

Competencies & Academic Advising

Name it: In working with an advisee, advisors should challenge the student to think about their course selection, major discernment, and career path within the context of their own interests, talents, and aspirations. This should be done while asking the student to reflect on their past that led them to college and the experiences that have formed their current mindset. Additionally, advisors should ask students to reflect on each course, assignment, project, and milestone towards their degree in terms of their learning and their progress towards their goals. Each semester should provide insight into the student's career path, development of professional behavior, effective interpersonal skills, along with their critical thinking and problem solving practice.

Asking students, “What did you learn from that experience”, or “how might you approach that same problem the next time it comes up” will allow the student to grow in their competencies.

Students can easily move through their semesters in college with an external locus of control and limit the growth that should be resulting from their course and co-curricular experiences. In order to allow growth for each semester, some students will benefit from being challenged to reflect and to articulate the outcomes of their approaches to classes and personal/professional commitments. That pressure to articulate what they should be learning can solidify the process of learning and empower the student to learn to grow.

Focus on integrative learning: Students will have social, academic, and professional opportunities to improve their competence across many domains. When a student is able to make connections between their efforts in and out of the classroom, they are more likely to value the effort they make. Class participation, papers, presentation, student organization events, and volunteering opportunities (etc.) will be enhanced by a student's growth mindset towards these tasks.

Effective reflection is critical: The campus environment and the activities in which the students participate should foster growth. Advising can provide an additional nudge in the growth process by asking students to examine their effort and their goals and reflect on their learning related to transferrable skills and competencies.