

Loyola College

Core Advising—Class of 2010

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This report prepared by The Office of Institutional Research using data collected in the Core Advising Survey—Class of 2010.

Core Advising—Class of 2010

Introduction

First-year students are assigned an academic Core advisor upon matriculation. For students engaged in a first-year program, including Alpha, Collegium, FE100, and Honors, their advisor is their first-year program faculty instructor. Students not engaging in a first-year program are assigned one of the other faculty members eligible to serve as Core advisors. The Core advisor is responsible for assisting their advisees in adjusting to college life, educating advisees about Loyola's liberal arts "Core" curriculum, advising students on course selection during their initial years, and providing guidance to students during the major selection process. By the end of the third semester, students must declare a major; at that time, students are reassigned to an advisor in their major department. As part of this process, students are asked to complete the Core Advising Survey to evaluate the efficacy of this advising process.

This reports synthesizes the survey results in regards to the frequency with which students met with their advisors, the quality of the Core advising experience, students' active engagement and preparedness in the advising process, and the frequency, nature, and quality of interaction with the Center for Academic Services and Support. Responses are stratified by first-year academic program to understand differences in the Core advising experience among first-year program participants and non-participants.

Methodology

The 2007–2008 Core Advising Survey was completed by 753 of the 963 students (78%) in the class of 2010. Based on these data, the sampling error for proportions is $\pm 2\%$. The 43-item survey contained yes/no, Likert-scale, and open-ended items. Students were asked how frequently they met with their advisor, the quality of the Core advising experience, students' active engagement and preparedness in the advising process, and the frequency, nature and quality of interaction with the Center for Academic Services and Support.

Significant changes were made to the survey between administrations with the class of 2009 and the class of 2010. While the content of the questions remained similar to prior years, the ordering and wording of items and the response sets were changed so that more meaningful results could be gleaned from the data. Therefore, in many instances, direct comparisons between this class and prior classes are not possible.

When analyzing these data by first-year program participation and non-participation, comparison of proportion tests were used to assess significant differences between groups based upon either the top two categories in a response set or the percentage responding yes. Unless otherwise noted, all group differences described in this report are statistically significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Executive Summary

- ◆ Almost all students had at least one meeting with their Core advisor once a semester and over nine out of ten students indicated that their Core advisor initiated at least one meeting with them each semester.
- ◆ At least seven out of ten students noted that their Core advisor was *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the core curriculum and helpful in answering questions about schedule planning. About half of the respondents felt Core advisors were *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the curriculum of their intended major.
- ◆ Just over half of the students indicated that their Core advisor used Degree Audit or departmental worksheets to help plan their curriculum.
- ◆ At least eight out of ten students planned their course schedule and were ready to discuss their curricular needs at advising sessions.
- ◆ At least nine out of ten students indicated that their advisor was available for consultation, treated them in a respectful manner, and made an effort to become familiar with their individual needs.
- ◆ Students engaged in a first-year academic program tended to have somewhat different advising experiences.
 - ◆ Alpha, Collegium, and FE100 students were more likely than General students to have met at least three times a semester with their advisor. Additionally, Alpha students were more likely than FE100 and Honors students to have met at least three times a semester with their Core advisor.
 - ◆ Alpha students were more likely than all other first-year students to have their advisor initiate at least three meetings a semester.
 - ◆ Alpha students were more likely than Collegium, FE100, and General students to perceive that their Core advisor made an effort to become more familiar with their individual needs.
 - ◆ Regarding Core advisors' knowledge and helpfulness:
 - ◆ Honors students more likely expressed that their advisor was *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the Core curriculum compared to Collegium, FE100 and General students.
 - ◆ Alpha and General students more often indicated that their Core advisors were *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the curriculum of their intended majors compared to all other first-year program participants.
 - ◆ Both Alpha and Honors students were more likely than FE100 students to say that their Core advisor was *extremely* or *very* helpful in answering questions about schedule planning.
 - ◆ Compared to their first-year peers, Honors students were more actively engaged in the advising process by seeking help from faculty, staff, and other College resources.
- ◆ The Center for Academic Services and Support continues to provide excellent service to students who seek them out. At least eight out of ten students noted how competent the front office staff and administrators were with their high-level of knowledge about the Core and major requirements.

Detailed Findings

Core Advisors

Meetings

With the exception of a handful of students (0.3%), the vast majority were in contact with their Core advisor (i.e. face-to-face, phone conversation, e-mail communication, etc.) at least once a semester (see Figure 1). Twenty-eight percent of students reported being in contact with their advisor more than four times a semester. This is the highest percentage and number of students doing so since recording these data for the class of 2003 (see Appendix A). Only 5% of students indicated that their Core advisor never initiated a meeting with them. This is the lowest percentage and number of students since the class of 2003. See Figure 2 and Appendix A.

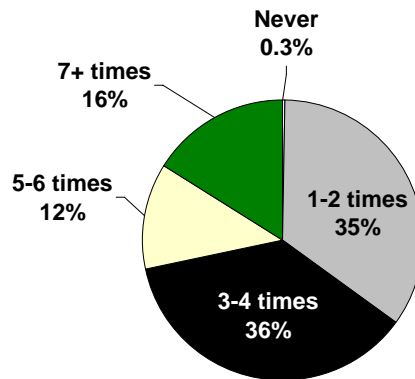


Figure 1. Number of times students reported being in contact with their Core advisor each semester

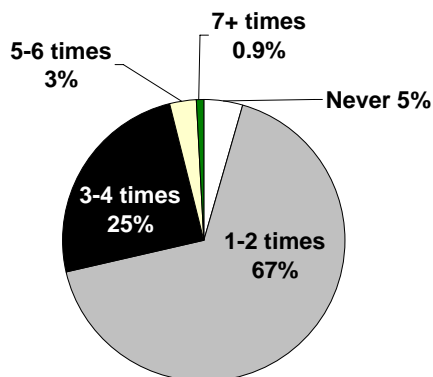


Figure 2. Number of times students reported their Core advisor initiated a meeting

Curriculum/Scheduling

Students were asked to evaluate the extent to which their Core advisor was knowledgeable about the curriculum and was helpful in answering questions about schedule planning using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all* to *extremely*.

Seventy-six percent of students noted that their Core advisor was *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the core curriculum with another one-fifth of students noting that their advisor was *somewhat* knowledgeable. Students were more likely to express that that Core advisors were less knowledgeable about the curriculum of their intended major. One-third of students perceived their advisor to be *somewhat* knowledgeable of their intended major, with another 20% indicating that their advisor had little to no knowledge. Still, the majority of students indicated that their advisor was *extremely* or *very* helpful in answering questions about schedule planning (70%). See Figure 3.

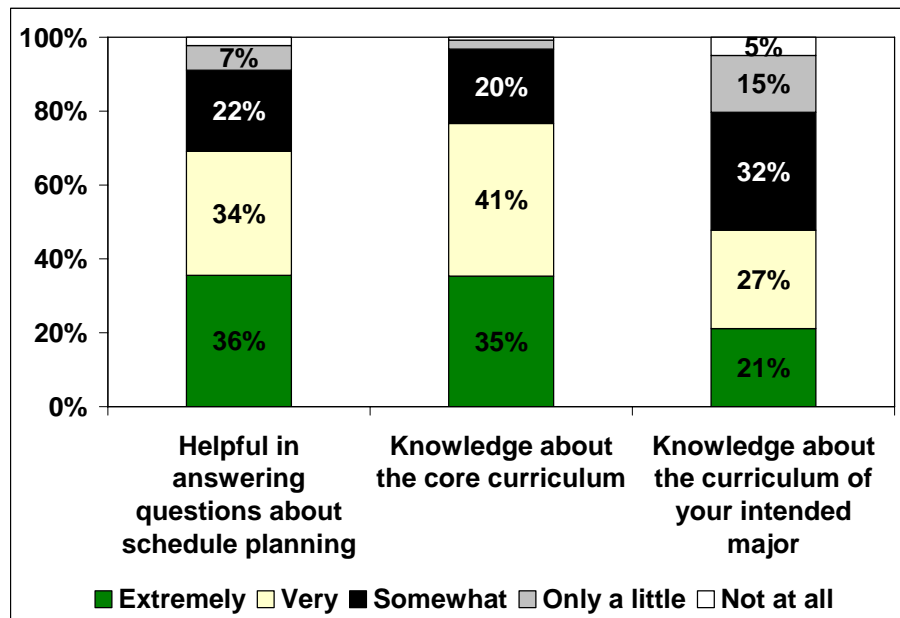


Figure 3. Extent of Core advisors' knowledge and helpfulness

Students were asked to indicate with a *yes* or *no* response whether or not the student engaged in particular help-seeking behaviors (i.e. consulted other College resources) or whether or not the advisor used available tools (i.e. departmental worksheets or Degree audit) to plan students' curriculum.

While 74% of respondents indicated that their Core advisor provided them with information and recommended resources to assist them in the declaration of major process, students were less likely to consult with individuals (faculty, department chairs) and offices beyond their Core advisor (67%). Of the available tools used to plan one's curriculum, 59% used a departmental worksheet and 54% of students indicated that their Core advisor used Degree Audit. See Table 1 on the next page.

Table 1. Percent Responding "Yes" to Curriculum Planning Questions for the Class of 2010

	% Yes
<i>My core advisor provided me with information and recommended resources to help me in the declaration of major process.</i>	74%
<i>Student consulted with other professors, department chairs, or members of the other College offices for additional assistance.</i>	67%
<i>My core advisor used a departmental worksheet to help me plan my curriculum.</i>	59%
<i>My core advisor used Degree Audit to help me plan my curriculum.</i>	54%

Interaction

Students were asked to indicate with a *yes* or *no* response whether or not they had positive interactions with their Core advisors. Most students noted that their advisor was available for consultation (98%), treated them in a respectful manner (99%), and made an effort to become familiar with their individual needs (89%). See Table 2.

Seventy-two percent of students indicated that their advisor never gave electronic permission or signed a form without discussing the impact on their academic record (28% said an advisor had done so). The percentage of students saying their advisor had provided permission without discussing implications for their academic record is much higher than in past survey years (4–10%). It is possible that the increase in advisors giving permission is due not to a change on the part of the advisors but a clarification in the wording of the question that added “electronic permission” in addition to “signed a form.”

Table 2. Percent Indicating Positive Interactions with Core Advisors

	% Yes
<i>My core advisor treated me in a respectful manner.</i>	99%
<i>My core advisor was available for consultation.</i>	98%
<i>My core advisor made an effort to become familiar with my individual needs.</i>	89%
<i>My core advisor never gave electronic permission or signed a form (registration or other) without discussing the impact on my academic record.</i>	72%

Personal Responsibility

Students were asked to self-assess how frequently they were actively engaged in the advising process and how prepared they were for their advising sessions using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *never* to *always*.

Using the top two categories of *always* and *frequently*, 85% of students planned their course schedules before attending their core advising sessions and were prepared to discuss their curricular needs at those sessions. Students often used the College catalogue to learn about the core, major, and minor requirements (81%) but used Degree Audit to a lesser extent (54%). See Figure 4.

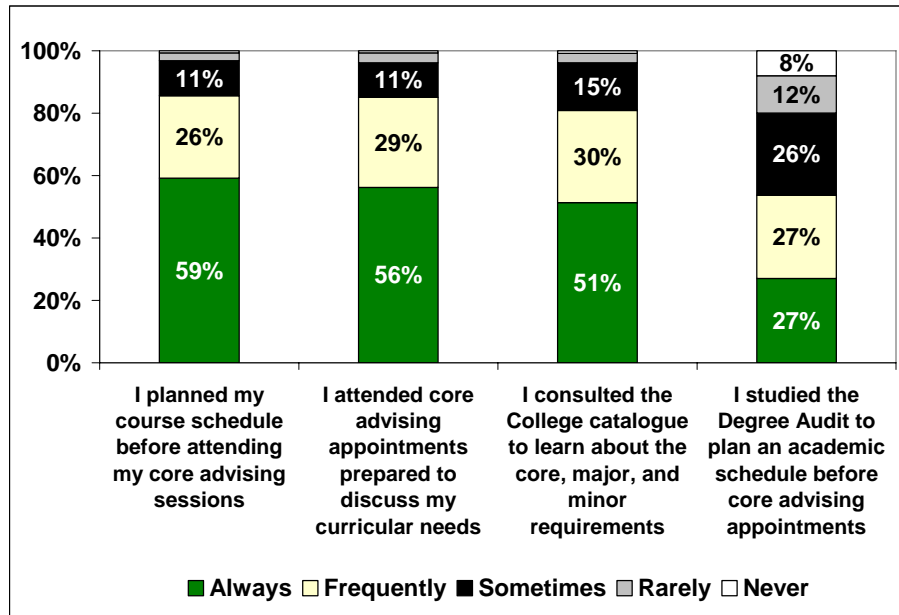


Figure 4. Frequency of student engagement and preparedness in the Core advising process

First-year Academic Program

Surveys were returned by 231 Alpha, 43 Collegium, 121 FE100, 49 Honors, and 303 non-first-year-program participants (referred to “general” in this report).¹ The sample is representative of the population of First-Year Program participants for the class of 2010. See Table 3, on the next page. Students who participate in one of the first-year programs have their program professor as their Core advisor. Comparisons between first-year program participants and non-participants were made to understand if the quality and nature of the Core advising experience differs among these groups of students. Superscripts are used to denote between group differences in the tables that follow: ^A significantly higher than Alpha; ^C significantly higher than Collegium; ^F significantly higher than FE100; ^H significantly higher than Honors; and ^G significantly higher than General.

¹ Six students did not identify if they engaged or did not engage in a first-year program. They were excluded from the analysis.

Table 3. Comparison of the Sample to the Population of First-year Program Participants for the Class of 2010

	Sample	Population
Alpha	31%	31%
Collegium	6%	7%
FE 100	16%	17%
Honors	7%	6%
General	41%	40%

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Meetings

Regarding the number of times students met with their Core advisors each semester, Alpha, Collegium, and FE100 students were more likely than General students to have had at least three meetings. Alpha participants were also more likely than FE100 and Honors students to have had at least three meetings a semester with their Core advisor. Additionally, Alpha students were more likely than all other first-year program participants and non-participants to indicate that their Core advisor initiated at least three meetings with them each semester. See Figures 5 and 6 (on the next page).

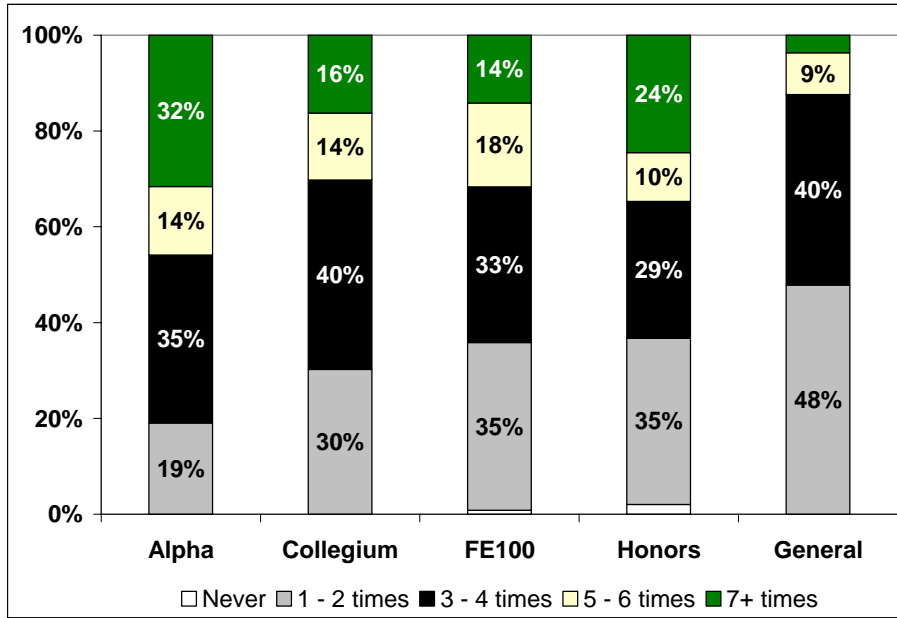


Figure 5. Number of times students reported being in contact with their Core advisor each semester by first-year program

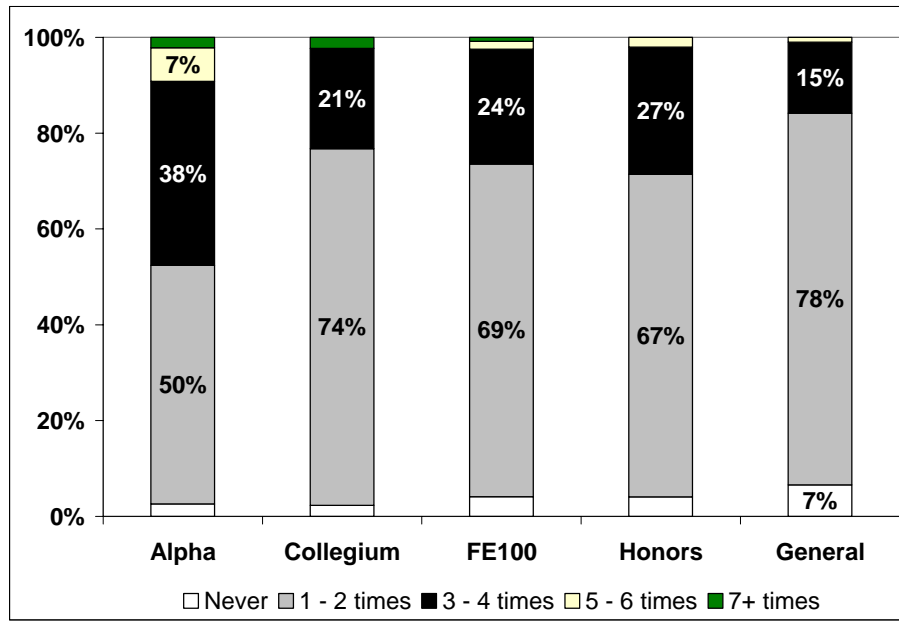


Figure 6. Number of items students reported their Core advisor initiated a meeting by first-year program

Curriculum/Scheduling

Group differences existed among first-year program participants and non-participants with regards to their perception of Core advisors' knowledge and helpfulness. Honors students more likely expressed that their advisor was *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the Core curriculum compared to Collegium, FE100 and General students. On the other hand, Alpha and General students more often indicated that their Core advisors were *extremely* or *very* knowledgeable about the curriculum of their intended majors compared to all other first-year program participants. Both Alpha and Honors students were more likely than FE100 students to say that their Core advisor was *extremely* or *very* helpful in answering questions about schedule planning. See Table 4 on the next page.

Table 4. Extent of Core Advisors' Knowledge and Helpfulness by First-year Program

	% Extremely or Very
<i>How knowledgeable was your core advisor about the core curriculum?</i>	
Alpha	80%
Collegium	67%
FE100	72%
Honors	88% ^{C,F,G}
General	76%
<i>How knowledgeable was your core advisor about the curriculum of your intended major?</i>	
Alpha	51% ^{C,F,H}
Collegium	33%
FE100	33%
Honors	29%
General	56% ^{C,F,H}
<i>How helpful was the core advisor in answering questions about schedule planning?</i>	
Alpha	74% ^F
Collegium	67%
FE100	60%
Honors	80% ^F
General	68%

Honors students were less likely to report that their advisors made frequent use of Degree Audit and departmental worksheets to help plan their curriculum compared to all other students. Instead, Honors students more frequently engaged with faculty or members of College offices for additional assistance with curriculum planning compared to Alpha and FE100 students. Compared to Collegium, FE100, and General students, Alpha students more frequently indicated that their Core advisor provided them with information and recommended resources to assist them in the major declaration process. General students were more likely than Collegium and FE100 students to indicate this as well. See Table 5 on the next page.

Table 5. Percent Responding "Yes" to Curriculum Planning Questions for the Class of 2010 by First-year Program

	% Yes
<i>Student consulted with other professors, department chairs, or members of other College offices for additional assistance.</i>	
Alpha	66%
Collegium	79% ^G
FE 100	69%
Honors	86% ^{A, F, G}
General	62%
<i>My core advisor provided me with information and recommended resources to help me in the declaration of major process.</i>	
Alpha	81% ^{C, F, G}
Collegium	61%
FE 100	66%
Honors	65%
General	76% ^{C, F}
<i>My core advisor used Degree Audit to help me plan my curriculum.</i>	
Alpha	54% ^H
Collegium	45%
FE 100	60% ^H
Honors	26%
General	58% ^H
<i>My core advisor used a departmental worksheet to help me plan my curriculum.</i>	
Alpha	60% ^H
Collegium	54% ^H
FE 100	55% ^H
Honors	17%
General	67% ^{F, H}

Interaction

No significant group differences were found with regards to students feeling that they had access to their Core advisors and were treated respectfully when meeting with them. Of note, Alpha students were more likely than Collegium, FE100, and General students to affirm that their Core advisor made an effort to become more familiar with their individual needs. See Table 6 on the next page.

Table 6. Percent Indicating Positive Interactions with Core Advisors by First-year Program

	% Yes
<i>My core advisor was available for consultation.</i>	
Alpha	99% ^F
Collegium	100% ^{F, G}
FE 100	94%
Honors	100% ^{F, G}
General	97%
<i>My core advisor treated me in a respectful manner.</i>	
Alpha	100% ^G
Collegium	100% ^G
FE 100	98%
Honors	100% ^G
General	99%
<i>My core advisor made an effort to become familiar with my individual needs.</i>	
Alpha	94% ^{C, F, G}
Collegium	81%
FE 100	84%
Honors	92%
General	86%
<i>My core advisor never gave electronic permission or signed a form (registration or other) with out discussing the impact on my academic record.</i>	
Alpha	69%
Collegium	84% ^A
FE 100	73%
Honors	67%
General	72%

Personal Responsibility

Above results suggested that Honors students were more self-reliant than their peers in the advising process. Along a similar vein, Honors students more frequently consulted the College catalogue to learn about their core, major, and minor requirements and were more often prepared to discuss their curricular needs at appointments compared to Alpha, FE100, and General students. Notably, Collegium students also more often indicated using the College catalogue to understand requirements compared to Alpha, FE100, and General students. See Table 7 on the next page.

Table 7. Frequency of Student Engagement and Preparedness in the Core Advising Process by First-year Program

	% Always or Frequently
<i>I planned my course schedule before attending my core advising sessions.</i>	
Alpha	85%
Collegium	86%
FE100	82%
Honors	92%
General	86%
<i>I came to my core advising appointments prepared to discuss my curricular needs.</i>	
Alpha	84%
Collegium	84%
FE100	84%
Honors	94% ^{A,F,G}
General	86%
<i>I consulted the College catalogue to learn about my core, major, and minor requirements.</i>	
Alpha	78%
Collegium	95% ^{A,F,G}
FE100	79%
Honors	92% ^{A,F,G}
General	81%
<i>I studied my Degree Audit to plan my academic schedule before coming to my core advising appointments.</i>	
Alpha	51%
Collegium	63%
FE100	54%
Honors	57%
General	54%

Center for Academic Services and Support

Over the past several years, the percentage of students visiting the Center for Academic Services and Support (C.A.S.S.) has steadily increased. While lower than last year (63%), 58% of students from the class of 2010 had visited C.A.S.S. since matriculating to Loyola College. This percentage is one of the highest since keeping record of these data for the class of 2003. Overwhelming, students remarked that the front office staff was *extremely* or *very*: helpful (84%), polite and respectful (90%), and responsive and available for consultation (87%).

Of the students who visited C.A.S.S. (n = 399), 117 students (29%) had at least one individual meeting with an Academic Services administrator. As with the front office staff, students affirmed that the Academic Service administrators were available for consultation when needed (97%), treated students with respect (98%), and made an effort to learn about their individual needs (89%). Students scheduling individual meetings with C.A.S.S. administrators indicated that administrators were *extremely* or *very*: knowledgeable about the core curriculum (93%), knowledgeable about the curriculum of their intended major (83%), and helpful in answering questions about schedule planning (88%). About three-fourths of students who met with an Academic

Services administrator noted that Degree Audit was used in a way that was helpful in reviewing their curriculum.

Summary

For the Class of 2010, significant changes were made to the Core Advising Survey to provide more meaningful results to the campus community. While similar themes from prior years emerged, new findings surfaced as well.

Virtually all students had at least one Core advising appointment each semester prior to declaring a major and selecting a departmental advisor. Similarly, Core advisors made frequent contacts with their advisees throughout their early years as is custom.

Students gave higher marks on Core advisors' generalized knowledge than they did their advisor's knowledge of various majors. This is reasonable since Core advisors are responsible for integrating students into the College's academic culture by educating them about the Core liberal arts curriculum and connecting students to faculty, staff, and resources so that they can select a major and become more self-reliant in curriculum planning. While students acknowledged their advisors as being accessible, attentive and very helpful, students' responses highlight an opportunity for them and their advisors to use tools such as Degree Audit and departmental worksheets to help students plan their curriculum in the formative years.

The Core advising experience differed by first-year academic program participants. Compared to other first-year students, Alpha students tended to have more interaction with their Core advisors and, perceive that their advisor made an effort to understand their individual needs more so than their first-year peers. Honors students were more actively engaged than others were in the advising process by consulting with faculty other than their advisor, staff, and additional resources.

The Center for Academic Services and Support continues to provide excellent service to students who seek them out. Students noted how competent the front office staff and administrators were with their high-level of knowledge about the Core and major requirements. Students also noted that administrators' use of the Degree Audit was helpful in reviewing their curriculum.

Appendix A Survey Trends: Core Advisors

Core Advising Item	Class of 2003		Class of 2004		Class of 2005		Class of 2006		Class of 2007		Class of 2008		Class of 2009		Class of 2010	
	AY 2000-01		AY 2001-02		AY 2002-03		AY 2003-04		AY 2004-05		AY 2005-06		AY 2006-07		AY 2007-08	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
<i>Classes of 2008-2010: How many times each semester were you in contact with your core advisor (i.e., face-to-face meetings, e-mail, phone conversations, etc.)?</i>																
<i>Classes of 2003-2007: How many times each semester did you speak to your advisor?</i>																
Never	3%	7	4%	12	1%	4	1%	7	1%	5	1%	5	1%	10	0%	2
One to four times	81%	215	86%	259	84%	317	88%	699	87%	690	83%	691	77%	588	71%	532
More than four times	16%	42	10%	30	15%	58	11%	90	13%	102	16%	134	22%	166	28%	212
Total	100%	264	100%	301	100%	379	100%	796	101%	797	100%	830	100%	764	100%	746

<i>How many times each semester did your core advisor initiate a meeting with you?</i>																
Never	31%	83	24%	72	14%	54	15%	122	13%	107	10%	81	8%	60	5%	34
One to four times	68%	179	75%	225	84%	318	83%	656	85%	679	89%	738	89%	673	92%	686
More than four times	1%	2	1%	3	2%	6	2%	16	2%	12	2%	13	3%	20	4%	29
Total	100%	264	100%	300	100%	378	100%	794	100%	798	100%	832	100%	753	100%	749

<i>2010: Did your core advisor ever give electronic permission or sign a form (registration or other) without discussing the impact on your academic record?</i>																
<i>2005 - 2009: Did your core advisor ever sign a form (registration or other) without discussing the impact on your academic record?</i>																
Yes					10%	35	9%	67	7%	54	4%	37	4%	32	29%	212
No					90%	320	91%	687	93%	736	96%	794	96%	708	72%	533
Total					100%	355	100%	754	100%	790	100%	831	100%	740	100%	745

<i>How many times have you visited Academic Services?</i>																
Never	68%	179	51%	150	44%	159	43%	338	45%	351	45%	372	37%	283	42%	285
One to six times	31%	81	46%	137	54%	194	56%	435	54%	424	53%	439	60%	456	55%	378
More than six times	1%	2	3%	10	2%	6	1%	7	1%	11	2%	19	2%	17	3%	21
Total	100%	262	100%	297	100%	359	100%	780	100%	786	100%	830	100%	756	100%	684

*Note 1: This question was used for the first time with the Class of 2005.

Note 2: Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Appendix B Survey Trends: Academic Services

Academic Services Item	Class of 2003		Class of 2004		Class of 2005		Class of 2006		Class of 2007		Class of 2008		Class of 2009		Class of 2010	
	AY 2000-01		AY 2001-02		AY 2002-03		AY 2003-04		AY 2004-05		AY 2005-06		AY 2006-07		AY 2007-08	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
<i>How many times have you visited Academic Services?</i>																
Never	68%	179	51%	150	44%	159	43%	338	45%	351	45%	372	37%	283	42%	285
One to six times	31%	81	46%	137	54%	194	56%	435	54%	424	53%	439	60%	456	55%	378
More than six times	1%	2	3%	10	2%	6	1%	7	1%	11	2%	19	2%	17	3%	21
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>262</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>297</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>359</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>780</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>786</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>830</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>756</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>684</i>

Note 1: Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Appendix C

Responses by First-year Academic Program

	Class of 2006 AY 2003-04	Class of 2007 AY 2004-05	Class of 2008 AY 2005-06	Class of 2009 AY 2006-07	Class of 2010 AY 2007-08
Core Advising Item					
<i>Classes of 2008-2010 How many times each semester were you in contact with your core advisor (i.e., face-to-face meetings, e-mail, phone conversations, etc.)?</i>					
<i>Classes of 2006-2007: How many times each semester did you speak to your advisor?</i>					
Three or more times a semester					
<i>Alpha</i>	57%	56%	66%	64%	81%
<i>Collegium</i>	50%	47%	54%	62%	70%
<i>FE 100</i>	20%	47%	51%	66%	64%
<i>Honors</i>	21%	34%	63%	83%	63%
<i>General</i>	27%	24%	42%	42%	52%
<i>How many times each semester did your core advisor initiate a meeting with you?</i>					
Never					
<i>Alpha</i>	10%	7%	9%	9%	3%
<i>Collegium</i>	12%	21%	10%	2%	2%
<i>FE 100</i>	28%	15%	12%	7%	4%
<i>Honors</i>	21%	9%	5%	4%	4%
<i>General</i>	17%	18%	10%	9%	7%
Three or more times a semester					
<i>Alpha</i>	21%	24%	23%	29%	48%
<i>Collegium</i>	14%	16%	14%	23%	23%
<i>FE 100</i>	2%	14%	17%	26%	27%
<i>Honors</i>	10%	2%	15%	24%	29%
<i>General</i>	8%	8%	11%	15%	16%

Note 1: Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.