Special Populations of Students

Advising Special Populations of Students

International Students
The diversity of Coastal Carolina University’s student population encourages multiple advising strategies. All new students can experience feelings of loneliness and homesickness during the first days at college. However, for international students the emotional discomfort that comes as a result of separation can be exacerbated by the cultural adjustment. Language, food, social behavior, nonverbal communication, and academic adjustment to the University and to the United States can be difficult. The challenge in advising international students is to understand that they have common concerns both socially and academically, but at the same time, they have specific questions and concerns. Coastal Carolina University’s International Student Program advises international students on a wide range of topics, including immigration matters, social and cultural differences, financial matters, and personal concerns. However, it does not replace academic advising for these students. Please contact Geoff Parsons in the Office of International Programs at 349-2054 or parsons@coastal.edu to assist you with any questions pertaining to international advisees.

Non-Degree Seeking Students
Non-degree seeking student should contact the Office of Admissions at 349-2170 for assistance with class scheduling and registration.

Non-Traditional Students
Each year, Coastal Carolina University enrolls undergraduate students who are over the age of 25. These students often have special requirements, concerns, and constraints on their time that separate them from traditional students. The goal of the academic advisor in this instance should be not only to provide academic information, but to provide a sense of community as well as provide information about specific concerns such as housing, career planning, and social networking. Because these students are older and may be transfer students, they often bring a higher level of maturity and depth of exposure to their education than does the more traditional student. However, advisors should be aware that these students may often lack confidence in their ability as students and may need much encouragement. At the other extreme are some non-traditional students who have an unrealistic view of the challenges of college life and are overconfident regarding their abilities to handle both the rigors of Coastal Carolina University and full-time employment or full-time childcare. These students need advisors who can help them develop a realistic program of study that best meets their needs.

Student Athletes
Be aware of any student athletes that you may be advising. They not only have Coastal Carolina University’s academic policies and regulations to follow, but also the strict academic regulations set forth by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in order to retain their playing eligibility. It you are unsure about the student’s course load, current degree progress, or if you have any other concerns, please contact Joe Mazurkiewicz in the Department of Athletics at 349-2315 or mazurk@coastal.edu.
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Student with Disabilities
Coastal Carolina University provides a program of assistance to students with disabilities. The University is committed to helping to make the entire university experience accessible to all qualified students. Because of this commitment, the University does not offer a separate program for student with disabilities. Instead, students with disabilities are mainstreamed into existing support services on campus. At Coastal Carolina University, students with disabilities may be referred to the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities by the local school district office, a high school counselor, the Office of Admissions, the Office of Residence Life, or by individual faculty or staff members. They may also be self-referred. Official documentation of a disability is required to determine what kind of special aids or adaptations and accommodations may be helpful on campus. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities provides invaluable advisory and support services to students with disabilities and the faculty who teach them. For more information on confidentiality requirements, Coastal Carolina University’s service delivery model, and specific policies regarding academic accommodations, please refer to the Coastal Carolina University Disabilities Handbook, compiled by the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities, or contact Wendy Woodsby in the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 349-6561 or wwoodsby@coastal.edu.

Transfer Students
Advising transfer students can present many challenges. These students may either be ahead or behind in course sequences compared to other students in their degree program. Transfer students may not be familiar with the different types of semester schedules that the University has to offer, and they may require advisement on how to schedule their work and course requirements. Initially, the evaluation of transfer credits is done by the Office of Admissions. If students and their advisors find errors, they must fill out a Transfer Credit Adjustment Form, have this form signed by the chair of the department of the course in question, and submit the form to the Office of Admissions. For more information regarding transfer students or transfer credit, please contact the Office of Admissions at 349-2026.

Engineering Dual Degree Program Academic Advisor
Through a cooperative program with Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University offers students the opportunity to begin their engineering education in the Engineering Dual Degree Program. In the first three years of this program, students fulfill most of the requirements for a B.S. degree at Coastal Carolina University. During this time, engineering courses will also be completed in physics, mathematics, and chemistry. The remaining engineering courses can be completed at Clemson University in two years and one summer session. The student in this program will receive two B.S. degrees: an engineering degree from Clemson University and a compatible B.S. degree from Coastal Carolina University. This program requires careful course selection made in consultation with the pre-engineering advisor. Degree options include:
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Coastal Carolina University Major | Clemson University Engineering Major
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Biology | Biosystems Engineering, (Biotechnology Emphasis Area)
Chemistry | Chemical Engineering
Computer Science or Mathematics/Statistics | Ceramic and Material Engineering
Civil Engineering
Computer Engineering
Electrical Engineering
Industrial Engineering
Mechanical Engineering

Students who are interested in the Engineering Dual Degree Program should contact Dr. Varavut Limpasuvan in the Department of Chemistry and Physics at 349-2826 or var@coastal.edu.

Pre-Law Academic Advisor
Coastal Carolina University provides comprehensive pre-law advisement and information concerning law schools to any student interested in pursuing a graduate education in law. Although there is no prescribed pre-law degree at Coastal Carolina, many students are preparing to meet the entrance requirements to law school through other majors. (The Pre-Law Handbook, published by the Association of American Law Schools and the Law School Admission Council, states that there is no recommended major.) Students may choose majors from the humanities, social sciences, mathematics or natural sciences, business administration, or any other field which might satisfy a particular career or personal goal in case they are not accepted to law school. In choosing a major, students should consider that law schools admit new students mainly by combining the undergraduate grade point average and the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) score. Students who are interested in entering law school upon graduation from Coastal Carolina University should contact Jack Riley in the Department of Politics and Geography at 349-2625 or riley@coastal.edu.

Pre-Veterinary Program Academic Advisor
Coastal Carolina University offers a Pre-Veterinary Science Program with a strong background in biology, chemistry, math, physics, and statistics. It is strongly recommended that undergraduate students also work with a veterinarian as an intern or as a part-time employee. Students who are interested in the Pre-Veterinary Program should contact Robert Young in the Department of Marine Science at 349-2277 or ryoung@coastal.edu.

Helping the Undecided Student Decide

There are many factors that might influence students when it comes to choosing a major. At times, students choose majors based upon what they have heard is practical or what their parents have told them to do. Unfortunately, this may not take into account their own personal interests, goals or values. Academic advisors serve as guides for students as they begin to develop a life
purpose. Developing a life purpose requires that students clarify what is really important to them in their personal lives and how their personal lives relate to their vocational decisions. Part of advising involves assisting students to build skills they can use in one or more careers. Successful advisors point students in directions that will help them succeed and develop the ability to make informed decisions. Students who are still undecided as to an academic major should make an appointment with the Office of Career Services. Career counselors are available to meet with students to discuss their interests and potential careers. A variety of different personality and interest inventories are available to students to assist students to help them with career guidance. Academic advisors for undeclared students should also encourage their students to explore their career interests through careful class selection and co-curricular involvement.