

SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM ADVISING SURVEY REPORT
Spring 2012

Submitted by
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PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

This survey is conducted each spring by the Social Work Program to give students advised by Social Work Program faculty an opportunity each academic year to share their views about their advising experiences. The results of the survey are shared with faculty and other constituencies like the Community Advisory Committee, the Student Advisory Committee, and the Human Behavior and Diversity Personnel Committee. The information shared in the survey is used to assist in evaluating program advising efforts and to improve it. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete.

CONFIDENTIALITY, VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Questionnaires were distributed to all students during the spring advising sessions with their advisors. There were 99 students enrolled as a social work major in April 2012, when these were administered, and thirty-three (33) responded. This was a return rate of 33%, which means that some caution should be used in generalizing this to all social work majors. Of these 33, nineteen (58%) were surveys from Liz Blue's advisees, nine (27%) were from Mimi Rappley Larson's advisees, and six (15%) were from Monica Roth Day's advisees.

Survey answers were confidential. To safeguard confidentiality, there were no questions asked, which would allow the Program to identify students individually. Participation in this research was voluntary. Surveys were returned anonymously directly to an envelope outside Liz Blue's door. After the report is complete, the original returned surveys will be shredded.

ADVISING SESSION INFORMATION

Table 1: Number of Times Saw Advisor in Past Academic Year

Advisor	Mean	Median	Range	Mode
All Advisors	3.813	4.000	2-7 meetings	4 meetings (10)
Elizabeth Blue	3.737	4.000	2-6 meetings	4 meetings (8)
Mimi Rappley Larson	3.778	3.000	2-6 meetings	3 meetings (3)
Monica Roth Day	4.250	3.500	3-7 meetings	3 meetings (2)

On an average, social work advisors say students three or more times during the academic year. Some students (8 or 25%) came five times or more to meet with an advisor during the academic year.

Table 2: Time Spent Typically in an Advising Session (in Minutes)

Advisor	Mean	Median	Range	Mode
All Advisors	38.8 minutes	30 minutes	10-60 minutes	30 minutes (14)
Elizabeth Blue	37.1 minutes	30 minutes	20-60 minutes	30 minutes (9)
Mimi Rappley Larson	47.2 minutes	50 minutes	30-60 minutes	60 minutes (4)
Monica Roth Day	30.0 minutes	30 minutes	10-60 minutes	30 minutes (2)

On average advisors saw students for a half hour or longer per visit. Fourteen of the 33 respondents (42%) typically spent more than 30 minutes with an advisor on a typical visit.

Table 3: Reasons Visited Advisor in the Past Year (checked all that applied)

Reason	All Advisors	ETB	MRL	MRD
Academic concerns	17 (52%)	13 (68%)	1 (11%)	3 (60%)
Switch major to or from social work	6 (18%)	3 (16%)	3 (33%)	0 (0%)
Needed supportive academic resources	11 (33%)	7 (37%)	2 (22%)	2 (40%)
Discuss possible graduate school goals	5 (15%)	2 (11%)	2 (22%)	1 (20%)
Add or drop a course	11 (33%)	8 (42%)	2 (22%)	1 (20%)
Making an academic plan	30 (91%)	16 (84%)	9 (100%)	5 (100%)
Discuss field placements goals/sites	16 (48%)	12 (63%)	0 (0%)	4 (80%)

Respondents could mark more than one answer for this item. Two thirds marked three or more of these reasons for visiting an advisor. There were two people (both advised by Monica Roth Day) who marked other and made comments; the comments were as follows (verbatim):

- **Health concerns**
- **Planning during my pregnancy and birth –continuing goals, objectives and tasks!!!**

ISSUES IN ADVISING: HOW WELL IS IT WORKING FOR YOU?

If something did not apply, the student left it blank.

The next 12 items all pertained to students' perceptions about how well they had been served by their social work advisors. They used a four point scale:

1 = strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = disagree 4 = strongly disagree.

The table below presents all the data for these 12 items by advisor.

Table 4: Issues in Advising: How Well Advising Worked

Advising Item	Advisor	Number/Percent Agree	Range
My advisor is on time for scheduled appointments	All	33 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
My advisor has assisted me in developing appropriate academic goals	All	33 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree

Advising Item	Advisor	Number/Percent Agree	Range
My advisor pays attention to my scheduling issues related to work and family obligations.	All	32 (97%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	18 (95%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
My advisor listens to what I have to say.	All	33 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
My advisor is knowledgeable about the requirements of the major (knows major courses and pre-requisites to course selection.	All	33 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
I am able to see my advisor within a reasonable amount of time when I need to enroll for classes.	All	32 (97%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	18 (95%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
My advisor is available to me at times outside of the fall and spring enrollment periods.	All	30 (91%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	17 (89%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	8 (89%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
When it was time, my advisor met with me to discuss my goals and objectives for selecting a field internship placement.	All	30 (91%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	6 (67%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree

Advising Item	Advisor	Number/Percent Agree	Range
My advisor helped me develop an academic plan designed to help me graduate in a timely fashion.	All	33 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	19 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
My advisor has discussed matters with me which may affect entry into the profession –like career opportunities, graduate school opportunities, and licensure and certification.	All	28 (85%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	15 (79%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	8 (89%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
When I have needed it, my advisor has helped me connect to campus resources (like Writing Lab, Student Organizations, vocational testing, career advising, personal support)	All	26 (79%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	16 (84%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	5 (56%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
My advisor gives me as much time as I need in an advisement session.	All	31 (94%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	17 (89%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
My advisor has been knowledgeable about the policies and procedures within the major.	All	31 (94%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	ETB	17 (89%)	1-2 Strongly agree to agree
	MRL	9 (100%)	1 Strongly agree
	MRD	5 (100%)	1 Strongly agree

The faculty figured out how to create an overall composite score for advising. They used the following core areas to create this composite:

- My advisor listens to what I have to say.
- My advisor is knowledgeable about the requirements of the major.
- My advisor has discussed matters with me which may affect entry into the profession.
- My advisor gives me as much time as I need in an advisement session.

- My advisor has been knowledgeable about the policies and procedures within the major.

To score these five core areas, the numerical average scores of all five are added together for a composite score. This means that score totals might range from 5 to 20. Any composite score of 10 or less is a positive composite score. The closer the score is to 5, the more positive it is.

Table 5: Composite Scores for Social Work Advisors

Advisor	Composite Mean	Composite 10 or less
All	5.698	Yes
ETB	5.975	Yes
MRL	5.375	Yes
MRD	5.000	Yes

These appear to be very positive composite scores for all advisors addressed in this survey.

VARIOUS OPEN-ENDED ITEMS

Next there were three open-ended items; the verbatim responses to these items are reported next. The color of the response tells the reader for which advisor the response was made. (Blue: Blue; Rappley Larson: Pink; Roth Day: Gold)

Specific advising problems experienced:

Blue

- None (7)
- Available appointments are scarce.
- Availability.
- No problems.

Larson

- I have experienced no problems. All has been great so far!
- None (3)
- Nothing big –just would like more explanation on what courses will be like (harder, lots of discussion, etc.)

Roth Day

- None (2)
- Sometimes it seems as if there are not enough time slots for meetings due to all the meetings [she holds related to her classes] with her for class.
- I have never had a problem.

Specific strengths of advisor:

Blue

- Very knowledgeable and straightforward. Tells me the information I need.
- Advisor seems to be very knowledgeable about the field.

- Very knowledgeable; kind and caring; genuine; trustworthy; and welcoming.
- Ms. Blue is experienced. [She] understands all that is required and has an appreciation of the student's life outside of school.
- She is a good listener.
- She is very helpful and takes the time to explain things.
- She is very knowledgeable and knows what I need. She is my teacher also so she takes the time to get to know me.
- Very quick and knowledgeable on the courses I need to help me graduate. Always kind and helpful.
- She doesn't "sugar coat". She is knowledgeable and genuine.
- She is present, caring and educated about the process.
- Liz is so straightforward and tells me exactly what I need to do and how.
- Helped me with specific classes and how we will plan them into my course schedule. Was friendly to my son (5 years old) also.
- She has always helped me stick to a plan. She is very helpful. She calms me down when I am stressed.
- Vast knowledge and willingness to share.
- Very helpful –created a good plan with me.

Larson

- Friendly, informative, helpful, caring and thorough.
- Very friendly; knowledgeable about courses and options; Efficient with time; explains everything so I easily understand.
- My academic plan was made between the two of us, and we discussed positives and negatives.
- Perfectly laid out expectations and course path throughout the program. Very personable advisor.
- Gives knowledge and experience and information. Knows off the top of her head the classes to take and alternatives.
- She is very knowledgeable and supportive. She is the best!!
- I am super impressed with how great my advisor knows each course and is ready and willing to help me out to make my schedule doable for me!
- I feel comfortable sharing my opinion. My advisor is optimistic as to what types I would want to take, but also keeps me on a steady track of classes. I love my social work instructors!!!
- As a transfer student, [I experienced her as] very helpful with giving me information about the campus and the social work program.

Roth Day

- I love Monica!! She has helped me focus on my goals and achieve them. Helped me see reason on some cases. Basically become stronger.
- Very knowledgeable about requirements.
- My advisor was especially helpful in aiding my decision to stay in school during and after my pregnancy. Together we outlined realistic goals and made sure I was able to achieve them adequately. I sincerely appreciated her input.
- It is very helpful to me. Without it [advisement] I would be completely lost.
- Always willing to help; supportive, clear on courses, lots of opportunities.

Suggestions for improvement to social work advisement process:

Blue

- It [The process] is not bad right now, but the only improvement I could think of would be to have more available office hours.
- Advisors are often booked out for two weeks. Available appointments are limited.
- It is all good.
- None. (3)
- Good job.
- No suggestions, she does great.

Larson

- None (4)
- Maybe have a general knowledge of what other teachers in other fields might be like.
- Would like more explanation on what courses will be like (harder, lots of discussion, etc.)

Roth Day

- None (2)
- Maybe a kind of graph of classes to put on the home page, so people know what to look for?

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 6: Number of Credits Completed by Survey Respondents at this Time

Credit Range	Number (%)
0-30 credits (Freshman)	3 (10%)
31-60 credits (Sophomore)	7 (24%)
61-90 credits (Junior)	10 (34%)
91-120 credits (Senior)	9 (31%)

Four of the respondents did not respond to the item asking them to identify how many credits each respondent had completed. The total number of students who responded to this item was 29 (88%).

Table 7: Respondent Demographic Data Age Group by Transfer Status by Standing

Transfer Status	Under 25		25 and Older	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Transfer Student (n = 23)	11	0	12	0
Not a Transfer Student (n =7)	6	0	0	1
All (n = 30)	17	0	12	1

Three respondents' data is missing because the student did not fill out one or more of these items on the survey. Twenty-three student respondents (77%) were transfer students; Eleven (48% of transfer respondents) were under the age of 25; all 23 (100% of the transfer respondents) were full time students. Seven of the students noted they were not transfer students (23% of all respondents). Six of the seven (86%) were full time students and under the age of 25 years. One non-transfer respondent was 25 years or older and was a part-time student.