



MORGAN
STATE UNIVERSITY

The Academic Advisor Newsletter

Academic Advising Tidbits

November at Morgan State University (MSU) is an extremely busy period for academic advising. Appointment slots will be filled and students will line the halls waiting to meet with their advisors for spring 2017 course advisement. According to the [priority registration groupings](#), freshmen (0-24 credits) will begin registering for their spring courses on Thursday, November 17th. With this date just a few days away here are some pertinent advising reminders.

- The **academic catalog** is a **key resource** for advisors and students. The 2016-2018 catalog is available online at www.morgan.edu/academics/academic_catalogs.html. Encourage your **students to review** their **suggested curriculum** sequence **prior** to their advising appointment.
- According to **Senate Bill 740** mandate, students **must** complete **credit-bearing math and English** courses in their **first 24 credits hours** (i.e. by the end of their freshman year).
- If you haven't done so already, **review your students' mid-term grades**. This way you can gauge whether or not you need to recommend tutoring or to suggest potentially repeating a course due to a failing grade.
- **Ask your students open-ended questions** during the advising session. This is a useful strategy to gather information to effectively advise students and to make appropriate referrals.
- Be **prepared** for each advising session!

November 2016

In this Issue:

- ⇒ Academic Advising Tidbits
- ⇒ Academic Advisor Professional Development
- ⇒ Student Disability Support Services
- ⇒ Strengths-Based Advising
- ⇒ Get to Know the Team

ACCEPTING

NOMINATIONS

Fall 2016 Outstanding

FY Academic Advisor

for more info. and to submit a nomination



www.morgan.edu/fyaaward

Nomination Deadline: December 2, 2016



Academic Advisor Professional Development

Save the date . . . Thursday, February 2nd, 2017 (10am—2pm). All freshmen academic advisors and any other interested faculty/staff are invited to participate in our spring 2017 advisor professional development. The theme is “Advising Today’s College Student.” Our keynote speaker, Dr. Joshua Smith (2012-2013 NACADA president) will kick off the event at 10am. Guest facilitators will conduct two interactive workshops aimed at providing attendees with strategies to engage in proactive versus prescriptive advising as well as techniques to address the unique challenges (mental health, substance abuse, personal and family issues etc.) of today’s college students.

Student Services Spotlight: Student Disability Support Services

Student Disability Support Services (SDSS) is dedicated to assisting students with disabilities by providing academic support to eliminate barriers and provide access to materials and programming. SDSS operates in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with SDSS prior to the start of the semester, however may request accommodations through SDSS at any time.

To register with SDSS, students with disabilities must complete the [Intake Form](#) found on SDSS's website. They must also provide current documentation of their disability. SDSS will meet with each student to determine the appropriate reasonable accommodations to provide access. Once accommodations are determined, they are listed on an Accommodation Memo. Students are responsible for sharing their Accommodation Memos with all of their professors, each semester. SDSS encourages a conversation between students and their professors to ensure there is a clear understanding of the listed reasonable accommodations.

Website: www.morgan.edu/sdss

Email: SDSS@morgan.edu

Office: Earl S. Richardson Library, Rooms 127A and 131

(Source: Kate Weeks, Director of SDSS)

Important Dates

November 2016

November 8th

Spring 2017
Registration Begins

November 14th - 19th

International
Education Week

November 16th
Study Abroad Fair

November 24th-27th
Thanksgiving Break

November 28th
Final Exams for
Prospective
December Graduates

Strengths-Based Advising

Strengths-based advising represents a paradigm shift for higher education from failure prevention and a survival mentality to success promotion and a perspective of thriving. Rather than assessing the areas in which the student is deficient and in need of remediation, advisors using a strengths-based approach assess the talents and personal assets that students bring into the college environment and work with them to develop those competencies into strengths through gained knowledge and skills.

Steps in Strengths-Based Advising

Five steps in strengths-based advising tend to work best in sequence.

Step 1: Identify Students' Talents. Strengths-based advising begins with an identification of students' talents. This process of discovery builds rapport with students as advisors focus on the individual and his or her potential contributions to the learning environment.

Step 2: Affirm Students' Talents and Increase Awareness of Strengths. After identifying students' talents, the advisor increases students' awareness and appreciation of those assets and helps them see how their talents can be further developed into strengths.

Step 3: Envision the Future. After steps 1 and 2, advisors implement the third step of strengths-based advising by discussing with students their aspirations and how developing their talents can help them reach their goals. This step is not primarily about career planning of major selection, but about the kind of person a student wants to become.

Step 4: Plan Specific Steps for Students to Reach Goals. In this step the advisor focuses on cocreating a specific plan that a student can implement, with both short- and long-term goals important to the student and congruent with her or his values and strengths.

Step 5: Apply Students' Strengths to Challenges. In the final step, advisors assist students in identifying ways to apply specific talents to new situations or challenges. By reminding students that they have successfully dealt with challenges in the past, advisors not only offer encouragement but call to mind the specific ways students achieved past successes as well as energize and motivate them to tackle the current difficulty.

Source: Schreiner, L. A. (2013). Strengths-Based Advising. In J. K. Drake, P. Jordan, M. A. Miller (Eds.), *Academic advising approaches: Strategies that teach students to make the most of college* (p. 105-120).

Get to Know the Team

Currently 18 staff members (CASA Advisors and Retention Coordinators) provide academic advising services to the first year student population at MSU. November's staff highlights are:



Derrell Brown

Academic Advisor, Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA)

Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Mr. Brown has dedicated more than 10 years of his life to working with students in the higher education environment. In 2014, he began his tenure as an academic advisor with CASA. Prior to 2014, Mr. Brown worked as an advisor at his alma mater, Community College of Baltimore County—Essex (CCBC). He earned his Associates degree in theater from CCBC—Essex and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). In 2017, he will begin the Master of Arts program in higher education administration at Morgan. Mr. Brown enjoys spending time with family, cooking, and playwriting.



Ayana Johnson

Retention Coordinator, School of Global Journalism and Communications

As a first-generation college student, Ms. Johnson obtained a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Master of Art in Counseling from Bowie State University (BSU). Serving as a Resident Director for BSU and a Program Specialist for the CollegeBound Foundation in her previous assignments, she prepared students for life in and after college. For over a decade, she has encouraged young scholars to focus on their mission while developing their self-sufficiency. At Morgan, she encourages every student to define their blueprint for success. With hard work and determination, she knows that every student will be successful. Ms. Johnson enjoys rollercoasters, nature, movies, traveling and food.



Salifu Cham

Academic Advisor, Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA)

Mr. Cham has served as a CASA academic advisor for the past three years. He graduated from Morgan State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and will also receive his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Morgan in December 2016. He enjoys spending time with family and friends and doing DIY projects at home on his free time. Mr. Cham is from The Gambia, the smallest country on mainland Africa.

GOT IDEAS!

Are there topics you would like to see in the newsletter? Send your ideas to FY_Advising@morgan.edu