Best Advisement Practice of the Month

As a new addition to The Navigator, the Title III staff will be sharing a monthly best advisement practice. This month’s best advisement practice is...

An advisor should help students articulate goals and processes for monitoring progress. (King, 2005; Reynolds, 2010)

Frontline Staff Training

On June 29 the Title III staff provided Friendly, Accurate, Supportive, and Timely (FAST) Track training for student support staff who serve students on the frontlines of enrollment and registration. The training focused on best advisement practices, analyzing student flow during registration, and discussing roles and responsibilities of various departments.

Coordinator of Alumni Services Candace Harper said, “The training session opens your eyes to issues that students are feeling frustrated with and allows us to see firsthand how we can solve those issues to better suit the needs of our students.”

Title III Learning Specialist Leslie Butler explained the importance of training frontline staff on best advisement practices by stating that “student advisement isn’t just about registering students for classes but involves an entire process of helping students to navigate through their college experience at PRCC. Since all staff come in contact with students, they are providing advice regarding the process of being a college student.”

“It is imperative that I know how to respond to each student’s unique situation with individual attention and follow through with the proper procedures related to their circumstances,” explained Gloria Wasmund, Distance Learning Assistant. “Every student is different, and I must listen carefully and attentively in order to know exactly what he or she needs.”

To assist student services staff in developing a cross-understanding of all departments on campus, the Title III department has begun creating a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that will be available online for all PRCC employees to utilize as a reference tool when answering students’ questions.

Harper said, “I believe that it is important for all staff to be knowledgeable about the overall operations of PRCC in order to fulfill our mission statement that we promise to our students. Our mission is to provide quality education and service opportunities for all who seek them. Knowing all the aspects of the college is important to serve our students the best we can. I feel there is no better way to fulfill the need of our students then by being able to offer them a solution to their problem, and with the FAQ we will be able to do this by the click of a mouse.”

Faculty/Professional Staff Training

In addition to frontline staff training, Title III staff have also developed and provided training in best advisement.
Did you know:
The newly designed student success course will be piloted Fall 2010. It will include topics such as time management, personal finance, and career exploration. For more information about the course contact Leslie Butler at x1427 or lbutler@prcc.edu.

Next on the Agenda:
• Training for Faculty and Staff Focus Groups in Best Advisement Practices Continues
• Poplarville Student Success Center Open House on August 12, come and go throughout the day, 2nd floor of Crosby Hall
• Peer Mentor Selection for Student Success Course that will begin August 16

practices to a faculty and professional staff focus group. The emphasis for Session 1, held on July 8 and 13, was developing an understanding of current research theories and trends of best advisement practices. The focus group participants were urged to become Advising Superheroes. Their training consisted of discussing the characteristics of PRCC students and studying the best advisement practices based on research and the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) in Higher Education. They also created a model advising superhero as an activity to identify the most significant traits of academic advisors.

John Gibson, Instructor of Construction Management Technology, said, “I always felt I was alone in this, but being a part of the training has made me feel like everybody is on the same page. We all want to learn more about advising students.” Gibson continued by stating that “advising is more than just placing students in classes.” He said that when advisors and students begin discussing the students’ career goals and future plans, it causes the students to view their advisors as real people who they can connect with and go to for guidance.

Session 2 of advising training for faculty and professional staff occurred on July 22 and 27. This session included analyzing various advising models and developing an academic advising syllabus.

Patricia Cone, Instructor of Speech, said, “I really like the advisement syllabus concept. I believe this will provide a clear focus for students and faculty alike by clearly outlining responsibilities for all involved and by initiating an easily understood step-by-step process for advisement.” Additionally, Cone said that the advising syllabus serves as “the foundation for gathering and maintaining individual student information” and “encourages institution-wide consistency in the faculty-student advisement relationship.”

Gibson pointed out, “We expect students to have a syllabus and be prepared for class. In the same way, advisors need to have the advising syllabus and know what the college expects of them. It will make everybody who is open to it better advisors.”

“We have a phenomenal group of faculty who are attending the advisement training,” Butler said. “They are motivated and sincerely interested in helping students succeed. I want to tap into that enthusiasm and help the faculty learn tactics and tricks to make their advisement time with students meaningful.”

The faculty and professional staff focus group will be participating in two additional training sessions throughout the next several months. Future topics include legal issues in advising, PRCC policies and procedures, and use of technology tools in advising.