adv deve - decision m
adv deve - social
Faculty Advisor Interview Data Analysis - 2

**Director of Advising**

**Involved Faculty Advisors**

F.A. volunteers
advisor form
advisee information

**Organized Monthly Meetings**

D - monthly mtgs
D - mtgs - pos
D - mtgs - emotional
D - mtgs - sharing soluts
D - mtgs assessment
D - mtgs - negs

**Acted as a Resource Person**

D - input

**Faculty Advisor**

**Practiced a Proactive Strategy**

proactive
F.A. initial contacts
open house w/advisees
lunch mtgs with advisees
academic advising vs social
F.A. as advocate
rapport w/advisees
Developed Advising Skills

F.A. development
advisor training
F.A. advising values
recruit msg/adv foll thru
Drake advising
retention
advising - retention
F.A. relationship with advisees
advising - teaching role
in-class advising advantage
assessment
F.A. accountability

Desired Earlier Involvement with Advisees

F.A. early involvement suggs
late start for FA
structure of program
uncertainty of adv prog
newness of advising program

Advised Open-enrolled Undeclared First-year Students

advising undeclared majors
advising declared majors
advisor questions
F.A. expectations
declaring major
declaring major - values
undeclared stigma
gen ed challenges

Involved Peer Advisors

prog goal
p.a. duties
Made Referrals

F.A. referrals
tutoring referrals
tutoring services
counseling center
career center referrals
value of career center

Peer Advisors

Assisted Faculty Advisors in Advising Open-enrolled Advisees

p.a. assignments
peer advisor - characteristics
p.a. characteristics
p.a. qualities
p.a. benefits
p.a. social functions
p.a. communication
p.a. advisee relationships
p.a. adjustment

Presented Challenges to Faculty Advisors

Varying Degrees of Working Relationships

F.A. relationship with P.A.
p.a. hassels
p.a. waste
p.a. unfulfilled respons
p.a. personal problems
p.a. lack of commitment
p.a. experience lacking
p.a. lack of clear direction

Lacking Accountability

p.a. accountability
p.a. assessment
p.a. training
p.a. suggestions

**Offering Contrasting Advice**

p.a. misconception of roles
F.A. concern over peer guidance

**Student Advisee**

**Responded to Faculty Advisors**

advisee receptiveness
advisee resistance

**Found Other Resources for Advice**

advisee networking
athletic advisees

**Developed During the First Year of College**

academic performance
academic adjustments
adv challenges 1st 2wks
fall vs spring sem
spring vs fall
adv deve
adv deve - aca skills/expe
adv devel - decision m
adv deve - social
prog activities
APPENDIX I

OUTLINES OF INTERVIEW FINDINGS
FACULTY ADVISOR INTERVIEW

Outline

Introduction

I. The Director of Advising
   A. Motivating Faculty Advisor Involvement
   B. Organizing Monthly Meetings
   C. Acting As A Resource Person

II. The Faculty Advisor
   A. Practicing Proactive Advising
   B. Promoting The Exploration Of Academic Interests
   C. Promoting Non-academic Involvement
   D. Making Referrals

III. The Peer Advisor
   A. Providing Assistance To Faculty Advisors
   B. Presenting Special Challenges To Faculty Advisors

IV. The Open-Enrolled First-Year Student Advisee
   A. Responding To Advising Services
   B. Networking With Others
   C. Developing Academically And Socially

Conclusion
INTRODUCTION

The advising services to open-enrolled first-year students in the College of Arts and Sciences took on a proactive quality during the 1991-92 academic year. Having volunteered for the special advising role and having been selected for the program, each faculty advisor entered into the experience with a high level of motivation and commitment. The following outline describes their experiences with their recommendations for future advising services. The presentation of faculty advisor input has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee.

I. The Director of Advising for the College of Arts and Sciences:

   A. motivated faculty advisor and student peer advisor involvement in a proactive advising program.

      1. met with faculty advisors during the summer before the fall of 1991 to orient and initiate the first of many formal advisor training sessions to follow.

      2. provided a reporting format to encourage advisor persistence and improved performance and accountability.

   B. organized and supervised monthly meetings for faculty advisors and peer advisors in the program.

      1. created numerous opportunities for advisors to share personal experiences, successes, and frustrations with the other faculty advisors and peer advisors who attended.

      2. provided supervised opportunities to discuss strategies of advising undeclared majors based upon personal experiences.
3. brought to the meetings special speakers who addressed their specific campus support services (i.e., tutoring, counseling center, career center).

4. provided time to review how well the program was progressing.

C. assisted advisors as a resource person in the advising process.
   1. was available for personal questions about the advising process.
   2. assisted in advising students with special academic needs or schedule change problems.
   3. provided important admissions information on each student advisee including summer orientation course selection results.

II. Faculty advisors, who volunteered to participate and were selected by the director's office of advising, provided advising services to open-enrolled first-year students. They:

   A. practiced a proactive strategy in the advising process.
      1. made excellent efforts to contact advisees regularly, especially the first semester, to establish a helping relationship.
      2. developed effective advising skills that improved personal satisfaction in advising and promoted greater impact upon the student's progress and development through the advisor and advisee relationship.
      3. desired to be involved earlier in the new student days activities to establish important relationship connections before substitute support groups were established and advisees' schedules were filled with other priorities.

   B. advised students to explore their academic interests by considering taking a variety of courses and experiences available to first-year students.
1. encouraged a variety of academic experiences as a foundation step to the selection a major.

2. usually advised taking general education courses after electives in academic interests were scheduled.

3. sorting through the newly arranged general education core requirements was a considerable challenge.

C. promoted involvement in non-academic activities both on and off Drake's campus.

D. referred advisees to various campus services that were available to provide specialized help in addressing academic and personal needs.

1. appreciated the existence of support services providing advisees with assistance in areas advisors felt unprepared or unable to help.

2. referrals to departments and professors regarding an advisee's interests were also important in helping the advisee sort out the choices of a major and better understand their interests and abilities.

III. Peer advisors were selected by the director of advising and assigned randomly to faculty advisors and their advisees. They:

A. provided assistance from a student's viewpoint to the advising process.

1. provided an additional contact opportunity to check on advisee progress academically and socially.

2. was able to relate to the advisee at his or her level emotionally, socially, and academically.

3. efforts to help advisees were not always well received.
B. brought special challenges for the faculty advisor in the advising process as their personal preparation, motivation, and experience impacted the program.

1. limited training and clear definition of the peer advisor’s role and responsibilities led to variety of faculty-to-peer advisor working relationships.

2. the program lacked accountability and supervision guidelines.

3. many peer advisors provided academic advice to advisees that contrasted with the faculty advisor’s view.

IV. The first-year open-enrolled student advisee:

A. responded to the advising services according to his or her level of need.

1. early response to the advisor’s initiatives was very encouraging.
2. mandatory sessions for course approval were typically attended.

B. established a network of college friends that supported his or her adjustment needs both academically and socially.

1. networking naturally occurred.
2. due to new student orientation week activities preceding advisor/advisee contacts, some advisees had already found their own peer resources to answer questions that several faculty and peer advisors were hopefully looking forward to address.

C. demonstrated growth in academic and social adjustment during the fall and spring semester of his or her first year.

1. the majority of growth and adjustment took place during the first semester on campus.
2. second semester reception to advisor input, however, was based upon a well established first semester relationship.
Introduction

I. The Director of Advising
   A. Motivating Peer Advisor Involvement
   B. Organizing Monthly Meetings
   C. Acting As A Resource Person

II. The Faculty Advisor
   A. Establishing A Working Relationship
   B. Lacking Clear Direction And Role Clarification
   C. Complimenting Drake's Recruitment Message

III. The Peer Advisor
   A. Providing Advisee Assistance
   B. Experiencing The Advantages And Disadvantages Of Being A Peer
   C. Suggesting Improvements For Training And Accountability

IV. The Open-Enrolled, First-Year Student Advisee
   A. Responding Cautiously To Peer Advising
   B. Needing Assistance With College Adjustments
   C. Deciding On A Major

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PEER ADVISOR INTERVIEW
OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Older experienced students were selected to participate in a new advising service to open-enrolled first-year students in the College of Arts and Sciences during the 1991-92 academic year. Each student had a unique and varied experience throughout the peer advising assignment. The following paragraphs are descriptions of their experiences including their personal assessments of the advising program with recommendations for future advising services. The presentation of peer advisor input has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee.

I. The director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences:

   A. motivated and encouraged peer advisor involvement in the open-enrolled advising program.

      1. selected and recruited recommended, older students to assist as peer advisors.

      2. oriented the peer advisors to the program structure and purpose.

      3. assigned advisees to each of the peer advisors and respective faculty advisors.

   B. organized and supervised several meetings each semester for faculty and peer advisors.

      1. created numerous opportunities for faculty and peer advisors to share personal experiences, successes, and frustrations with other advisors and peer advisors who attended.
2. provided supervised opportunities to discuss strategies for advising undeclared majors based upon personal experiences.

3. allowed for structured time with the peer advisor's assigned faculty advisor.

C. assisted peer advisors as a resource person in the advising process.

II. Faculty advisors were selected by the advising office and had three peer advisors assigned to them and to approximately 5 of their 15 advisees. They:

A. met with their assigned peer advisors at the beginning of the fall semester and at the monthly meetings that peer advisors attended to discuss expectations and progress.

1. some faculty advisors were very active in meeting informally to review peer advisor progress.

2. some faculty and peer advisor relationships were very good.

B. several faculty and peer advisor relationships were strained.

1. time constraints limited meeting times to minimal number in any.

2. many peer advisors were not matched well with their faculty advisor (i.e., different academic departments, unknown) causing uncomfortable and forced relationships.

3. faculty advisors didn't seem confident in those relationships about what to expect of the peer advisor and how to communicate those expectations.

B. generally, faculty advisors were viewed in a different light in the academic advising role than the peer advisor (who's role will be discussed later). Faculty advisors were seen to be the ones who:
C. played an important role as a faculty advisor with the advisee and peer advisor (informative, accurate, friendly, and caring) demonstrating Drake's admission and recruitment message - we care about you personally.

III. Each peer advisor who participated was selected by the director of advising and assigned to assist a faculty advisor and five or six advisees. The peer advisor:

A. tried to provide the advisee assistance from a student's viewpoint to the advisee in adjusting to college life.

B. considered personal experiences and training to have had an impact on the peer advising results.

1. lack of communication skills and counseling skills caused some peer advisors to feel very inadequate in helping open-enrolled first-year students.

2. on the other hand, on-campus work related experiences, experience from earlier years of academic success and social adjustments gave other peer advisors confidence to aggressively pursue the advising challenge.

C. were often frustrated, however, because of limited training and role clarification.

1. the group meetings and brief contacts with faculty advisors were all the training many experienced; those who were unable to attend most of these meetings felt even less prepared.

2. accountability to the job (which was rewarded with income) and training to accomplish the responsibilities were both recognized as essential factors for future participation.

IV. First-year open-enrolled advisees:
A. responded in various degrees to the peer advising services; many were very cautious.

1. many were not well informed of the peer advisor's role.

2. many advisees were not able to or possibly not interested in getting together to meet with their peer advisor.

3. were typically intimidated by advisors because of their "faculty - professor" role and because of the lack of any meaningful and friendly relationship.

B. needed much assistance in making the adjustment into the college experience, especially as an open-enrolled.

1. needed encouragement to remain open-enrolled and explore the options before declaring.

2. lacked confidence and knowledge on how to cope in college and how to fit in.

3. needed a variety of experiences to broaden his or her appreciation of personal interests and abilities to help make wise decisions in declaring a major.

4. interdisciplinary, multi-cultural, and service related academic experiences were recommended to promote personal discovery of one's ambitions.

C. needed help in sorting our the challenge of declaring a major.

1. needed encouragement to be involved in extra-curricular activities.

2. needed motivation to consider campus services to assist the choosing process (faculty advising in each department, counseling services, student networking, out of class academic activities).

Conclusion
FIRST-YEAR, OPEN-ENROLLED STUDENT ADVISEE

Outline

Introduction

I. The Director of Advising
   A. Acting As An Important Resource Person
   B. Providing Continued Advising Services

II. The Faculty Advisor
   A. Establishing Initial Contacts
   B. Being Available For Course Registration
   C. Providing Academic Advice
      1. Providing Biased Advice
      2. Advising General Education Requirements
   D. Advising Open-Enrolled To Explore Interests
   E. Receiving Suggestions For Improving The Advisor's Role

III. The Peer Advisor
   A. Making Initial Contacts
      1. Understanding The Peer Advisor's Purpose
      2. Experiencing Factors That Limited The Advising Relationship
   B. Appreciating The Peer Advisor's Potential
C. Suggesting Earlier Involvement

IV. The Open-Enrolled, First-Year Student Advisee

A. Varying In Degrees Of Development

B. Responding To Advising Services

C. Supplementing Peer Advisors By Networking With Friends

D. Using Faculty Advising Services
   1. Benefiting From Having The Faculty Advisor As A Professor
   2. Experiencing The Application Of Drake's Recruitment Message
   3. Suggesting Faculty Advisor Accountability And Assessment
   4. Deciding On A Major

E. Promoting Freshmen Seminar

Conclusion
FIRST-YEAR, OPEN-ENROLLED STUDENT ADVISEE INTERVIEW OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

The director of advising for the College of Arts and Sciences supervised the advising program designed to assist open-enrolled students. Eight faculty advisors were selected and twenty-four peer advisors were recruited to assist in advising first-year, open-enrolled students. Each advisor had three peer advisors who were assigned five to six advisees on the advisors list of fifteen to sixteen. The following paragraphs are descriptions of the advisee’s experiences and personal assessments of the advising program with recommendations for future advising services. The presentation of the advisee input has been organized in context to each of the key groups of people involved in the advising program including the director of advising, the faculty advisor, the peer advisor, and the student advisee.

I. The Director of Advising for the College of Arts and Sciences:

A. was an available resource person for the open-enrolled advisees.

1. provided academic advising assistance when the faculty advisor was not available.

2. provided advice on choosing courses, declaring majors, and switching advisors.

3. provided advice on adding and dropping courses.

B. was a back-up advisor for advisees who did not have a good working relationship with their assigned faculty advisor.

1. was found to be very supportive and helpful.

2. provided accurate and timely assistance.
II. The faculty advisor to whom the advisee was assigned:

A. met initially at the beginning of the fall semester with the advisees.
   1. some met advisees over lunch (one even at her home) on an informal, get acquainted basis.
   2. many met as a group with the advisees to introduce themselves and address any questions the advisees had at the beginning of the semester.
   3. typically, advisors met on a one-to-one basis at the end of the first couple of weeks of classes.

B. was available in the fall semester to assist in the adjustment process and registration for semester courses.
   1. made office hours available and usually sent notices for advising sessions to cover the registration process.
   2. appeared interested but busy with teaching and other advising opportunities with older students in the advisor's department or program.

C. advised students to consider the variety of academic experiences available at Drake as students were considering their future academic direction and career choices.
   1. was usually very open to what ever the student was interested in taking but often was biased by promoting his or her own program or department course offerings.
   2. general education core requirements were considered but often took a secondary priority to exploration type courses to help advisees check out interests and tentative majors.
D. advised students during the Spring semester as they signed up for sophomore, fall courses and considered tentative majors.

1. did not focus heavily upon declaring yet, but rather encouraged more tentative exploration.

2. met less often in the Spring semester.

3. advisees felt if a good relationship was not established in the fall, the time spent in the spring was very brief and mechanical.

E. suggested ways to improve the advisor's role

III. Assisting the faculty advisors, the assigned peer advisors:

A. made initial contact in the early fall with the advisee.

1. advisees did not, for the most part, understand the role of the peer advisor and thus did not take advantage of it.

2. was frustrated by many things within the system.

   a. time restraints on student schedules (both advisee and peer advisor) prevented many peers and advisees from developing meaningful relationships.

   b. advisee and peer advisor matching appeared to be by chance; different interests led to different directions on campus further restricting the growth of the advising relationship.

B. in spite of the absence of the peer advisor for many advisees, the appreciation for their potential role still existed.

1. advisees valued another, older, experienced student's advice on professors, classes, activities on and off campus.

2. advisees valued the successful role model that a peer advisor could provide on reaching academic goals and making career decisions.
C. earlier involvement in summer orientation and new student week would help establish better relationships going into the fall semester.

IV. The first-year student advisee who was open-enrolled:

A. varied in academic ability, interests, motivation, experience, and self-confidence.

1. ability in academics and coping skills impacted the need for an advisor as well as the response students gave to the advisor.

2. the lack of experience as a college student was often seen as a hindrance to the student appreciating the advising services.

B. received the peer advising services with mixed reviews.

1. the more self-confident the advisee, the less the need for a peer advisor existed.

2. the closer the match between the advisee's interests and the faculty advisor and/or peer advisor's interests, the better the advising relationship.

C. networking with friends and class members supplemented or replaced the peer advising system.

1. advisees naturally linked with other students closer to them to establish support groups before the older, peer advisor arrived on the scene.

2. networking was often based on common interests, availability, age, and personal tastes; peer advisors lacked this natural fit.

D. utilized, for the most part, the faculty advisor's assistance
1. found the professorship status to be somewhat intimidating especially if the advisor did not offer time for informal meetings to strengthen the advising relationship.

   a. found that having the faculty advisor as a classroom professor the fall semester was a definite advantage in promoting the advising relationship.

   b. being in the class helped both get more acquainted and the advisee more comfortable about approaching the faculty advisor for advice.

   c. becoming more acquainted removed much of the intimidation factor.

2. acknowledged the faculty advisor's role as very critical in carrying out the recruitment message of Drake - we care personally about you and your success.

   a. many agreed that the certain professors did well in portraying this message but not necessarily the faculty advisor.

   b. observed and experienced faculty advisors with varying degrees of motivation and incentive for the advising role.

3. accountability and assessment (similar to teacher assessment) were frequently suggested.

4. searched to find direction for future academic choices at Drake.

   a) found direction for tentative career and major choices primarily through interesting courses and commendable professors.

   b) was often frustrated by an advisor's attempt to encourage the advisee to experiment and explore many interests (including the advisor's own program) without much attention to the pressures of finishing in four years.

   c) Drake is very expensive making the goal of finishing in four years a top priority for most students.

E. promoted the future freshmen seminar concept.
Standards of Program Evaluation

Standards for program evaluation (The Joint Commission, 1981) were given important consideration as the research project proceeded from the development of the proposal through the data collection phase to its completion and presentation. Standards within each of the four qualities of program evaluation (i.e., utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy) were practiced throughout the research process. The following outline describes how the researcher's activity supported these standards in order to maintain a high level of professional practice:

1. Utility Standards - reported useful information to meet audience needs.
   a. Audience Identification - confirmed the role of the director of advising as the primary stakeholder in designing and coordinating the advising services in the College of Arts and Sciences; confirmed the actual participants of the original 1991-92 advising program by name, status, and telephone number.
   b. Evaluation Credibility - relied on recent professional studies in student services, on eight years of personal experiences as a faculty advisor, on past experiences in counseling and interviewing adults and teenagers, on advice from my committee co-chairs who both have extensive experience in program evaluation and qualitative research methods, and on recent, direct observation experiences of advising and student service programs at Des Moines Area Community College,
Central College, Waldorf College and Iowa State University to help me perform this research study and make sense out of the resulting data. I met frequently with the director of advising during the beginning proposal stages of the study as well as throughout the study, to establish a trusting relationship and accurate understanding of the true purpose of the study.

c. Information Scope and Selection - met with the director of advising during the development of the proposal, during the data collection process, and at the conclusion of the study to develop an understanding of the director's needs and interests in order to tailor the study to appropriately address those needs in context with the original purpose of the study; collected appropriate information from interviews to help sufficiently described the essence of the advising services to the director of advising; used eleven pilot study interviews to confirm the design and content of initial focus questions; interviewed all faculty advisors, seven of the nine available peer advisors, and 24 of the available 86 advisees to collect a representative view of the advising services.

d. Valuation Interpretation - stated at the beginning the qualitative design of the study, the study's purpose, and the actual methods of collecting important interview data with the use of focus questions; documented in my journal how those plans were followed to produce a useful report.

e. Report Clarity - developed concise statements in the introduction, purpose, and methods chapters that identified the actual
program to be studied, the participants to be interviewed, and the specific purpose of improving future advising services to open-enrolled student advisees.

f. Report Dissemination - provided the director of advising with a thorough summary of the findings including recommendations to address the identified needs of the advising program; shared these findings with select committee members in preparation for the results chapter of the research report.

g. Report Timeliness - established a time table to motivate the researcher to accomplish the interview process before the end of the spring semester and to provide input to the director of advising that could be used towards future advising services; the potential development of unforeseen changes in the researcher's place of employment during the month of February slowed the interview data collection process so that the time table to finish interviews was moved forward to the month of May just prior to exam week; having to actually relocate residence during July caused the researcher to move the time table of completing the final report to the director of advising to August; accomplished important review of the findings and recommendations with the director by telephone conference in September; maintained regular contacts throughout the research process with the director and with research committee members to communicate adjustments in the interruptions to the original time table; submitted adjustments to the time table in March and in June to
communicate the new time table objectives to accomplish the study for a November oral presentation.

h. Evaluation Impact - provided the director of advising with a thorough development of the findings and recommendations for advising program; included with the recommendations a good selection of working examples from which future direction could be taken to improve advising services.

2. Feasibility Standards - performed the study in an undesruptive, politically viable, and cost effective manner.

a. Practical Procedures - obtained information with minimal disruption to faculty advisors, peer advisors, and advisees by providing a variety of times to attend interviews; met in campus offices or in the centrally located campus library; audio taped interviews to help accurately record input without distracting from the interview process by having to write down all of the significant comments.

b. Political Viability - designed the study so that cooperation and participation was obtained from the various interest groups (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, students, and the director of advising); established a good working relationship with the director of advising in order to clearly identify the purpose of the study; established an understanding and appreciation for maintaining confidentiality of each interviewee; used consent forms with each participant to communicate confidentiality and the option to withdraw from the study.

c. Cost Effectiveness - provided a thorough program assessment without requiring an excess expenditure of time with any one
particular individual by having interviews on campus with available personnel; saved mailing costs by using the campus mail system to communicate the initial purpose of the study with a good number of the potential participants; saved financially by using my home phone to arrange interview appointments and by using my home computer and office space to perform the data analysis; mailed final reports; utilized a telephone conference format, after relocating, to accomplish the review and confirmation of the final report with the director of advisor.

3. Propriety Standards - protected the rights of participants in the study through proper conduct and honest reporting.

   a. Formal Obligation - provided a respondent consent form prior to the interview; reviewed the purpose of the study, researcher responsibilities, and gave opportunity to decline the use of their input in the study prior to and after the interview.

   b. Conflict of Interest - maintained a professional, working relationship with the director of advising to avoid compromising the final analysis of the advising program's findings and recommendations especially as they related to the director's role.

   c. Full and Frank Disclosure - developed a thorough presentation of the summary and recommendations for improvement after presenting summaries of the advising program from the perspectives of the faculty advisors, peers advisors, and advisees.

   d. Public's Right to Know - agreed to maintain confidentiality on the consent form; protected the right of privacy by eliminating any and
all references to names from the data; used letter codes to identify the status of the interviewee; shared summary of findings in focus group interviews to confirm understanding; gave final report to director of advising for review and application to future advising services.

e. Rights of Human Subjects - conducted the study so that the rights and well-being of those being interviewed were honored and respected; separated names from the data to insure confidentiality.

f. Human Interactions - exercised respect for personal opinions expressed in the interview process; listened and actively sought respondent involvement in the data collection process.

g. Balanced Reporting - presented a thorough analysis of the advising program by describing and assessing its qualities upon which improvements could be made; provided a variety of recommended solutions so that immediate and long term improvements could be realized.

h. Fiscal Responsibility - performed the study for the director of advising at my own personal expense and time by arranging my own interviews and using my own personal, home computer and office space; secured approval to have a secretary transcribe audio tape recordings; cared for mailing expenses of reports to director of advising and committee members after relocating.

4. Accuracy Standards - produced valid information through sound research methods in order to determine the worth or merit of the program being evaluated.
a. Object Identification - identified, with the director's assistance, the actual advising program to be studied prior to formulating a proposal; identified specific participants to be interviewed in the proposal process; interviewed members from each of the three groups of participants to verify their participation and to obtain a clear understanding of the program from as many perspectives as possible.

b. Context Analysis - performed enough interviews with participants to be able to more fully describe what impact the advising services had upon the first-year advisees, peer advisors, and faculty advisors.

c. Described Purposes and Procedures - established clear direction in the proposal on how the interview format would help collect important information on the advising services; kept a interview log and research journal; and described the plan and process in the proposal and final report.

d. Defensible Information Sources - maintained a journal that tracked my research activity (Appendix C); filed transcriptions of each interview along with actual cassette recordings for future confirmation; filed respondent consent forms from each interview; maintained an interview log and tracked the data collection, transcription, computer entry, and analysis process; consistently referred to those records in the reporting process by letter and number codes without using the names of the participants.
e. Valid Measurement - performed peer and stakeholder debriefings and pilot study interviews to confirm the usefulness and appropriateness of the initial interview focus questions; revised the single list of focus questions into three separate lists for more effective interview use with each of the three groups; audio taped each interview; utilized computer software to track data into important themes and to recover supporting data for summary and concluding statements.

f. Reliable Measurement - confirmed clarity of focus questions during pilot study interviews; interviewed all faculty advisors, most of the available peer advisors, and nearly a third of the available advisees to obtain a representative view of the original advising services; transcribed audio tapes and developed themes through computer software sorting procedures which assisted in dealing with the vast amount of qualitative data.

g. Systematic Data Control - established accuracy in my understanding of interview input by restating what was being shared by the respondent during the interview; confirmed understanding of general and specific themes during interviews with the director; sorted and resorted data in an effort to establish major themes that accurately portrayed the main findings; held focus group member checks to confirm my understandings of the respondents' story; held concluding conference with the director of advising to confirm understanding and usefulness of the final report.
h. Analysis of Qualitative Information - followed qualitative procedures for analyzing interview data with the assistance of computer software to store and retrieve the vast amounts of information from all of the interviews; coded printed interview transcriptions by hand, entered codes into software, sorted data, printed resulting topic cards, checked accuracy of assortment, re-coded, reprinted, and resorted data in order to arrive at a more accurate understanding of the major themes; maintained three separate storage files for the storing, coding, and re-sorting of data received from faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees.

i. Justified Conclusions - based findings and recommendations upon the over-all summary of major themes with a focus on improvement; referred to appropriate examples from other advising programs which have addressed those specific needs and are experiencing successful results; conferred with the director to confirm the usefulness and appropriateness of the final report.

j. Objective Reporting - designed focus questions to provide respondents opportunity to tell their own story; reported summary of major themes in three sections (i.e., faculty advisors, peer advisors, and student advisees) to identify the different points of view from each group of participants; maintained responsibility and control over the data collection and data analysis process so as not to be influenced directly by the director of advising and her conclusions and recommendations; interviewed all eight faculty advisors, seven of the nine available peer advisors, and 24 of the available 86 student
advisees in order to obtain a more holistic view of the advising services; based final summary and recommendations upon major themes supported by all three groups rather than any one single group; used focus groups to confirm my understandings; reviewed and revised the summary reports to address my own misconceptions or assumptions; held debriefings with the director of advising to confirm interpretation of findings and concluding recommendations.

Giving attention to the utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy of a research study gave me greater confidence in summarizing the findings and recommendations. Following these standards enabled me to practice sound research methods and to develop a useful presentation of findings, assessment, and recommendations for the director of advising on the proactive advising program offered to first-year, open-enrolled students.