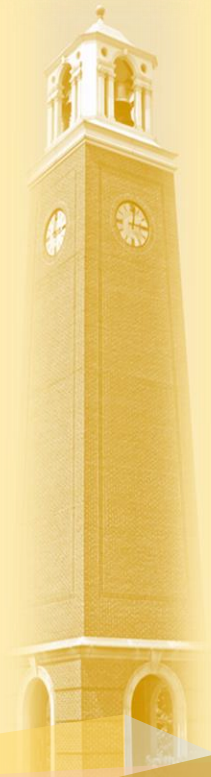# Perceptions of Academic Advising at Birmingham-Southern College

Vanderbilt University Capstone Project 2017

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Executive Summary

Birmingham-Southern College, a small, private, liberal arts institution in Birmingham, Alabama, asked for an evaluation of their academic advising program. Anecdotal evidence, as well as the findings from a Vanderbilt Capstone Project from 2015-16, suggests that the academic advising services at the college may not be evenly delivered and are sometimes ineffective in targeting and supporting students. Birmingham-Southern College (BSC) believes that academic advising not only plays a central role in retaining students, but also assisting them in identifying and pursuing their passions. BSC views a successful academic advising program as central to student success and has sought in recent years to improve its advising services. Using a mixed methods approach, a team of doctoral students from Vanderbilt University created a study to answer the following three questions: 1) To what extent does the current advising program meet the personal and academic needs of BSC students? 2) Are there any identifiable groups of students whose needs are not being met from the current academic advising program? 3) To what extent do faculty and administration perceive resources are being effectively utilized to deliver academic advising services to students?

Guided by standards and concepts set forth by the Council for Academic Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), both quantitative and qualitative data analyses are used to explore the study questions. The quantitative analysis was used exclusively to answer the first and second study questions. The entire enrolled student population for the fall 2016 semester received an invitation to complete a survey following the completion of the fall 2016 registration period. This sampling method reflected a purposive non-probability convenience sample with volunteer subjects. More than 10% of the population completed the survey. In addition to the responses provided, the survey was supplemented by additional information provided in the population file for demographic analysis. Overall, the respondents indicated agreement/satisfaction with the academic advising program. Additional analysis was done to identify the perceptions or satisfaction of different subsets of students, including athletes, minorities, low socioeconomic status students, as well as those of particular majors. Not surprisingly, athletes and the hard science majors reported higher satisfaction with the different components of the academic advising as compared to their comparison groups (non-athletes and all other majors respectively). Lastly, low socioeconomic students reported lower satisfaction scores in most of the academic advising components. There was only one statistically significant finding and more detailed information is found under the respective study questions section.

The qualitative analysis was used to exclusively answer the third study question and supplemented the quantitative analysis for the first and second study questions. Using different sampling techniques depending on the group, interviews were conducted with current students, faculty advisors, and key administrators. The qualitative analysis also included a review of materials related to the BSC curriculum and advising program. The third research question found that inequalities and deficiencies in resources have adverse effects on faculty advisors that might impact the outcome of advising for students.

Based on the findings of the three study questions, a comprehensive set of recommendations was developed. The recommendations include that BSC should:

Reconsider the leadership and staffing of the academic advising program,

Evaluate the advising program structure, including how the structure lends itself to the academic progress and personal guidance of students,

Create opportunities for extensive advisor training and training content,

Expand pre-professional advising services,

Intentionally include matters of diversity, equity, and access in the advising program,

Utilize technology such that it positively affects the delivery of advising, and

Regularly assess the advising program and faculty advisors.

Acknowledgments

The capstone team would like to thank the administration, faculty, and students of Birmingham-Southern College, who all displayed an inspiring commitment to their institution and its ideals. In particular, the team would like to thank Dr. Kent Anderson, Dr. Susan Hagen, Dr. Michelle Behr, Dr. David Eberhardt, and Kim Lewis, all of whom were dedicated partners in this project.

Thank you to Dr. John Braxton, our capstone advisor, who throughout his career has dedicated himself to the success of college students. We feel this commitment exemplified not only through his extensive scholarly activity, but also through the personal support he has extended to each member of the capstone team. We are deeply grateful for his assistance and guidance both in this project and throughout our time in the Ed.D. program. Each capstone team member would like to thank our families, friends, and support networks who assisted us in this journey.

Context and Problem

Birmingham-Southern College (BSC) is a small, private liberal arts college in Birmingham, Alabama. Founded in 1856 and regarded as the premier liberal arts college in the state, the College currently enrolls approximately 1300 undergraduate students, over 50% of who are from outside of Alabama. The College enjoys a student-faculty ratio of 13:1, and prides itself on its experiential learning opportunities for students, including service-learning, leadership, collaborative faculty-undergraduate research, and study abroad opportunities. The BSC academic calendar features a unique January term that provides opportunities for students to work collaboratively on a single project with faculty members and professionals for one month.

The College enrolls the most academically qualified student body in the state of Alabama and hosts a Phi Beta Kappa chapter. Significant portions of its graduates enroll in professional schools or graduate programs, and more than 95% of the faculty members hold terminal degrees in their fields. The College is one of forty institutions listed in Lauren Pope's Colleges that Change Lives, and until 2011, the College ranked in U.S. News and World Report's top 100 national liberal arts colleges. The College is a member of the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS), a consortium of sixteen liberal arts colleges that includes Rhodes, Sewanee, Davidson, and Furman. Central to the College's identity is a belief in individualized student attention: class sizes are small and each student is assigned a full-time faculty member as his or her academic advisor upon enrollment.

BSC believes that academic advising plays a central role in retaining students and assisting them in identifying and pursuing their passions. This belief aligns well with the prescription of academic advising developed by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), which states, "Academic advising synthesizes and contextualizes students' educational experiences within the frameworks of their aspirations, abilities, and lives to extend learning beyond campus boundaries and timeframes" (Concept of Academic Advising, 2006). According to the client, the college views a successful academic advising program as central to student success and has sought in recent years to improve its advising services. Anecdotal evidence, as well as the findings from a Vanderbilt Capstone Project from 2015-16, suggest that the academic advising services at BSC may not be evenly delivered and are sometimes ineffective in supporting and retaining students.

As the advising structure at BSC connects each student with their own faculty academic advisor, the College has instituted programs and initiatives to help faculty deliver quality advising. Those initiatives include better integration of academic advising with first-year orientation, the creation of a peer-advisor program to supplement the main academic advising structure, operationalizing an academic advising website, and training opportunities for faculty advisors. BSC administrators believe, however, that these initiatives and services are inconsistently utilized, which can negatively affect student learning and success.

BSC uses a faculty-only advising model. All tenure-track faculty are required to serve as academic advisors and begin doing so at the start of their second year at the institution. Nontenure-track faculty can opt to, but are not required to advise. Not all advisors take on first-year students, and the determination of whether or not someone will have first-year advisees is made during the spring semester. Each spring, the advising coordinator, currently Kim Lewis, sets a predetermined number of continuing advisees that each advisor must have. The predetermined number varies from year to year and is based upon how many advisors BSC anticipates needing due to the incoming class size and faculty sabbatical leaves. The coordinator then runs a list of all advisors with their current

number of advisees. After removing those students who are expected to graduate in May, if the number of continuing advisees is less than the predetermined number, an advisor should expect to be assigned first-year advisees. For the 2016-2017 academic year, the predetermined number was 13, meaning that if an advisor would have 13 or less continuing advisees post-graduation, they would be assigned 10-12 first-year students in the fall 2016 semester. In rare cases, some faculty are not assigned first-year advisees. This could occur for a variety of reasons, including because they work better with upper-class students. There are not an expected number of advisees that faculty advisors must maintain; as students are allowed to switch advisors at will, some faculty find themselves with significantly larger advising loads than others.

All faculty advisors at BSC are trained at least one time. Advisor training occurs annually, but is only required for first-time advisors and advisors of first-year students. New advisors participate in a two-day workshop. The first day is designed for them alone, and the second day joined by all advisors of first-year students. During the second day of the workshop, everyone receives their advising assignments and meets with the peer advisor and orientation leaders for their advising group. Peer advisors are upper class students chosen by the faculty advisor to provide assistance during Orientation and group advising meetings in the fall semester. Group advising meetings are only required of first-year students and happen throughout the first semester. The peer advisor plays a helpful role in that they often help first-year students learn how to navigate important online systems and provide perspective on students' schedules.

The advising coordinator makes all advising assignments based on the following criteria and in the following order: the advisor is teaching an Explorations in Scholarship (ES) first-year seminar and was on rotation to have new advisees; the advisor will be teaching first-year students; the advisor is faculty of special groups such as the Honors Program or students who have received the Fine and Performing Arts Scholarship; the advisor is in a field in which the student has expressed an academic interest; lastly, there is an even distribution, among faculty advisors for first-year students, of students who had not yet been assigned based on any of the aforementioned criteria.

This project team was tasked with assessing and evaluating the academic advising program at BSC. The college requested that the team explore the effectiveness, utilization, and delivery system of the current advising structure, as well as the campus's satisfaction with the academic advising program. Additionally, the team was tasked to investigate if and how academic advising should integrate with other campus services and programs, and examine what the college can do to ensure the continuous delivery of an effective advising program.

Based on the information provided by the institution, as well as research on academic advising, the capstone team developed the following three study questions:

I. To what extent does the current advising program meet the personal and academic needs of BSC students?
II. Are there any identifiable groups of students whose needs are not being met from the current academic advising program?
III. To what extent do faculty and administration perceive resources are being effectively utilized to deliver academic advising services to students?

Conceptual Framework

The project team seeks to ensure that BSC's system is consistent with the standards of the Council of Advancement of Standards (CAS) and utilizes the NACADA Concept of Advising, both of which are considered "pillars" of academic advising by NACADA. The framework is utilized in the selection and creation of survey instruments, and in guiding the discussion and recommendations for all three study questions.

The project team found it important that the conceptual framework draws from current literature and best practices in the field of academic advising. BSC has committed to a full faculty advising model, which as noted in the literature review (Appendix A) is the classic structure of academic advising and the most prominent on liberal arts campuses. Therefore, juxtaposing BSC's classic structure of advising with recent scholarship and best practices ensures that BSC's classic system meets the needs of today's student. As a supplement to the two frameworks, aforementioned scholarship on advising and retention will be utilized to help form recommendations for BSC moving forward. Together, these modern frameworks and best practices will combine to ensure BSC's system meets the needs of students and stakeholders.

CAS Professional Standards for Academic Advising

CAS (2014), a consortium of professional associations within higher education, "promotes the use of its professional standards for the development, assessment, improvement of quality student learning, programs and services." The standards can be utilized in a variety of settings and contexts. White suggests that "these standards often serve as the primary mechanism to attain acceptable standards of practice or to self-assess either for self-initiated improvement or to meet requirements for various accrediting agencies, be they discipline or regionally-based" (2006). As the standards are often used for accreditation, using this framework is time and resource effective for BSC to pursue as a framework.

The CAS Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising contain the following twelve standards:
- Mission, Program
- Organization and Leadership
- Human Resources
- Ethics
- Law, Policy and Government
- Diversity, Equity, and Access
- Institutional and External Relations
- Financial Resources
- Technology
- Facilities and Equipment
- Assessment and Evaluation

Each standard establishes the criteria that every institution of higher education is expected and able to reach with reasonable effort and diligence (White, 2006).

The standards list a litany of requirements for advising programs. Among them, programs should be intentionally designed, guided by theories of knowledge and learning and development, reflective of

the student population and universally accessible. Throughout the project, efforts will be made to delineate when BSC's program is within or outside of the Standards and Guidelines. The standard of *Assessment and Evaluation* was utilized when selecting and creating instruments that could answer all three study questions. The *Diversity, Equity, and Access* standard guided the selection of study question II as an essential question. The twelve standards guide the framing of the discussion and recommendations for all three study questions.

NACADA Concept of Academic Advising

The team also utilized the NACADA Concept of Academic Advising as guidance (NACADA, 2006). The concept delineates academic advising objectives differently among institutions based upon the particular mission, goals, curriculum, co-curriculum, and assessment methods established for the respective campus (White, 2000).

Seen as the preeminent professional association for advising, NACADA's vision is "to be the premier global association for the development and dissemination of innovative theory, research, and practice of academic advising in higher education" (2006). The mission of NACADA is to "promote student success by advancing the field of academic advising globally" (2006).

The Concept, as written, theorizes that "academic advising has three components: *curriculum* (what advising deals with), *pedagogy* (how advising does what it does), and *student learning outcomes* (the result of academic advising)" (NACADA, 2006). According to the Concept (2006), the advising *curriculum* includes, but is not limited to, "the institution's mission, culture and expectations; the meaning, value, and interrelationship of the institution's curriculum and co-curriculum; modes of thinking, learning, and decision-making; the selection of academic programs and courses; the development of life and career goals; campus/community resources, policies, and procedures; and the transferability of skills and knowledge" (NACADA, 2006). The *pedagogy* should incorporate "the preparation, facilitation, documentation, and assessment of advising interactions," and implores that such interactions between advisors and students are "characterized by mutual respect, trust, and ethical behavior" (NACADA, 2006). The *student learning outcomes* of academic advising should vary amongst institutions based on a variety of factors, but should always "be defined in an advising curriculum, articulate what students will demonstrate, know, value, and do as a result of participating in academic advising" (NACADA, 2006).

According to the Concept, a representative sample of learning outcomes for advising indicates that students will
- craft a coherent educational plan based on an assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values;
- use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals;
- assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements;
- articulate the meaning of higher education and the intent of the institution's curriculum;
- cultivate the intellectual habits that lead to a lifetime of learning; and
- behave as citizens who engage in the wider world around them (NACADA, 2006)

The concepts of curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes guided aspects of the assessment throughout the project. The Concept was utilized to create the variables to answer study

question I. In addition, the team selected aspects of existing survey instruments that largely addressed these concepts, then added questions to address aspects of the framework not covered. A representative sample of learning outcomes from the Concept is referenced in the discussion and recommendations of the project. Additional scholarship on academic advising is available in Appendix A will supplement the framework, particularly with regard to future recommendations.

Study Design

The design of this project is a mixed method parallel study that utilizes both quantitative and qualitative elements. A mixed method approach allows for an "inclusive, pluralistic and complementary" form of research that captures as much information on the student experience (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Burke and Onwuegbuzie define mixed methods research as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (2004). According to these authors, "the goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies" (2004, p.14).

The subjects of the quantitative study are currently enrolled students and the assessment focus is student expectations and needs within academic advising. This will be utilized to answer study questions I and II. The qualitative study focuses on a more broad set of stakeholders- students, faculty advisors, and key administrators with advising and decision-making functions in regards to the advising program. This supplements the quantitative findings to answer study questions I and II. Only the qualitative data is utilized to explore question III.

Quantitative Study Design and Methodology

Quantitative instrument development. To address the first two study questions, it was imperative to get feedback from students on their overall perceptions of the academic advising program, as well as their specific experience with academic progress, personal guidance and overall satisfaction of the academic advising program. As provided in the literature review and conceptual framework, there is little information available regarding assessment of an academic advising program. In reviewing the NACADA website for basic information on program assessment in the summer of 2016, there were several examples provided for ascertaining student satisfaction. Also, as indicated in the literature and background, it is important to gain more than just satisfaction when assessing an academic advising program. As such, the survey instrument used was created from three different existing instruments available through the NACADA website. The conceptual framework guided the selection of survey items from these three different existing instruments. The Academic Advising Inventory (Winston and Sandor, 2002), The Advising Evaluation Instrument (Tynon and Schrader, 2002), and Academic Advising Center Advising Questionnaire (Vick) all had different questions that were relevant to the student experience regarding program structure, personal guidance, academic progress, and general student satisfaction. When possible, the authors were contacted and permission was provided to use the survey instruments. The questions were generally grouped together from the different surveys to make coding and analysis easier following the collection of results. Appendix B is the survey instrument that was created and distributed based on the methods below to the current students at BSC as of October 2016.

Sampling. To gather data on the study questions, a sample of BSC undergraduate students

was surveyed in November of 2016. The sampling design for this study reflects a purposive non-probability convenience sample with volunteer subjects. All 1288 enrolled undergraduate students (as of October 2016) at the institution were invited to participate. The project team intentionally chose this student population based on access to the population. A member of the BSC administration was able to provide the project team with a file of all currently enrolled full-time students at the institution as of October 2016. This population of students was also chosen due to size and the likelihood of a sufficient sample size from survey respondents. Further, this population of students includes individuals with characteristics germane to this study, specifically currently enrolled undergraduate students, who reflect a variety of academic fields and background characteristics.

This population of students is also reflective of the past and future students at the institution. While it would have been helpful to understand the perspective of those students no longer enrolled at BSC, either through departure or graduation, the feasibility of tracking or capturing the responses from those individuals would be extremely difficult, especially given the time frame of the project.

The factors outlined above allow for generalizability of results from this study to be useful to future students at the same institution. In addition, the study of this population allows for the possibility of longer-term research on students at this institution. As previously indicated, the institution has not previously evaluated the academic advising program. Gathering baseline data and running initial analysis will provide the institution with baseline information regarding the current student perceptions of the academic advising program, areas that are currently meeting student needs, as well as potential areas of focus for the program and the institution.

The questionnaire, once drafted and approved by Vanderbilt's IRB Committee, was distributed via Qualtrics. None of the students were required to participate. Participation in the survey was encouraged through communication to students about the benefit of gathering the data to both students and the institution, with no additional incentives provided to the students. Three reminder emails were sent following the initial request to participate. All students were assured of confidentiality of information, with no names or personal identification information requested as part of the survey.

The survey was distributed following the close of the Fall 2016 registration period (for Spring 2017 classes) at BSC. As all students would have had to meet with their faculty advisor in order to register for the upcoming semester, this would allow for all students to reflect on their most recent interactions with their advisor, as well as how successfully they were able to register for spring 2017 classes. The reminders were scheduled to be distributed to those students that had not opened the initial invitation or started the survey throughout the next two weeks. The survey was kept open an extra week following the Thanksgiving holiday to allow any students that wanted to complete the survey to do so upon returning from the break prior to finals.

Of the 1288 students, 262 opened the link, 184 started the survey, with 158 completing the survey by the closing date prior to the start of the final exam period in December 2016. Based on the number of students who completed (n=158) the survey, the response rate was 12.2% of the student body. Responses from individuals that did not complete the survey were removed from the final data set.

Respondent personal demographics and academic background. Of the respondents that completed the survey, 67.72% were female, 29.75% were male and 2.53% indicated "Another identity". Additionally, 70.7% of the respondents identified as White, 15.8% were African-American and 5% identified as Asian. According to the statistics provided by the institution of currently enrolled students in the fall of 2016, the student body was 79.19% White, 11.65% African-American and 4.89% Asian. All other ethnicities, as indicated by the respondents, were included in Table 1. The respondents range almost equally across the first year of study (Freshman) to the fourth year or more (Senior) as shown in Table 2.

Table 1

Respondents' Ethnicity		
	Frequency	Percent
African American/Black	25	15.8
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	.6
Asian	8	5.1
Latino/Hispanic	4	2.5
White/Caucasian	112	70.9
Multiracial	2	1.3
Other	6	3.8
Total	158	100.0

Table 2

Respondents' Year in school		
	Frequency	Percent
Other	1	.6
Freshman	44	27.8
Sophomore	38	24.1
Junior	36	22.8
Senior	39	24.7
Total	158	100.0

The respondents represent over 27 different majors within the institution, with the top three majors represented being Biology (19.57%), Psychology (15.22%) and Business Administration (9.78%). Of the respondents, 94.57% of individuals are traditional undergraduate students and enrolled at BSC immediately after completing high school. Approximately 5% of respondents would be considered either non-traditional or transfer students. This small percentage of respondents did not start at BSC immediately following high school graduation.

Approximately 40% of the enrolled students are coded as athletes at the institution according to the population file received, with some playing multiple sports. Of the students that completed the survey, 34.18% are coded as athletes according to the information provided by the school. 47% of the students that completed the survey are considered Greek, while over half of the students (52%) enrolled at BSC in the fall semester were in a Greek letter organization. Additionally, over 50% of the students that responded to the survey indicated they are not currently employed and are not currently looking for work, while 36.81% of the students were working part-time while in school, and less than 2% were working full time. Lastly, of the respondents, 22% are Pell Grant recipients (35/158) according to the data provided by BSC. In comparison, according to the population file provided by the institution, approximately 19% of the students at the institution are Pell Grant recipients (240/1288).

Overall, the respondents are representative of the student body at BSC. The minority students are slightly overrepresented in the survey respondents, with the institution being 20% minority, and the survey respondents being closer to 30% minority. There were equal numbers of respondents across the different academic levels (first year to senior). However, the equal representation does not equate to their representation within the student body. According to the percentages enrolled, there was a slight overrepresentation of first-year students, and underrepresentation of seniors. The number of athletes represented is very approximate to the number of athletes reported by the school in their population file. The same can be said for Pell Grant recipients. The number of respondents affiliated with Greek organizations was slightly less than reported by the institution in the population file. However, based on the different categories that were being looked at for the study questions, as well as the different demographic questions included in the survey, the respondents were a good representative sample of the population.

Qualitative Study Design and Methodology

To address all three study questions, it was important to get the perspectives of those intimately involved with the academic advising program at BSC. Using in-depth qualitative interviewing, a technique described by Rubin and Rubin, which allows researchers to "explore in detail the experiences, motives, and opinions of others and learn to see the world from perspectives other than their own," (2012, p.3), the study team interviewed students, faculty advisors, and key administrators at the college. In total, three sets of interviews were conducted.

The interview protocols (Appendix C) for students, faculty advisors, and key administrators were similar to one another and modeled after the quantitative survey distributed to the student body. Similar questions and structure were used for each protocol in anticipation of identifying similar concepts and themes, as well as being able to report results from all three interview groups with relative consistency. Some questions specific to the qualitative instrument were used with permission from a focus group protocol authored by Dr. Joshua Smith, who at the time was an academic advisor at the University of Albany. The study team also developed questions based on earlier

informational meetings with students, advisors, and administrators at BSC. Questions in the interview protocol for students were divided into the categories: Academic Progress/Completion, Personal Advice/Guidance, Diversity/Inclusion, Overall Student Satisfaction, Demographic Information. Questions in the interview protocols for faculty advisors and key administrators were divided into the categories: Academic Progress/Completion, Personal Advice/Guidance, Diversity/Inclusion, Overall Advisor Satisfaction, and Demographic Information. The selection of each of these categories and the questions within were guided by components of the conceptual framework. Specifically, the study team examined the three components of the NACADA Concept (curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes) to ensure the categories and questions addressed, among other things: BSC's curriculum, student ways of learning, course selection, campus resources, relationships between advisor and advisee, and assessment of the advising program. The study team also examined the CAS standards to ensure the categories and questions of the qualitative instruments addressed diversity, access, and the organization of the advising program.

Interviews were conducted in rooms in the Norton Campus Center, which were reserved by staff at BSC. This location was ideal for participants, as it is well known and easily accessed. It was also convenient for the study team, providing one central location for all three interview groups and eliminating having to move about campus. Interviews were conducted during a three-day period, and each interviewer administered interviews on their own. Interviews were scheduled for 45 minutes, though some fell short of or exceeded the allocated time. Key administrators and faculty advisors were interviewed individually. It was intended to interview students in friendship pairs, although scheduling constraints did not always allow for that to happen; in many instances students were interviewed individually, and in two instances a trio of students was interviewed by one member of the research team. Students and faculty advisors were asked to select pseudonyms for the interviews and subsequent data analysis. Key administrators did not select pseudonyms, and the study team decided to only disclose the name of an administrator in the findings when such disclosure was relevant to their specific role. Before each interview, participants were given a verbal description of the project, its purpose, and the team conducting the study. This was a reminder of the information they had already received an email invitation to participate. Each participant agreed to an audio recording of the interview and signed an informed consent form before the interview began.

      Sampling. Student participants were selected using simple random sampling. While the literature suggested that advising yields strong retention rates for students who are undecided, change majors, or are first-generation college students, the study team opted for simple random sampling rather than targeting any of those specific groups for three primary reasons. First, BSC could only provide first-generation status information for students in the current first and second-year classes. Second, the team believed that undecided students would limit participants to those in the first and second-year classes, as the major declaration deadline at BSC is in the spring of the sophomore year. Finally, understanding that this study was not about retention, the study team determined that it was best for exploration of the study questions that the sample included all students rather than those that the literature suggested might not persist to graduation.

Information from student participants was intended to supplement results from the quantitative survey that had already been distributed. The Vice President for Student Development shared a list of all students who were enrolled at BSC in the fall 2016 semester (n=1288). The list was randomized and the first 100 names were invited to participate in interviews. The invitation was sent via email from the Vice President for Student Development because the study team believed

students would be more inclined to acknowledge an email from a person with a BSC email account and with a well-recognized name. After receiving a marginal response, the study team selected the next 100 students from the previously randomized list, and eventually, the next 150 students. In total, 350 students were randomly invited to interview. An email confirmation and subsequent reminder were sent to those students who signed up for an interview. To protect the anonymity of participants from the Vice President for Student Development and any other administrators at BSC, students were invited to sign up for interviews via an online scheduling system that was only accessible by the study team. In total, the project team interviewed nineteen students. To determine if the students interviewed by the project team properly represented the current student population at BSC, demographics were collected, including ethnicity, class year, and athletic status. These specific demographics were selected based on the three study questions. Of the nineteen students interviewed, 32% identified as Black or African-American, 11% as Asian or Asian-American, and 57% as White. The ethnicities of the participants were not representative of the population of BSC; based on the population file provided by the institution at the time of data collection, Black/African American students made up 12% of the student body, Asian/Asian American students made up 5%, and White students made up 79% of the BSC's student body. Further, no students who participated in interviews identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native, Hispanic, or Multiracial, although BSC did have students who identified in each of those categories. Of the 19 students interviewed, 47% identified as a student-athlete. This is a slight overrepresentation of the 44% of student-athletes at BSC during the time of data collection. Finally, the students who participated in interviews were not representative of BSC's student population in terms of class year. Of the 19 students, 21% were members of the first-year class, despite BSC's first-year class making up 33% of the total student population. 16% of students interviewed were sophomores, although sophomores made up 29% of students at BSC. 26% of students interviewed were juniors, which was a slightly higher representation of the 22% of juniors enrolled at BSC. The largest discrepancy in class year representation was with seniors. 37% of students interviewed for this project were seniors, although seniors comprised only 18% of BSC's student population.

Faculty advisors were selected using stratified random sampling. As has been included in previous sections, BSC uses an all faculty advising model, and as suggested in the literature review, to sustain such a model and encourage effective advising, faculty advisors may need resources and an advising structure that will make their efforts both successful and worthwhile. Faculty advisors were interviewed to gain insight into their perceptions of the advising program and process, as well as their understanding of the student experience with the advising program. The advising coordinator from BSC sent the study team a list of all faculty advisors (n=84) and their years of service as an advisor. After removing from the list those who were on sabbatical during the fall 2016 semester and any key administrators, those faculty advisors with an advising load for the 2016-2017 academic year (n= 75) made up the eligible population for this study. Upon recommendation from the advising coordinator and associate provost, the faculty advisors were divided into three groups based on their number of years advising: those with 1-11 years of service; those with 12-24 years of service; and, those with 25 or more years of service. Using stratified random sampling to ensure representation from each of the three groups, the study team sent an invitation to participate to thirty faculty advisors via email. Of the thirty who received invitations to participate, 44% had 1-11 years of service, 37% had 12-24 years of service and 19% had 25 or more years of service. In total, the project team interviewed ten faculty advisors. The faculty advisors who participated in interviews were somewhat representative of the eligible population: 50% had 1-11 years of service, 30% had 12-24 years of service, and 20% had 25 or more years of service.

There was no sampling method used for the key administrators. Considering their roles at BSC, the study team determined that it was important to interview the four administrators who requested this study, as well as the associate provost. The administrators were: Kent Andersen, Chair, Engaged Learning Programs & Director of the Hess Center for Leadership and Service; Michelle Behr, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; David Eberhardt, Vice President for Student Development; Susan Hagen, Associate Provost; Kim Lewis, Director of Academic Advising and Instructor of Spanish. Each of these individuals had a relevant stake in the three components (curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning outcomes) that make up the NACADA Concept, which is outlined in the conceptual framework. All five administrators accepted an invitation to interview. A follow-up conversation was held with the advising coordinator and other administrators to clarify the structure of the advising program and aspects of the BSC curriculum. During the course of completing this research project, Michelle Behr left BSC for a new professional opportunity and Susan Hagen was appointed interim provost.

Data Analysis: Coding. Each member of the research team participated in coding the interviews. To maintain integrity in the coding process, it was purposeful to not assign the researcher only the interviews they had conducted. This also allowed each researcher to broaden their understanding of the challenges and opportunities at the institution by listening to the different opinions and experiences provided throughout the interviews. The interviews were divided arbitrarily such that each person listened to a select number of the interviews of students, faculty advisors, and key administrators. For each interview, the researcher did an initial listen to familiarize themselves with the overall content. They then did a second listen, identifying concepts and themes that were unique to the interview, common among interviews, and/or related to the conceptual framework. This process in the second and, in some cases, third listen was used to code each interview.

Data Analysis: Matrices. Observations from each interview were organized using an online documentation tool. The tool, meant to mimic a matrix, was developed using ideas from the conceptual framework, and for each interview type a unique "matrix" was developed (Appendix D). For the student interviews, researchers recorded themes and evidence in one of three constructs: basic structure of the advising program; student needs; improvements and recommendations. For interviews with faculty advisors and key administrators, the researchers recorded themes and evidence in one of three constructs: basic structure of the advising program, student and advisor needs, improvements and recommendations.

The researchers listened carefully to each interview to determine in which construct they would place a theme and its related evidence. For the construct "basic structure of the program," the researchers listened specifically for strengths or weaknesses of the advising program identified by the participants. For the construct "student needs," the researchers listened specifically for information related to academic progress, personal guidance, and satisfaction. For the construct "student needs and advisor needs," the researchers listened specifically for information related to academic progress, personal guidance, student satisfaction, and advisor satisfaction. For the construct "improvements and recommendations," the researchers listened specifically for information related to best practices, things that were working well with the advising program, and things that were not working well with the advising program. Each matrix specified questions from the relevant protocol from which themes and evidence for each construct might derive, although the researchers listened attentively to responses to all questions.

After listening to and coding each interview, the matrices were reviewed for common themes in each interview type and between the three sets of interviews. For each interview type, major concepts were identified, with associated themes that were explicitly stated or implied by the participants. These concepts and themes guide the findings for study question III, and supplement the findings for study questions I and II and are available in Appendix E.

Study Question I Findings

Statement of Study Question I

To what extent does the current advising program meet the personal and academic needs of BSC students?

Aspect of Conceptual Framework Utilized for Study Question I

Utilizing the CAS Standards and NACADA Concept of Academic Advising as guidance for the design of this project, student needs are examined through the concepts of program structure, general satisfaction, academic progress, and personal guidance. In a subsequent section, the findings are presented for each of the concepts described below.

Program structure. In both the quantitative and qualitative studies, students are asked about their experiences with the structure of academic advising at BSC. This includes questions about the length and content of their meetings, and whether they had switched their advisors since initial assignment and why. The NACADA Concept of Academic Advising espouses that advising, "requires a pedagogy that incorporates the preparation, facilitation, documentation, and assessment of advising interactions" (2006). These questions help the study team and client get a basic sense of advising interactions.

General satisfaction. BSC had never assessed the academic advising program and requested this project to learn whether or not students feel their needs are being met. While previous scholarship and best practices indicate satisfaction cannot be the only aspect of advising, both the client and study team believe that it is still data worth gathering. The project assessment asks questions about the interactions between advisor and advisee. The Concept of Academic Advising states, "although the specific methods, strategies, and techniques may vary, the relationship between advisors and students is fundamental and is characterized by mutual respect, trust, and ethical behavior" (2006). By assessing general satisfaction, the study team hopes to illuminate the pedagogy used by BSC's advisors. Students are able to give voice to the nature of their relationship with their advisor through these questions, and faculty, similarly, can reflect on the nature of their relationship with advisees.

Academic progress. Crafting a coherent plan, setting goals, and assuming responsibility for meeting academic program requirements are among the representative sample of student learning outcomes for advising as listed in the NACADA Concept of Academic Advising (2006). Questions are asked of students as to how they feel advising prepares them to progress through the curriculum, and of faculty as to how they feel prepared to guide students through the curriculum. The Concept states that this curriculum, "includes, but is not limited to, the institution's mission, culture and expectations; the meaning, value, and interrelationship of the institution's curriculum and co-curriculum; modes of thinking, learning, and decision-making; the selection of academic programs

and courses; the development of life and career" (2006).

     Personal guidance. The survey tools ask a series of questions as to how advisors engage students outside of the curriculum. The conceptual framework clearly calls for advising to transcend simply the academic but delve deeply into developmental, career, and advising on matters of life. The CAS standards and guidelines for academic advising lists that in addition to contributing to students education and progress, programs must prepare students for their "careers, citizenship and lives" (2006). The NACADA Concept of Academic Advising lists "cultivating the intellectual habits that lead to a lifetime of learning and behaving as citizens who engage in the wider world around them" among a representative sample of learning outcomes (2006).

Aspects of Methods and Data Collection for Study Question I

Both the quantitative and qualitative studies of students, whose data collections methods are described previously in *Study Design and Methodology,* are utilized to answer study question I. Qualitative data from faculty and key administrators supplement or draw distinctions from the student viewpoint.

Variable Construction for Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings for Study Question I
In order to better assess the academic advising program, four new variables were computed through SPSS. These four variables – Academic Progress, Basic Structure, Personal Guidance, and General Satisfaction – were created based on the concept map (Appendix F) that identified which Likert scale survey questions related to which of the four major components of academic advising listed above. When creating the variables, the questions were tested for reliability.

The table below (3) includes the variable name, as well as the operationalization of the variable, including specific survey items used and the response scale used throughout study.

Table 3

Variable Name	Operational Definition
Minority	Minority student=1, White/Caucasian student =0. In the survey, students indicated race (Black/African American, Asian, Native American, Latino/Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, Caucasian, multiracial, other). Based on student response, those indicated Caucasian were coded 0, those indicating Black/African American, Asian, Native American, Latino/Hispanic, Native Hawaiian, and Multiracial were coded as 1. Those responding as "other" were treated as missing data points. Survey items on the *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey*
Hard Science	Hard Science = 1, all other majors = 0. Based on student responses to the survey instrument requesting department of study. All students

	that responded with biology, chemistry, or physics as their majors were coded as 1. All other majors were coded as 0. Survey item was on the *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey.*
Athlete	Athlete =1, not an athlete = 0. Students were coded by the university in the original population file.
Pell	Pell Grant eligible student = 1, not eligible =0. Pell Grant eligibility is determined by the Federal Government and processed by BSC. Students were coded by the institution in a follow up request to the population file.
Program/Basic Structure	Composite of three items measuring the student perception on the opportunities to interact with faculty advisors, how the advising program is structured and the opportunity to change advisors should they want or need to. To compute the new variable (Basic Structure), the values of the responses to each survey item were added together and then dividing by the total number of items. (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree 5). Cronbach's alpha =.585. Survey items from *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey*
Academic Progress	Composite of questions measuring the student perception regarding the academic advice on curriculum, scheduling and other academic progress by their assigned faculty advisor. To compute the new variable (Academic Progress), the values of the responses to each survey item were added together and then dividing by the total number of items.(strongly disagree = 5 to strongly agree 1). Cronbach's alpha =.90. Survey items from *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey*
Personal Guidance	Composite of five questions measuring the student perception regarding the personal guidance given to students by their assigned faculty advisor. To compute the new variable (Personal Guidance), the values of the responses to each survey item were added together and then dividing by the total number of items. (strongly disagree = 5 to strongly

	agree 1). Cronbach's alpha =.856. Survey items from *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey*
General Satisfaction	Composite of nine items measuring the general student satisfaction with the academic advising program. To compute the new variable (General Satisfaction), the values of the responses to each survey item were added together and then dividing by the total number of items. (strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree 5). Cronbach's alpha =.899. Survey items from *Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey*

Program structure/Basic structure. The basic program structure is probably the most simplistic variable due to the limited number of questions utilized in the Likert scale. According to the concept map, the program structure questions were identified as 12(8), 12(9) and 12(10). In order to create the variable, the survey results were coded on a 1-5 scale, with 5 indicating Strongly Agree and 1 indicating Strongly Disagree. When coding, the software was told that any response of "Don't know/NA" should be treated as missing by the system so that results would not be skewed towards the positive. The Cronbach's alpha for this variable was a .585 which is a medium/moderate reliability between the three variables.

Findings: program structure/basic structure. In the survey, students are asked if academic advising should be mandatory for all students at the institution. 84% of the students that completed the survey indicate they agree or strongly agree with the statement. Additionally, when asked if only first year students should be required to participate in the academic advising program, only 19% of the students agree with that statement.

In addition to the Likert scale questions listed above, four additional questions are identified as providing feedback on the basic advising structure/program. Questions 19, 20, 21 & 22 of the survey asks the students for a variety of information including their perceptions of how the program should be structured. Currently, all students are assigned a faculty advisor upon arrival at BSC. While first-year students are required to meet with their advisor more often in the first year, all students are required to meet with their advisor at least once a semester for future registration confirmation.   According to the survey results, 73% of the students report having stayed with the advisor assigned to them upon entering into BSC. Over 90% of the students surveyed understand that they could change their faculty advisor if they wanted to do so.

In the survey, students are asked where the majority of the academic advising came from during the academic year. According to the respondents, the overwhelming answer was "individually from the assigned faculty advisor" (77.71%), with the next closest answer "individually by other faculty member" (11.46%), with the "individual advising from staff or administrator" and "advised with a group of students" receiving the same number of responses (each 2.55%). The total of those responses account for 94% of the respondents of the survey. Less than 2% of the students report receiving academic advising from a peer or other student. The majority of the students (70%) report having at least two academic advising sessions during the academic year (at the point the survey was

administered). Table 4 includes all answers provided regarding the frequency of meetings reported. Lastly, 50.98% of the respondents estimate that their advising sessions lasted approximately 16-30 minutes, with another 9.80% indicating that meetings lasted between 31-45 minutes. 35.95% of respondents indicated meetings lasted less than 15 minutes.

Table 4

How many academic advising session have you had this academic year?		
Number of Meetings	Frequency	Percentage
None	4	2.53
One	40	25.32
Two	70	44.30
Three	21	13.29
Four	14	8.86
Five	6	3.80
Six	1	0.63
Seven	1	0.63
Eight	0	0.00
Nine or more	1	0.63
Total	158	100

Academic progress. The Academic Progress variable is the most comprehensive variable due to the number of questions utilized in the survey. According to the concept map, Academic Progress was measured by questions 6(1-6), 8(1,2,4,5,6,) and 9(1 & 2). In order to create the variable, the survey results were coded on a 1-5 scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Agree and 5 indicating Strongly Disagree. When coding, the software was told that any response of "Don't know/NA" should be treated as missing by the system so that results would not be skewed towards the positive. The Cronbach's alpha for this variable was a .90 which indicates a high reliability between the questions used to create the variable.

Findings: academic progress. Over 75% of the respondents of the survey indicate they agree or strongly agree their advisors are a good source of information as it related to their academic progress. Approximately 74% of the respondents agree their advisors help provide information about courses, scheduling needs and graduation requirements. On average, 10% of the respondents of the survey are neutral about the questions posed on the support and information provided by academic advisors to currently enrolled students. Lastly, a little over half (51.23%) of the respondents indicate they only discuss academics with their advisor. Approximately 38% of the

respondents indicate their disagreement with that statement, with about another 10% of the respondents being neutral. Lastly, over 70% of the respondents (72.94%) indicate they strongly agree or agree with the statement, "My advisor offers me good academic advice so I can make sound judgments about my post-academic future."

Personal guidance. The Personal Guidance variable is comprised of five questions from the survey. According to the concept map, personal guidance was measured by questions 8(3) and 9(2-5). In order to create the variable, the survey results were coded on a 1-5 scale, with 1 indicating Strongly Agree and 5 indicating Strongly Disagree. When coding, the software was told that any response of "Don't know/NA" should be treated as missing by the system so that results would not be skewed towards the positive. The Cronbach's alpha for this variable was a .856 which indicates a high reliability between the questions used to create the variable.

Findings: personal guidance. Over 77% of the respondents agree that the faculty support or provide personal guidance. In particular, close to 81% of the respondents strongly agree or agree with the statement, "My advisor listens closely to my concerns and questions, whether they are academic, professional or personal." However, the personal guidance questions received the largest neutral responses from the respondents. On average, almost 13% of the respondents responded to neutral to the five questions related to the personal guidance as provided by the academic advisors. When reviewing the responses to this section, on average less than 7% of the respondents disagree with that personal support provided by the academic advisors at BSC.

General satisfaction. The General Satisfaction variable was created with nine questions from the survey instrument. According to the concept map, general satisfaction was measured by questions 11(1) and 12(1-8). In order to create the variable, the survey results were coded on a 1-5 scale, with 5 indicating Strongly Agree and 1 indicating Strongly Disagree. When coding, the software was told that any response of "Don't know/NA" should be treated as missing by the system so that results would not be skewed towards the positive. The Cronbach's alpha for this variable was a .899 which indicates a high reliability between the questions used to create the variable.

Findings: general satisfaction. Approximately 82% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that their academic advisor treats them as an individual with unique characteristics and interests. For all other general satisfaction questions, 83% of all respondents either agree or strongly agree they are satisfied with the interactions and responses from their academic advisors. However, within the general satisfaction subset, only 56.33% of the respondents believe there are sufficient resources provided online regarding academic advising to get the information needed. As included earlier, over 70% of the student respondents maintain the advisor assigned to them in their first year at the institution.

The mean for each of the four computed variables for all respondents is included below in Table 5. As a reminder, the scale for General Satisfaction and Basic Structure was 1-5 with 5 indicating Strongly Agree and 1 indicating Strongly Disagree (and any Don't know/NA response coded as missing by the system). The scale for Academic Progress and Personal Guidance is the inverse, with 1 indicating Strongly Agree and 5 indicating Strongly Disagree (with Don't know/NA responses being treated the same).

Table 5

		General Satisfaction	Basic Structure	Personal Guidance	Academic Progress
		Respondents Statistics			
N	Valid	157	158	158	158
	Missing	1	0	0	0
Mean		4.2498	4.1930	1.8245	1.9890
Median		4.4444	4.3333	1.8000	1.7857
Std. Deviation		.70799	.78072	.76700	.74129
Variance		.501	.610	.588	.550
Range		4.00	3.00	3.40	3.07

From the means provided in Table 5, the respondents are reporting above the Agreed category (4 on the Likert scale for the variable) for General Satisfaction, as well as Basic Structure. For Academic Progress and Personal Guidance, the total respondents report close to Agree (2) based on the Likert scale used for the variable. Overall, the results are positive as reported for the four different components of the academic advising program.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings for Study Question I

Program structure. Students are relatively pleased with what they understand of the structure of the advising program. The greatest discord is related to advisor assignments, although there are also conflicting opinions about registration meetings. Other topics related to the structure of the program include holistic, pre-professional, and informal advising.

Advisor assignments. Students have various conflicting opinions about being paired with advisors outside of their intended major in the first year. Some students understand the rationale for having an advisor outside of their intended discipline, while others express frustration. Sterling, a sophomore, explains,

> I had already declared the religion major before I got here, and they put with me an advisor in the philosophy department. I mean, they're related, but I would think it would be more beneficial to pair me with someone in religion. And all the advisees that were in my same orientation group, there were people who were business majors. I mean, that doesn't have anything to do with philosophy.

Ashley echoes, "I do have some friends that are Biology majors that have non-Biology advisors and sometimes they get a little frustrated because they're like 'why would this school pair me up with a non-science professor?'"

Regardless of not understanding how advising assignments are made, all students express that they understand they can change their advisor at any time. A few students are able to articulate the liberal arts curriculum case for having an advisor outside of the major. Fred, a freshman, explains,

> Since I've declared, I have considered changing advisors to a more relevant department but I'm also inclined to stay with my current advisor for at least another semester just because she's been so helpful in exposing me to stuff that frustrates me. I think that rather than go back to my comfort zone of the business department, I think forcing myself to stay connected to her department is an intellectually helpful and stimulating way of doing that.

A few of the students report, however, that they feel some faculty are a little heavy handed in pushing courses within their own discipline. Other students believe the faculty advisor's personal commitment to the students outweigh the necessity to be in a matching discipline. Heather explains,

> So I came in as a biology major, so I knew what I wanted to do. I was really almost offended. I was like, 'Why did they give me an English major?' This is stupid. Now I'm going to have to go change.' I was so mad. I was like ... I kind of just started realizing like, 'This guy's awesome. He knows about the curriculum way more than I ever will.' I was like, 'I have to change.' But, I think the fact that we had a good relationship was way more important than the fact that he's an English professor. We have a lot in common with our service-oriented goals, because he taught a January term class that I took from him that was about service and that flowed into my study-abroad trip. We just have way more in common than majors, and that's, to me, more important.

Advising registration meetings. Students are required to meet with their advisors before registering for classes. While some students seem satisfied with the one required meeting, which could be supplemented with optional meetings, others express that they wish to have more time or more appointments with their advisors. Mary explains,

> We have a sign-up sheet and the meetings are like in 15-minute increments, so it's just like churning students out. She'll say have your schedule, four back-up classes, and make sure you have the Explorations sheet filled out.

Will also has hopes for more meetings saying,

> I guess if we had more required meetings with our academic advisors that would probably be good because I know a lot of people, they get bad grades and stuff. We have to go 'til midterm to see our academic advisor, and so seeing them, let's say, kind of in between those times, so probably more scheduled.

Advisors agree that additional time to meet with their advisees would be ideal. Arthur, an advisor, admits that there are times when he clears his junior or senior advisees without meeting with them. He says, "If you have 15 or 20 advisees and you're trying to meet with them face-to-face for 15 minutes, the time constraint is the biggest challenge."

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Holistic advising. Students generally report that advisors serve them excellently in a variety of capacities. In addition to academic advising, faculty provide advice on career guidance, internships, and vocation. Faculty advisors also provide guidance around winter term projects. Many students, especially those with particularly positive advising experiences, report that their advisors are important influences in career discernment. In keeping with BSC's liberal arts tradition, many students recount stories of faculty advisors pushing them to take classes or delve into experiences outside of their initial or expressed major/career path. Heather summarizes this by saying:

> He'll always challenge you to think about other options. If you're dead-set on a major, or you're dead-set on a career path, he'll be like, 'Well, that's great and all, but why don't you look at something else, or look at something that you haven't looked at before?' A lot of times he'll be like, 'Why don't you take this class next semester, because you have a free option, or you have the ability to take this class. Take this class. It's out of your major. See how you like it. You never know how that could shift your career path, because you could take that class and absolutely love it, even though it's completely outside your major, and then go into that.'

Martin, who was heavily pressured by his parents to explore a career in finance, relies on his advisor to help explore his options. His advisor assisted him in enrolling in three introductory courses in his first year, one for each field he had an interest in: "He's really adamant about asking, 'What do you want?' Like, 'What do you want to do if there was no external pressure to do this after graduation or do that?'"

Advisors have varied knowledge about the various resources available to students, particularly outside of the academic arena. Catherine switched to a new advisor within her major with much more experience than her first advisor but finds her new advisor's resource knowledge lacking. Of her advisor she shares, "She's been around for a while, but I think BSC...is making a lot of changes that some of the older professors aren't aware of, and I think that's what's throwing her off from helping me get in touch with some services." Few students report instances where their advisor connects them with counseling, student development, or specific career center resources (even if they did give career advice themselves). One advisor, recognizing the limitations of what she and others could do, also understands that it is important to try and connect with students however possible:

> We are called, in this capacity, academic advisors. We are not life skills advisors or personal consultants. Academic advising is what we're supposed to do. I do think that for many of us it goes beyond that and I think the students appreciate it. I think it's meeting students' needs if the advisors are doing it well.

Pre-professional advising. Dr. Buckingham, BSC's pre-health advisor, is cited frequently as a knowledgeable and trusted advisor. Despite BSC also having pre-professional advisors in business, church-related professions, pre-law, nursing, engineering and teacher certification, the pre-engineering advisor is referenced only once by a student, and no pre-professional advisors are referenced by the faculty. Six of the nineteen students, however, mention Dr. Buckingham by name as a critical advising resource. In addition to providing support for students, faculty advisors liberally refer students interested in health careers to Dr. Buckingham. She is known by pre-health students as being exceptionally detailed and knowledgeable. Will explains, "All the premed track people have to meet with Dr. Buckingham where she kind of fashions the schedule for all her pre-med students.

Then you have to get that checked with your advisor...it's correct pretty much every time."

Pre-health students often utilize Dr. Buckingham and affirm her role in addition to their academic advisor. Charlie seemingly likes the dual advisor model:

> Yes, I have an actual advisor but Dr. Buckingham is our pre-med advisor so I just meet with her a lot more because my advisor is in Psychology. But I love him because whatever schedule I create, he's not going to question it unless there's really a conflict.

Sterling shares his thoughts on the distinct roles of each advisor and how they were helpful to students:

> My roommate is a Bio major and he has two advisors. One to get him into med school and one to get him out of BSC, and of course he needs to know what classes he's got to take to get out of BSC, but he needs to know what to take for med school.

Chris was referred to Dr. Buckingham in his second semester after expressing an interest in health careers to his advisor, "[My advisor] said, 'Okay, well you should go talk to Dr. Buckingham, she's fantastic, this is where her office is.' I set up a time to meet with her and now I swing by all the time."

Informal advising. In initial meetings with key administrators, they described an informal advising network that helped students navigate BSC. Student interviews affirm that they do receive advice from a variety of sources. Participants report a number of informal advising networks that help them navigate the curriculum and course selection. Students who have advisors outside of their major report frequently consulting with faculty within their major or faculty members from particular courses in which they were enrolled. Peers, including peer advisors in the first year, fraternity brothers/sorority sisters and athletic teammates, play a large part in course selection for students. However, most advice from peers is in regard to the quality of teaching of a particular faculty member, rather than the more holistic advising that students report receiving from faculty. Fred epitomizes this by saying, "I will ask my fraternity brothers, 'you've taken this class. What did you think of it?' I feel like that's a more genuine piece of advice than what an advisor could give me, being a student rather than a colleague."

Academic progress. Students report largely positive experiences with faculty advisors assisting them with navigating BSC's curriculum, which many describe as confusing. Rachel explains, "Birmingham-Southern just has such a weird curriculum...I honestly can't even understand what all I need, and so just having someone literally telling me...knowing what's required of me to graduate is really helpful.'

Students have varied feedback regarding advising within the major, particularly in relation to how familiar their advisor was with that major. However, numerous students, even those with lower satisfaction regarding major advising, offer instances in which their advisors guided them in fulfilling the areas of the curriculum with classes that fit their interest and/or stretched their capacities. Fred affirms this by saying,

> I guess I was looking for a lot of the requirements of general education here. I knew where to find them on the website and I could read them over but it's very helpful to have a person

explain to you how education works here, how it should be done, how it shouldn't be done in the sense that you are not trying to rush through all these credits. You are trying to immerse yourself in a real liberal arts education.

There are numerous self-reported instances of students taking courses outside of their comfort zone, attending January term trips outside of their field of study, or attending unfamiliar required cultural events as a result of guidance from their advisors.

Several students take personal responsibility for knowing graduation requirements, and not solely relying on the advisor for this task. Some advisors have particular worksheets, developed by specific academic departments or by the advisor, themselves, that students are required to fill out before meetings. This does not seem like a universal resource, however. Two students mention the mandatory graduation checks conducted by Advising Coordinator Kim Lewis in the junior year. Both find it helpful and wished it could happen more often.

Personal guidance. Many students speak at great length and depth of the personal connections they have developed with their advisors. Those connections help affirm academic and personal decisions and demonstrate to students a specific level a care. Butter, a senior, epitomizes what many of the students shared by saying,

> I guess someone who's invested is the first thing that I'd look for. Someone who's invested not only in my academic career but also in me as a person, so that when I'm struggling I can go for academic concerns or anything that's happening in my life. We'll start out as, 'let's pick your schedule' and then end with 'okay these are all of my thoughts and feelings.' That's been good for me.

Many students express appreciation and satisfaction with advisors remembering unique details about their lives, such as extracurricular activities, career aspirations, and familial situations. Heather is among those students:

> We talk about the retention rate being such a huge problem here, and I think that would be a huge way to keep students here, is if they knew at least one professor on this campus was invested in them and wanted to see them succeed. I definitely feel like my advisor did that...I know he cares because he asks questions that are completely unrelated to my schedule or my career or whatever. He'll ask about how things are going in general, like friends, family, all that kind of stuff. I know that he cares.

Heather describes this connection more in depth by explaining that she knows regardless of the academic decisions she might make, her advisor believes that she has "the ability to achieve something significant in [my] life" and that he sees in her something that she could "take into the world." For Heather, as well as other students, it is important that an advisor "genuinely cares and sees potential."

Seemingly, the depth of the personal relationship is often tied with satisfaction to one's advisor. Butter explains, "My first advisor, I don't think I got the full thing out of his advising. It is a lot more like, 'Here, what classes do you want to take? When you're done with classes, you are good to go.'" He says that he couldn't understand what others found cool about advising until he got a new advisor. He continues, "I get it now. I'm like, 'This makes so much sense.' I know about his kids, I

know about lots of other things about him and he knows all these things about me." Mary also affirms the connection between the depth of personal connection and quality advising:

> I think if you just generally don't care about having a relationship with a student then I don't think you should be an advisor. But I think there are a lot faculty who are super passionate about the students here so they should for sure have advisees. They can talk to us, they're personable. There are some faculty that it is like you're talking a piece of cardboard. Nothing's going through.

For those students who wish for a more personal and in-depth relationship with their advisors, the need to get through multiple students' academic schedules during registration in some ways seems to inhibit this relationship. Because BSC students must have their schedules signed off by their advisors, the registration period seemingly puts a lot of pressure on the advising system. Students and faculty report back-to-back meetings ranging from 10-30 minutes where advisors meet with all of their advisees to check schedules. Students acknowledge that faculty have multiple time pressures imposed on them. Charlie, a sophomore, explains,

> The strength is that because we are a smaller school we will have a much more personal experience than other colleges...but at the same time that is also the con because less people means that these advisors are still teaching classes, meaning that they have less time. But it goes back to the same problem, it's hard to get everyone the advisor they want because of how few faculty we have for each major or career path compared to how many students come.

Ashley, a junior who likes the small student to faculty ratio at BSC, also feels like her advising sessions are rushed because of advisors' time constraints. She says, "I feel like it's sometimes hard to schedule with them just because not only are they advisors, but they have to teach classes, as well. Sometimes I do need a little more than 15 minutes to talk…" Advisors report feeling similar pressure to meet with students given the limitations of their time. One advisor suggests that it is a challenge to "meet with all these students in the middle of the semester when you've got all of these other things going." He offers that a "block of time for advising would be great. Even if it's just one day. Advising day. You make all of your appointments over that day or two days."

Though very few participants self-report poor advising relationships, many have stories of friends with more negative experiences. Students with less positive opinions perceive the mandatory meeting before registration as a "task" or "another thing on the checklist," rather than an opportunity. Several note the reciprocal relationships necessary to have a positive advisor relationship. "You get what you put into it," noted Chris. Although it isn't her personal experience, Heather explains, "I've just heard horror stories of people going into their advisor's office and they'd be like, 'Okay, you're taking this class, this class, this class. Okay, bye.'" She offers that advisors need to understand that they "have the potential to make an impact on a student." She continues, "You may not see it at that point, and you may really dread spending 20 minutes with somebody, but to them, it could change their perspective and their college experience."

Some students feel a minimal personal connection with their advisors. For Kelly, a senior, the lack of personal connection with her advisor is relatively okay:

> I think it would be nice to come to my professor and talk about things that don't have to do

with school, and I would like for them to be empathetic, but I don't think they have to actively care about things other than schedules.

Heather, however, thinks that advisors should have more connections with students and believes they need additional training emphasizing the personal aspects of advising. Advisors, she says, "have the potential to change how a student sees BSC." Martin, who has felt little connection with his advisor, articulates the importance of a personal connection by saying, "In a small setting like this everybody could use any extra ear or shoulder to lean on...It may be 'I'm not struggling in this class, but I miss home, or I miss my siblings or things like that.'" When asked how to improve the program, he suggests outreach events "just to get to know students and let them know you're people." Martin, and other students, acknowledge the demands of teaching and research on faculty, but seem to want a different kind of relationship with his advisor, "He's a Rhodes scholar. He's got all these leather-bound books in his office. It smells really nice, but you can't imagine him kicking back and having an ice cream cone, you know?" He adds, "We are all people, let's just be people."

General satisfaction. Most of the students interviewed identify being "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their academic advising experience. Students are particularly aware of the high-touch academic advising experience they receive from faculty, particularly in relation to their friends at larger public institutions. In addition, students express a wide variety of reasoning for their satisfaction, ranging from academic information to career guidance, to the interpersonal relationships. Rachel explains, "he really just drove into what inspires me, and what drives me; not just the school aspect, not just career goals, more just what makes me happy and what am I hoping to accomplish with my entire life." Heather raves, "I definitely agree that it's been so incredible, and I'm beyond enthusiastic about [advising]." Will echoes, "I mean it's very good. I mean, up there at 10, around 10."

Fred, a freshman, has been impressed with advising in his first year and notes, "I would describe it as between good and excellent. I think a lot of what makes it so good is the involvement that the faculties have. It's something that they want to be involved with." Fred continues that the faculty, "want to see us succeed and they want to see us succeed in what we want to succeed in." Ariana, on the other end of the spectrum as a senior, is slightly less enthusiastic, "It's there when you need it - as you go up in classification, I feel like you know what you need to do, but overall I'm pretty satisfied with it."

Discussion of Findings for Study Question I

The overall results of the quantitative survey find that the respondents are generally satisfied with the academic advising program. They report that they stay with their assigned faculty advisor, and are aware they can change advisors upon request. Overwhelmingly, students support a required academic advising program for all enrolled students, and not just one grouping (like first-year students). While the responses are generally favorable, there are some inconsistencies in the responses regarding additional personal or developmental support by academic advisors outside of the academic progression/curriculum required for graduation. The results indicate that there may be work to do for faculty advisors to connect with students and learn about their personal and professional goals. The responses indicate there are some students who have the opportunity to connect with their advisors on the personal level, while others do not.

Based on the findings of the qualitative segment of this project, students are relatively pleased with what they understood of the structure of the advising program. Many of the students interviewed

seem to be getting comprehensive and attentive advising on the curriculum, career discernment, and personal matters. Those who are the most positive about their advising experiences believe their advisors made efforts to get to know them personally and utilize this information to advise them on classes, majors and careers. Some students report not being satisfied with being placed with an advisor outside of their major, yet the quantitative analysis reveals that many do not switch from the advisor with whom they were originally assigned. There are also some students who report some dissatisfaction with registration meetings. For those that do, it is mostly related to the lack of the personal nature of the meetings. Students do receive additional support from faculty who are not their advisors and students (although most of this advice seemed to be regarding which professors to take particular courses with). Dr. Sue Buckingham, the pre-health advisor, is a well-utilized and respected resource for students and faculty alike. Pre-health students are therefore receiving a stronger network of support more closely aligned with recommendations of the CAS standards.

The CAS standards call for academic advising programs to "identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes" (Gordon et al., 2008). BSC's stated outcomes on its website are narrow in scope and focused primarily on guidance through the curriculum. It is clear, however, BSC's students are often receiving. Most are satisfied by, holistic advising that addresses both their academic progress, as well as personal guidance. The findings indicate a positive view of the program, but also indicate some incongruence between mission and what the NACADA concept of advising calls the "curriculum" of advising.

Study Question II Findings

Statement of Study Question II

Are there any identifiable groups of students whose needs are not being met from the current academic advising program?

Aspect of Conceptual Framework Utilized for Question II

The CAS standards list Diversity, Equity, and Access as an essential standard for academic advising programs. The standards hold that programs may not be discriminatory and must, among other things, "modify or remove policies, practices, systems, technologies, facilities and structures that create barriers or produce inequities" (CAS, 2014). In addition, the standards ask that programs must "establish goals for diversity, equity, and access," and "foster communication and practices that enhance understanding of identity, culture, self-expression and heritage" (CAS, 2014). In addition to addressing specific identities, the standard also calls for universal access such as "ensuring physical, program, and resource access for all constituents" and "responding to the needs of all constituents served when establishing hours of operation and developing methods of delivering programs, services, and resources" (CAS, 2014).

As such, the quantitative analysis seeks to determine whether outcomes vary based on social identity (i.e. ethnicity/minority status) as well as student characteristics (athlete vs. non-athlete, and socioeconomic status). When needed, proxies were created using the information available from both the population file provided by the institution and the data collected from the survey instrument.

Aspects of Methods and Data Collection for Study Question II
Both the quantitative and qualitative studies of students, whose data collections methods were described previously in *Study Design and Methodology,* are utilized to answer study question II. Qualitative data from faculty and key administrators are used to supplement or draw a distinction with the student viewpoint.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Findings for Study Question II
In order to identify if there are specific groups of students whose needs are or are not being met, the study team derived four alternative hypotheses. These hypotheses are based on the demographic information available, the expressed needs of the client, as well as the literature review on identifiable student populations that might need additional support throughout their college experience.

The 2015-2016 Vanderbilt capstone team findings indicated a gap in retention between minority students and white students. In addition, previous literature cited indicates both the gaps in retention for minority students and the potential benefits of creating specialized advising programs for students of color and marginalized groups (which do not currently exist in an academic context at BSC). The client is also specifically interested in the experiences of marginalized students within the advising system. As such, the first two hypotheses were generated by the study team:

1. Minority students will report being less satisfied with the academic advising program at BSC.
2. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds will not experience different components of the academic advising program; basic structure, personal guidance, academic progress and general satisfaction to the same extent as students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

While there are few academic resources at BSC specifically targeted toward minority students or students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, two groups of students receive additional support to supplement their faculty advisors. Pre-health students have available to them a full-time academic, graduate school and career advisor in Dr. Sue Buckingham, in addition to their assigned faculty advisor. Student athletes at BSC receive priority registration and have additional support networks such as coaches and faculty team liaisons to each team. The perceptions of student-athletes were also explicitly in the interest of the client. Kuh (2005) affirms the use of having multiple advisors (networks of support) as a recommended practice. Here we seek to find if these practices are impacting students' perceptions of academic advising. From this, the final two hypotheses are derived:

3. Students in natural/hard science (biology, chemistry, physics) majors will report higher levels of satisfaction with the academic advising than students in all other majors identified by respondents in the survey. The students in this category are presumed to be pre-health, although there are certainly students who are hard sciences majors who may not pursue a career in health, and conversely, students outside of these majors who pursue health careers.
4. Student athletes will report higher levels of satisfaction with academic advising than non-athletes at BSC.

Each hypothesis is tested using the data provided in the survey by the respondents, as well as supplemental information from the institution as provided in the population file.

First hypothesis - minority students. The project team hypothesized that minority students at BSC will express less satisfaction with the Basic Structure, Academic Progress, Personal Guidance, and General Satisfaction of the BSC advising program. The survey instrument asked students to identify their ethnicity. Table 3 explains how the minority variable was created based on the student response regarding their race/ethnicity. The basic results for all respondents were provided in the *Study Design and Methodology* section.

Once the minority variable was created, an independent t-test was run using the .05 level of statistical significance According to table 6b, the outputs for Basic Structure and Personal Guidance are t= -.096, with .924 significance, and t= 1.504, with .135 significance level, respectively. Based on the output, there is no significant association between minority status and satisfaction with basic structure and personal guidance. For general satisfaction, the t= -1.40, with a significance of .164. Lastly for Academic Progress, the t=1.268, with a significance level = .207. Contrary to our hypothesis, these t-test results indicate that minority students and White-Caucasian students express similar degrees of satisfaction with the Basic Structure, Academic Progress, Personal Guidance, and General Satisfaction of the BSC advising program.

Table 6a

	Minority	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Minority Group Statistics					
General Satisfaction	No	111	4.2053	.75083	.07127
	Yes	40	4.3885	.57828	.09143
Basic Structure	No	112	4.1860	.76220	.07202
	Yes	40	4.2000	.86988	.13754
Personal Guidance	No	112	1.8845	.79441	.07506
	Yes	40	1.6713	.69429	.10978
Academic Progress	No	112	2.0283	.77174	.07292
	Yes	40	1.8551	.64944	.10269

Table 6b

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
General Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	3.894	.050	-1.400	149	.164	-.18321	.13088	-.44184	.07542
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.580	89.117	.118	-.18321	.11593	-.41355	.04713
Basic Structure	Equal variances assumed	.418	.519	-.096	150	.924	-.01399	.14581	-.30210	.27412
	Equal variances not assumed			-.090	61.690	.929	-.01399	.15526	-.32437	.29640
Personal Guidance	Equal variances assumed	1.313	.254	1.504	150	.135	.21327	.14176	-.06684	.49339
	Equal variances not assumed			1.604	78.005	.113	.21327	.13299	-.05148	.47803
Academic Progress	Equal variances assumed	3.693	.057	1.268	150	.207	.17326	.13665	-.09676	.44327
	Equal variances not assumed			1.376	81.016	.173	.17326	.12594	-.07733	.42385

Minority - Independent Samples Test

Second hypothesis – low SES students: Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds will not experience different components of the academic advising program (Basic Structure, Personal Guidance, Academic Progress and General Satisfaction) to the same extent as students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. As the study group did not have access to financial records of students, the institution provided a marker to indicate if the student was receiving a Pell Grant as an enrolled student. The Pell Grant is used in this analysis as a proxy measurement for low SES students. The institution, in a follow- up conversation provided this information after the original population file was created. The study group cross-referenced the information provided by the institution with the respondents of the survey. The total number of Pell Grant recipients in the respondent population was n=35 (out of 158).

According to tables 7a and 7b, the outputs for Basic Structure and Personal Guidance are t= .757, with .450 significance, and t= - 1.797, with .074 significance level, respectively. Based on the output, there is no significant association for Pell status and student perception with Basic Structure and Personal Guidance. For General satisfaction, the t= 1.038, with a significance of .211. Lastly for Academic Progress, the t = -.673, with a significance level = .504. Based on the output, there is no significant association between Pell Grant eligibility and student perceptions around academic progress. Additionally, none of the sig 2 tailed values are less than .05, so any differences are most

likely due to chance. These t-test results fail to offer support for our above hypothesis. Stated differently, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds experience different components of the academic advising program; basic structure, personal guidance, academic progress and general satisfaction to the same extent as students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.

Table 7a

Pell Grant Group Statistics					
	Pell	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
General Satisfaction	No	122	4.2878	.63853	.05781
	Yes	35	4.1175	.90866	.15359
Basic Structure	No	123	4.2182	.75661	.06822
	Yes	35	4.1048	.86611	.14640
Personal Guidance	No	123	1.7664	.73193	.06600
	Yes	35	2.0286	.85974	.14532
Academic Progress	No	123	1.9679	.74421	.06710
	Yes	35	2.0631	.73675	.12453

Table 7b

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
Pell - Independent Samples Test										
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
General Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	3.759	.054	1.257	155	.211	.17034	.13551	-.09734	.43801
	Equal variances not assumed			1.038	44.067	.305	.17034	.16411	-.16039	.50107
Basic Structure	Equal variances assumed	.464	.497	.757	156	.450	.11340	.14977	-.18245	.40924
	Equal variances not assumed			.702	49.716	.486	.11340	.16151	-.21106	.43785
Personal Guidance	Equal variances assumed	1.501	.222	-1.797	156	.074	-.26218	.14591	-.55038	.02603
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.643	48.890	.107	-.26218	.15961	-.58294	.05858
Academic Progress	Equal variances assumed	.135	.714	-.669	156	.504	-.09520	.14226	-.37621	.18581
	Equal variances not assumed			-.673	55.310	.504	-.09520	.14146	-.37866	.18826

Third hypothesis - hard science/pre-health Students. The third alternative hypothesis asserts that students in natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics) majors will report higher levels of satisfaction with academic advising than students in all other majors identified by respondents in the survey.

In addition to the previously provided rationale for this hypothesis, the group created this hypothesis due to the literature on the availability of a full-time professional academic advisor. As noted earlier, health related students have an additional full-time advisor which is not available to non-health related students. The instrument did not ask students to indicate if they were pre-health students. However, since hard science majors (identified as biology, chemistry, and physics) are often associated with students interested in a pre-health curriculum, the survey respondents were separated into "hard science" and "non-hard science majors". The non-hard science category includes all other majors indicated by respondents in the survey.

According to tables 8a and 8b, the outputs for Basic Structure and Academic Progress are t= .051, with .959 significance, and t= 1.036, with .302 significance level, respectively. Based on the output,

there is no significant association between hard science major students and other majors as reported in the survey administered as it relates to the Basic Structure and the Academic Progress. For General Satisfaction, the t= -1.191, with a significance of .236. Lastly for Personal Guidance, the t=2.277, with a significance level = .024. Again, for academic progress, there is no significant association between the majors and the student perceptions regarding academic progress. However, of note, the sig 2 tailed for personal guidance is less than .05, which means there is a statistical difference between the means for this variable (personal guidance). For all other variables, the difference is most likely due to chance. Thus, hard science major express more satisfaction with the personal guidance they receive than other majors.

Table 8a

Hard Science Group Statistics					
	science	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
General Satisfaction	Other	124	4.2152	.68747	.06174
	Hard science	33	4.3801	.77771	.13538
Basic Structure	Other	125	4.1947	.78309	.07004
	Hard science	33	4.1869	.78369	.13642
Personal Guidance	Other	125	1.8949	.78476	.07019
	Hard science	33	1.5576	.63800	.11106
Academic Progress	Other	125	2.0204	.73933	.06613
	Hard science	33	1.8701	.74797	.13020

Table 8b

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
General Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	.216	.642	-1.191	155	.236	-.16488	.13849	-.43846	.10869
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.108	46.173	.274	-.16488	.14879	-.46436	.13459
Basic Structure	Equal variances assumed	.216	.643	.051	156	.959	.00780	.15328	-.29498	.31058
	Equal variances not assumed			.051	50.194	.960	.00780	.15335	-.30019	.31579
Personal Guidance	Equal variances assumed	1.691	.195	2.277	156	.024	.33736	.14815	.04472	.62999
	Equal variances not assumed			2.568	60.190	.013	.33736	.13138	.07457	.60015
Academic Progress	Equal variances assumed	.040	.842	1.036	156	.302	.15025	.14504	-.13625	.43676
	Equal variances not assumed			1.029	49.782	.309	.15025	.14603	-.14310	.44360

Table heading: **Hard Science - Independent Samples Test**

Fourth hypothesis - athletes. The last alternative hypothesis asserts that students coded as athletes will report higher levels of satisfaction with academic advising than non-athletes. Based on information provided by administrators at BSC, given the specific focus and the attention given to athletes to make sure they are making their academic benchmarks, the thought is that those students would indicate higher levels of satisfaction. While students were not asked on the survey to indicate if they were an athlete or not, the population file provided by the institution coded student-athletes.

According to table 9b, the outputs for Academic Progress and Personal Guidance are t= 1.701, with .091 significance, and t= 1.254, with .212 significance level respectively. Based on the output, there is no significant association between athlete status and student perceptions regarding academic progress or personal guidance. For General Satisfaction, t= -1.129, with a significance level of .261. Again, there is no significant association for general satisfaction. Lastly, for Basic Structure, t = 1.939, with .056 significance level as Levene's test indicates the t-values need to be derived from the equal variances not assumed portion of Table 9b. Overall, the results of these t-tests indicate that athletes and non-athletes share similar levels of satisfaction with academic advising at BSC.

Table 9a

	Athlete	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Athletes Group Statistics					
General Satisfaction	No	104	4.2043	.74680	.07323
	Yes	53	4.3391	.62193	.08543
Basic Structure	No	105	4.2825	.72616	.07087
	Yes	53	4.0157	.85876	.11796
Personal Guidance	No	105	1.8787	.80968	.07902
	Yes	53	1.7170	.66881	.09187
Academic Progress	No	105	2.0599	.74195	.07241
	Yes	53	1.8486	.72656	.09980

Table 9b

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Athlete - Independent Samples Test										
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
General Satisfaction	Equal variances assumed	2.744	.100	-1.129	155	.261	-.13477	.11938	-.37060	.10106
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.198	122.974	.233	-.13477	.11252	-.35750	.08796
Basic Structure	Equal variances assumed	4.540	.035	2.049	156	.042	.26682	.13023	.00957	.52406
	Equal variances not assumed			1.939	90.420	.056	.26682	.13761	-.00655	.54018
Personal Guidance	Equal variances assumed	1.412	.237	1.254	156	.212	.16175	.12900	-.09307	.41657
	Equal variances not assumed			1.335	123.580	.184	.16175	.12117	-.07810	.40160
Academic Progress	Equal variances assumed	.724	.396	1.701	156	.091	.21123	.12416	-.03402	.45648
	Equal variances not assumed			1.713	106.408	.090	.21123	.12330	-.03321	.45567

Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings for Study Question II

While the quantitative data do not find that any specific groups of students whose needs are not being met by the advising program, the qualitative data suggest that there are areas of students' social identity that need more focused attention. Many students do not feel that identity plays much of a factor in the academic advising process and view advising as a positive experience. However, some faculty advisors and key administrators discuss their own and students' demographic backgrounds as important considerations for how to meet students' needs. While one student explains, "Whatever your identity is...It just never plays a role at all," other students have varied experiences of advising based on their own social identities and express why acknowledgment of one's social identities mattered.

Martin, a senior who identifies his race as Black and has not changed advisors at all during his time at BSC, recalls a specific incident in relation to his racial identity:

> I want to say it was junior year my advisor went to get out my file. We hadn't met very often, so it's normal for him to not exactly know who I am all the time. He got this other guy's file. I didn't take offense to it. I don't even think he knows I noticed. But we have a similar build, he's Black as well, he's athletic, and we have the same advisor.

Martin shares that he has a good relationship with his advisor, but cited the misidentification of him for another Black male student as how he has seen at least one of his social identities factor in advising in a negative way.

Catherine, a student who self-identifies as having a learning difference reports,

> So my concern is always, 'is this class going to hinder me because of my disability?' And I think the advising sessions that I do have are helpful at pushing me to not use it as a crutch, and remember that you always have these accommodations.

For Catherine, being able, with her advisor, to discuss her learning differences and how they could manifest in classes is critical to their relationship and her overall experiences as a BSC student.

Social identity as it relates to athletic status emerges primarily in terms of the support student-athletes receive. Martin, also an athlete, explains the importance of academic liaisons to some students, particularly first-year students. Although he does not include himself as someone that utilizes the athletic liaison often, Martin offers,

> The team does have an academic liaison. He's a big fan of the team, but he helps a lot of our guys, especially some of the guys that struggle, on the field and in school. He's always there. He meets with the team once a week, especially during the season, sometimes even more often. Our freshmen are required to go to his office at least once and just shake his hand, familiarize themselves with him. He's just another source. He's another source that we could use if we need anything.

Academic liaisons at BSC are faculty members who volunteer to work with athletic teams as a conduit between the athletic and academic programs. They can serve as a listening ear or extra guide for student-athletes and often help connect coaches and relevant athletic staff to the academic

process. As the quantitative data show, while not to a statistically significant level, athletes report higher levels of satisfaction with academic advising than non-athletes. Where their satisfaction was less than other respondents was in the basic structure of the advising program. It is unclear whether or not integrating academic liaisons even more into teams would improve athletes perception of the structure, or if advisors need more preparation for working with this student population. Ashley, another student-athlete, talks about turning to teammates for assistance with advising. She also says her coach plays a part in schedule selection (particularly regarding being able to meet obligations around the demands of the athletics schedule). In Ashley's case, she does not mention the academic liaison but does value her coach's opinion on course selection inasmuch as he could provide perspective on conflicts with athletic obligations.

For some, the advising program's ability to meet student needs has a lot to do with who is doing the advising and what level of cultural competency they possess. Kelly, an Asian American woman, speaks about how social identity matters in the representation of advisors themselves:

> Lots of the professors here are all in one category. I think they're all Caucasian. Well, I'm sure there's some difference. I know of one Chinese professor and that is the only different person that I can think of. I'm sure I'm wrong. Oh! And there's an Arabic professor. So, I think [the diversity statement] is hard to represent when all of your professors are in the same sort of category...I think, in terms of color and SES status.

Kelly adds that there may be a disconnect between multicultural and international students who have a very specific career choice in mind, and liberal arts faculty who may not understand the cultural relevance of their career aspirations. She thinks that faculty advisors may need to better understand the cultural implications of why a student has a specific interest before continually emphasizing exploration. Harry, a faculty advisor, offers perspective that underscores Kelly's thoughts well:

> I mean, let's be candid. The institution is tragically white. It's racist to the core. The biggest, surest sign of that is many of our faculty perceive that we're an open welcoming diverse community, which should be the very first signal that something's wrong. You look around a faculty meeting, and we've got two or three faculty members who are Asian. Now, two members, if we include a new hire in the library, who are African-American. Roughly 100 FTE. Something I burn a lot of capital on is trying to get others to understand that white privilege is, to use Richard Shipler's term, an invisible backpack of privileges you don't even know you, we carry around. The best data that we're not inclusive is the empirical data in a faculty meeting. Look around, and you tell me if we've been successful.

While the quantitative analysis may not identify statistically significant relationships between various forms of students' identity and satisfaction with the advising program, the qualitative analysis reveals that students thought an acknowledgment of one's identity(ies) was important in the advising relationship. Martin offers the importance of identity-conscious advising and how it can help advisors successfully work with advisees:

> As far as having a relationship with your advisee, yeah, I think it's important to know things they identify as, the possible struggles or triumphs that they could experience, how they'll be perceived in their environment, things that could possibly happen, and how to be an ally to a group. By being an ally, I mean maybe not identify with that group, and maybe not minimize their struggle by trying to take it on but say[ing], 'I see you. I see you. I feel. I want to feel

what you're feeling. I want to hurt with you. I want to feel great with you.' I think that's the basis of any real relationship is wanting to be in a place where that person is. Whether that's advising or not, but definitely in a place where you have the authority to be a face of help for someone or a face of refuge. A place again where people are struggling with a lot of things, I'd say that's very important.

Conversations with advisors and key administrators reveal that there may some students whose needs are not being met well by advisors, or who the college has yet to identify effective ways to work with. Billy, an advisor for 13 years, says,

> It has also become clear in some other data analysis that the demographics of the college have changed, even in the time I have been here. We used to recruit students that were better academically prepared students. There has been a drift downward, we still recruit a lot of high caliber students, but we also recruit a lot of students from underserved communities and first-generation students. These groups come in with extra challenges that our traditional high caliber students didn't have.

One key administrator offers that the advising program was only meeting some students' needs. Placing students in tiers, he says of "...the most thoughtful, reflective student who knows how to take advantage of the resources and people around him or her" advising is "probably serving them really well because we like those students and they're fun to work with." Of "the student who is a very good rule follower" he offers that they "probably get served well enough" because "they make enough connections and...they'll probably bump into the right person at some point who'll ask them some tough questions about what they're doing." Of the "[student] with the least amount of resources," he states they are "definitely not" having their needs met, but suggests that there is "a lot of apparatus" around those students to help them succeed. He concludes that advising "probably serves the students who are most engaged, either those that kind of already get it, those that are ripe to get it, and maybe every once in a while the student who happens to catch the right advisor who helps them find their way in." While this administrator does not explicitly share demographic qualities of students whose needs are or are not being met by the advising program, his reference to students with "the least amount of resources" aligns with Billy's description of students from underserved communities and first-generation students that "come in with extra challenges." It also aligns with the quantitative findings that low SES students indicate less satisfaction with the academic advising program than other students at the institution, even if found to a statistically significant level.

Discussion of Findings for Study Question II
To gain further understanding of the student experience with the academic advising program, the responses were broken down by different demographics. Based on the literature review and the concerns of the institution as expressed in initial conversations, four groups were identified; minorities, athletes, low socioeconomic status students, as well as pre-health students. However, the results of our t-tests indicate that minorities, athletes, and students from low socio-economic backgrounds express similar degrees of satisfaction with the various aspects of advising at BSC as do their student counterparts. The only statistically significant result is for personal guidance as hard sciences majors express greater satisfaction with this aspect of advising at BSC than other majors. For these students, there are additional resources provided in the form of a dedicated advisor that provides guidance and support in achieving personal/professional goals (i.e. admission into medical school/health profession graduate program).

Qualitative data from students and faculty advisors suggest that identity matters for relationship building, as well as meeting the needs of students through the advising program. In this case, we have information about ethnicity, learning differences, and culture and how they impact the advising relationship. Many students felt advisors affirmed and supported them and all the aspects of their identity, while some wished advisors would consider identity as a more important aspect of advising. Still, many participants could not articulate the tie between academic advising and diversity, equity, and inclusion. This could be interpreted in multiple ways. Either, there are relatively few concerns about diversity within the program, or there is not sufficient consciousness-raising within the program about the importance of these issues. Qualitatively, it is clear, that there is work to be done to ensure an equitable advising experience for all of BSC's students, and action steps should be taken to ensure this equity. Many of the diversity, equity, and access aspects of the CAS standards are not currently addressed in BSC's program and will need to be for the program to thrive.

Study Question III Findings

Statement of Study Question III
To what extent do faculty and administration perceive resources are being effectively utilized to deliver academic advising services to students?

Aspect of Conceptual Framework Utilized for Study Question III
In their research brief entitled *Evaluation of Faculty Academic Advising;* the Educational Advisory Board (EAB) advocates that "comprehensive advising evaluation integrates multiple perspectives (p. 11)." In addition, the CAS standards of academic advising list a variety of requirements pertaining to advisor preparation, professional development, advisor resources and institutional resources that would be outside of the purview and common knowledge of BSC's students. Therefore, the inclusion of the perspectives of faculty and administrators in this assessment process is essential for getting a truly holistic view of BSC's program.

Aspects of Methods and Data Collection for Study Question III
We used in-depth qualitative interviewing to guide the findings for this study question. Although some responses from student interviews are used to supplement the findings for this study question, interviews with faculty advisors and key administrators are the primary data used. A stratified random sampling was used to form the sample of faculty advisors, with email invitation sent by the study team for participation. Ten faculty advisors representing each of the three strata – advisors with 1-11, 12-24, or 25 or more years of advising experience – participated in interviews. There was no sampling method used for the five key administrators interviewed. The study team thought it important to interview the four administrators who requested the project, as well as the associate provost. Additional rationale for the selection of these administrators is available in the *Qualitative Study Design and Methodology* section of this project. Each member of the team participated in coding the interviews and identifying major concepts and themes that emerged. Further information on the methods and data collection for this study is available in the *Study Design* section.

Qualitative Data Analysis and Findings for Study Question III
This study question focused on the utilization of resources to deliver academic advising services to students. The study team did not explicitly name or define any resources for faculty advisors or key administrators; rather, the team wanted to let answers emerge organically. Most faculty advisors and key administrators seem satisfied with the structure of the advising program and believe that its

model is appropriate for a residential liberal arts institution. Both groups, however, identify ways that human and fiscal resources could be better used to affect the delivery of advising. Themes emerge related to training, support, and the faculty advising model itself.

Training. Faculty and key administrators overwhelmingly agree that training for academic advisors is lacking and insufficient. The quantity and quality of training, according to participants, is a detriment to both advisors and students. As it is currently structured, training is only required for first-time advisors and those who will have first-year advisees. As it relates to training, advisors and administrators discuss the curriculum, students' social identities, and problem-solving.

Curriculum. Faculty advisors may need more training on BSC's Explorations Curriculum and major requirements. One key administrator admits she did not believe the training was "particularly effective" and says she does not think advisors know the curriculum. In 2011, BSC enacted Explorations, a general education curriculum, that is intended to "foster[s] the exact skills, abilities, and knowledge sets that employers and professional schools are looking for," (Explorations Curriculum, 2017). This recent curriculum change, coupled with the training structure, contributes to the knowledge deficit among advisors. Prince, a faculty advisor for 14 years says, "We're expected to know the college catalog. But we don't actually run through graduation check sheets. What are the requirements? Since we're always changing our curriculum, we have to keep up to date. It's very dynamic." Harry, a faculty advisor for 7 years, seems ambivalent about the frequency of training, but is also aware that there could be deficits in his and others' knowledge: "There's kind of a training program for people who are first-time advisors; also for those faculty who are advising new students who've done it before, but there could be some curricular changes and other stuff." Kim Lewis, advising coordinator, who is responsible for aspects of the program including making advising assignments and training advisors, corroborates that the "drastic change" in the curriculum requires that advisors make "an effort to learn how to think about it" when working with students. Kim reflects that many returning advisors are not getting enough exposure to advising on the Explorations curriculum: "There has to be more careful thought into how faculty members guide those students and we are not doing a good job on that. Our attention has all gone on new faculty advisors."

Faculty advisors and administrators recognize voids in training for more seasoned advisors. Kim notes, "We've had seasons where it's been good and seasons where it has not. In the last couple of years, we've had I think less time that's available to do ongoing training around that for our faculty who are continuing advisors." For first-time advisors and advisors of incoming students, she notes, "New or not, we have a big afternoon workshop...It's not as formalized. A lot of it is truly, it's housekeeping. The venue is not one where I think a lot of faculty members even listen." Because training is only required for a select group, the possibility that advisors are not well-informed increases. This may be especially true for faculty who have advised for a long time without taking on first-year advisees. Arthur, a faculty advisor for thirty years offers, "I think we're getting a kind of minimum training...and a number of changes have happened including a new general education program. I think a refresher course might be helpful." As Kim laments,

> I think that a lot of the questions that I get from...faculty advisors... sometimes it astonishes me that I cannot believe this person's been here for 20 years and they just asked me that question. I think that's a big area where we're failing, of just ongoing professional development around advising.

The philosophy of a liberal arts education comes to light in conversations about training. Kim Lewis notes that Susan Hagen, assistant provost, has spent time in trainings with new advisors walking through "the philosophy around our Explorations curriculum, the philosophy around liberal arts, the philosophy around learning outcomes." Susan, however, admits that part of the reason she thinks training may not be as effective as possible is because advisors may not be "dedicated to a liberal arts education." This, she suggests, could be because of "tension between our inherent liberal arts philosophy and what we want to do and what our students, their parents, and society, in general, expects from students leaving college." In fact, this tug between a liberal arts philosophy and societal expectations upon leaving college is reflected in this description of the Explorations curriculum and its associated learning outcomes: "The BSC Explorations general education program is designed to foster the learning outcomes below—outcomes that correspond perfectly with what the graduate schools, professional schools, and employers are looking for" (Explorations Curriculum, 2017). Explorations includes learning outcomes centered on communication, problem-solving, connection, civic engagement, and self-directed teaching and learning. The curriculum is inherently liberal arts focused but presented in terms of employability or graduate and professional school preparation.

The philosophy of advising and its role in a liberal arts institution also emerges in conversations. Kim offers that a weakness in BSC's advising program could be that everyone didn't "share the same philosophy on advising." However, Nancy, a newer faculty advisor suggests, "some people, when told to do this, they'll do the minimum amount of work. Or they just don't enjoy it. They don't understand the curriculum and they're not going to take the time to figure out." Kim corroborates Nancy's opinion, suggesting that faculty may see advising as added work rather than "understand[ing] the importance that advising is retention." She says, "We all play a role in helping a student come in first year through graduation and I think that maybe a lot of our faculty who have been advising for a long time...they've maybe lost that vision."

  Social identities. One aspect of training in which advisors and administrators have different perspectives pertained to students' social identities. One key administrator points out that the values outlined in BSC's diversity statement are not reflected in the advising program, and highlights its absence in training and advisor-related materials: "We certainly don't get any training around inclusion and diversity that might be useful. There's never been any training about it and I can't think of a single resource anywhere, in our handbook, in our advising website...about that."

The percentage of non-White students at BSC may underscore perspectives about incorporating issues of diversity and identity into advisor training. Of the list of 1288 students enrolled at BSC in the fall 2016 semester, provided to the project team, 21% of those students are classified as students of color. Many faculty advisors believe that BSC is a welcoming and safe space for students regardless of their social identities. Prince, referring to the outcome of the 2016 presidential election and BSC's location in the South suggests, "People of different identities and different orientations, both political, gender/sex-based, feel a lot more comfortable here than they might be outside the campus gates." Other advisors share similar sentiments that BSC, as an institution, approaches diversity well. Lucy, a faculty advisor of nine years comments, "I think we are acutely aware of diversity here on campus. I can tell you that for the majority of people, particularly the faculty members that I'm closest to and that I'm most familiar with, this is a very open faculty."

Despite the sense that BSC is a safe and welcoming space, however, some faculty advisors note that there are no aspects of diversity incorporated into training. Harry says that there is no "special carve-out time" in training to discuss diversity, although he thinks it more important to get to know

people as individuals rather singling them out by how they identify. Other faculty advisors share Harry's sentiment and seem to suggest that acknowledging students diverse identities might be inappropriate in some way. One faculty advisor, who has been at BSC for almost thirty years, says that she would choose to pay special attention to a student because they were at-risk rather than for "a minority or a diversity issue." While these perspectives may be genuine, some faculty think it important to include issues of diversity in advisor training. Billy, a faculty advisor for thirteen years offers,

> There is a lot to stay abreast about and lots to stay informed about. While intentions are good, I think we need to do a lot more training of faculty and staff to be aware of some of the latest findings in issues about diversity, such as implicit bias, stereotype threat. Some of us know a little about it and we understand it's important and others might not know much of anything about it. So I think we need to do more training of faculty.

A specific social identity, as it related to training, that is addressed by advisors and administrators are students who identified as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer (LGBTQ) community. One key administrator mentions that allies training, which is not part of advisor training, could be helpful to faculty advisors overall. She notes, "We probably don't do enough with self-identified gender. Probably because most people believe we don't need to." Arthur, a faculty advisor for thirty years, shares that his awareness of LGBTQ issues was heightened after a student corrected him for assuming they identified as a woman. He states,

> Having had that experience in the classroom and having had the training in LGBTQ issues, I am now far more sensitive to [the] possibilities that my advisees might be living that I would've made assumptions about before, and so I'm making fewer assumptions and asking more questions. I think that's been spurred by...the voluntary workshop that I went to. Nothing has been mandated though. It's been encouraged. I do [think it should be mandatory].

Student participants substantiate the relevance of faculty advisors having some sort of competency as it related to LGBTQ-identified students. One student, referring to allies training says, "many professors have little signs outside their door that say they were part of that training, which I think is an effort to a little bit of diversity, which I think is nice." Another student comments that while he doesn't think faculty advisors necessarily need to know one's sexual orientation, he does think they should "know your struggles," because if those struggles "[have] to do with your sexual orientation...that can be a shaping factor of your college experience." This student continues that faculty advisors, "need to prepare to maybe not help with that, but know that at the very least."

Many administrators and faculty reported that diversity conversations during training need to go farther. One key administrator suggests that diversity has been addressed in training but that "Those conversations usually turn into black and white, but we don't think brown." She also acknowledges that there are other areas that could be discussed, adding, "We don't talk about religious diversity." Some faculty advisors note that an absence in diversity training hampers an advisor's ability to support and retain students. Billy, a faculty advisor, suggests,

> You've got a student who is feeling like they're not fitting in because they're underrepresented on campus. What sort of support structure or system do we have in place for them? Are they connected to that system? How do we connect them to that system?

These are the kinds of things that we could do better to improve our retention, which is good for the student and good for the institution.

Other faculty advisors offer that diversity training is important because of the racial breakdown of faculty and students at BSC. Arthur, who has been advising for at least three decades, offers that a changing faculty and student body almost mandates better diversity training:

It's been very clear that there is a movement in the faculty and being supported by and emphasized by the provost's office to extend our racial diversity on the faculty. I hope that I'm providing a place that feels safe and open, but being the person I am, I can't feel that. I don't feel or sometimes even recognize what others might call micro-aggressions and so I think training in that or at least sensitizing to that would be very helpful.

Problem-solving. Faculty advisors and key administrators think that training could be used as a tool for problem-solving. Brenda, a faculty advisor for fifteen years, suggests that advisors need more training on how to triage student needs. She says, "I have no aspirations to become a counselor...but there are things I don't know how to deal with effectively. It would be good to have training to know how to handle those situations." She continues, "we have to get through the mechanics to get the students out in four to six years, but we have to go beyond that. We're not trained on intrusive advising. Just on the mechanics." Michelle Behr, provost, offers that while professional development is "really important", BSC is so "thinly staffed that there are a lot of these areas for professional growth among faculty that I think we're not as attentive to as we ought to be." Michelle's thoughts on how training could be augmented couple well with Brenda's desire for skills on intrusive advising:

If there were some magical way to bring people together to talk about their experience, to look at a little bit of literature, to problem solve together --to make it a community rather than an individual endeavor -- I think that would be really helpful...and it would even out some of the peaks and valleys and provide a more consistent experience across campus, it would also I think especially for those who struggle with understanding how they could be more effective, it would provide some support and some role models for them, and for people who are already invested in it, it would provide an organized way to continue their own learning.

Support. There is a genuine interest among faculty advisors in working with and supporting students. Many faculty report choosing to work at an institution like BSC for the type of small supportive structure the school provides. Where advisors see reliable institutional support structures, they report being better able to work with advisees in a way that fostered student success. Formal and informal support structures at BSC appear to create resources that help faculty deliver advising services. Themes that emerge among key administrators and faculty advisors included pre-professional advising, faculty peers, the advising coordinator, and the role of technology and software.

Pre-professional advising. BSC offers pre-professional advising in numerous fields including health, engineering, and law. Of the students interviewed for this project, most who received some sort of pre-professional advising indicate that they are pre-health, and anecdotally, say that there is a large number of pre-health students at BSC. In addition to their assigned academic advisor, these students all work with Sue Buckingham, the Health Professions Program Advisor

(HPPA).

Faculty advisors find the presence of pre-professional advising both helpful to them and important for student success. Harry offers that while he is in a field that may not usually see pre-health students, he feels able to guide his students toward classes for the MCAT. Still, he thinks having someone who works with pre-med students gives advisors a "real backstop." Despite the fact that his field is in the natural sciences, Billy suggests the pre-health advisor role is important because it "helps both students and faculty advisors in catching students to make sure they get courses and needed support...it has such an important function in getting our students to be successful to being prepared for professional school." Many advisors rely on the relationship students have with pre-professional advisors. Chris, a senior Biology major, says,

> My actual advisor is always under the impression that I have been in contact with the pre-health advisor and have consulted her in what my courses will be and then I go to my actual advisor to get that approval. It was actually my advisor who told me to go and talk to Dr. Buckingham.

> ***Faculty peers and informal advising.*** Faculty advisors and key administrators talk about the importance of relying on peers to effectively advise students. Among the many ways initial advising assignments are made, incoming students can be paired with an advisor because that advisor is teaching a first-year seminar, and/or the advisor is generally teaching first-years students. At any point during their time at BSC, a student can switch to the advisor of their choice. This structure often leads to students having advisors that are not in their intended or declared major. Faculty advisors share that when needed, they overcome any gap in knowledge by talking to their colleagues. Nancy, a newer faculty advisor, says,

> I know about our English program because I interact with the English department and I served on a search committee with them. I know about the Psychology major because I know the people in that department. I would say that the interaction with other faculty members is how I know about other majors.

Samantha, a faculty advisor for twenty-nine years shared her experience working with a department with a particularly tough curriculum. "The most difficult major I have ever advised a student through was Music. The requirements are just outside of my comprehension. I had a lot of email contact with the head of the Music department at that point."

Some faculty advisors, however, see value in relying on their peers to directly advise students in their own major department. This, they think, is a better form of support from faculty colleagues. Lucy explains,

> I think the institution, as a whole, likes for us to advise first-year students across the board so that first-year students don't immediately get pegged into pre-health or get pre-engineering or whatever. I think that's wonderful...but when students get into that end of their sophomore year particularly and they're starting to really declare a major, we shuffle them somewhere else. If you're really interested in being an historian, then I really want you to go over to the history department. Advising is both general and then specific.

Billy agrees, "Some would argue with this, but I would say that if you're pre-health, you need to have

a STEM advisor. Putting students outside the discipline related to their major, it's a nice liberal-artsy kind of idea, but it leads to snafus. It leads to problems."

Administrators and faculty advisors offer that to an extent the institution relies on informal advising among the faculty to help students. Kim Lewis notes, "I think that that's where the gap gets filled a lot, with the informal advising, where X faculty member is my advisor of record but I get more direction and care from my chemistry professor with whom I've worked a lot." Informal advising appears to happen frequently through course and departmental connections. Michelle Behr, provost, notes that students might get advising from "a faculty member in a course they really enjoy, or a faculty member in their major that isn't their official advisor." She hopes this is because "the faculty are so approachable." Harry, celebrates the idea informal advising as a hallmark of student choice:

> There are tons of students who seek out individual faculty informally or some who move on because they're not in my major, but they decide. They come by all the time and talk. Where do you put those? I think, if you talk to BSC folks all over the place, I think they'll tell you there's a very large informal advising network.

Advising coordinator. Overwhelmingly, key administrators and faculty advisors discuss the advising coordinator role as one of the most critical support resources to the advising program. This role, currently occupied by Kim Lewis, is a conduit between faculty advisors and the service they provide to students. Many believe that while Kim does an excellent job as coordinator, she needs assistance and/or formal structures to support her work.

Advisors cite Kim as one of the resources that help students from falling through the cracks. Samantha describes, "Kim Lewis is a marvel of organization. The information and scaffolding...that she provides for everyone is invaluable. It is very easy for us to make sure that nothing falls between the cracks for individual students." Samantha continues to describe that Kim's frequent contact with advisors makes it "really hard on us to screw up a senior." Arthur, in thinking through ways the advising program might be improved, thinks it could be helpful to have someone on-call and available to answer questions. He realizes, though, that "Kim Lewis is very good about that. She has always been available when I've called and when I've panicked because I forgot something."

While advisors and administrators acknowledge Kim's value, they also recognize that the role of advising coordinator might be too large for one person. Prince offers that an improvement in the program could be to have "someone else who can be helping [Kim] out. And maybe someone can get recompensed for that." One key administrator believes that the advising coordinator may have too many responsibilities, some unintentional: "Kim's doing too much. She's doing all of the grad checks, and she's coordinating all of our stuff on the faculty side, and she becomes the default contact for students." Kim describes the work she does with graduating students and the contact she has with students and advisor:

> Before registration for a final spring, I've done a degree audit for students, communicate with a student, copy the advisor, everything looks good, I see you're pre-registering for this, or in the spring you need to do that. I do that for all of the intended graduates.

Kim's description of her work with seniors before their final spring is only one aspect of her role as coordinator and her job at BSC. Prior to becoming the advisor coordinator, she was the degree audit specialist. When she was asked to become the coordinator of academic advising, the degree audit

specialist role was not replaced -- she occupied and still occupies both roles. Kim is also a professor in the Spanish department and has sixty-one advisees. As Lucy, an advisor for nine years suggests, the role of advising coordinator, as it currently exists, needs additional support:

> This is something I can't imagine happening anytime soon, but I think that there should be an advising center. Even if it was not housed with 10 people, but if it were Kim Lewis. I don't know if you've met her, but Kim is a faculty member in Spanish and she also works in our registrar's office with student records and that sort of thing. She does a grad check on every student in their junior year. Someone like her or a couple of people who could answer advising questions, that would be nice. It'd be nice to have someone who was a touch point person.

 Technology and software. Faculty advisors and administrators have mixed feelings about how technology is utilized to best support students and advisors. In many cases, faculty advisors think the use of technology is lagging and needs improvements.

BSC uses Starfish, an online system that helps to identify students of concern. It is meant to be an early warning system so that students who are struggling academically or otherwise are identified before things get out of control. Advisors automatically receive a notification when a Starfish report has been written about one of their advisees. Few advisors mention utilizing Starfish either in their role as professor or faculty advisor, and it is apparent that there are different thoughts on how it could be utilized. Billy thinks that academic Starfish notifications should "automatically trigger a meeting with your advisor," but also offers that advisors may not be prepared to have the resulting conversations. He says that BSC has to "make sure advisors know what the hell to say, and what to do, and a good resource to point the student towards." Some advisors see Starfish as an additional resource with which relationships with advisees could be established. Prince says that Starfish is one of the ways he builds personal connections with his students, adding that he always calls students in who are not doing well at midterms and "Of course, the ones who get flagged by the Starfish system." Some advisors, though, feel that the Starfish system is intended to help administrators more than students. Referring to the Care Team, a group of administrators who identify and support students of concern, Arthur suggests that although advisors also receive Starfish notifications, "That Starfish network is for the support group, not so much for contacting the students."

Most concerns about technology involve TheSIS, a portal that allows students and relevant faculty and administrators to access a student's academic and financial information. Advisors and administrators have mixed feelings about the utility of TheSIS, or even whether it is being used to its maximum potential. Some advisors express frustration that TheSIS provides incorrect information and adds levels of work. Nancy, who has about twenty-five advisees, says "I've got advisees from three years ago listed. Like, people who graduated three years ago. So, I may have a list of forty-five students and then I've got to go through there and figure out which ones are my current students." Prince offers a similar complaint, "You have a list of all your advisees, but it's never current. People who graduated two years ago will still be on that list." Still, some advisors and administrators find great utility with TheSIS and how it helps create connections with students, or at least hold them accountable. Without an advisor checking a box indicating that they and their advisee have met, students cannot register for classes through TheSIS. As Lucy explains,

> I will get those texts at 7 o'clock in the morning on the morning that they're supposed to register, and it will be, 'Dr. [Lucy], I'm on TheSIS and it says I'm not approved.' I say,

'You're not. I haven't seen you. I'm in my office.' I think that irritates them.

Aside from advisors being able to help students identify classes missing from the general education or major requirements, TheSIS could be used to have meaningful conversations with advisees. Kim Lewis offers,

> If you are dialed into your advisee, if you know enough, or if you have enough wherewithal, you should be pulling up their transcript and looking at that on TheSIS when you are advising. I think we should say to a student, 'Chris, I see you've made two D's in the last couple semesters in these courses in your major, but every art class you've taken you've done really well so let's talk about Business. Why are you doing Business?' I think that students ultimately will benefit from that as much or more than, 'Okay next semester you need your science, next semester you need…

One area where TheSIS is not working involves the degree audit. As explained throughout interviews, most students, in their junior and senior year, go to Kim Lewis for degree audits. The degree audit system through TheSIS has been down for at least a couple of years, and the registrar has been working for about eight months to fix glitches primarily associated with the requirements for specific majors. Kim identifies that a functioning degree audit system through TheSIS would improve satisfaction among students and advisors:

> If we can get our degree audit running again, I think that would blow the doors off of advising satisfaction. If a student could click on eval or whatever it would be and it shows them complete, complete, not complete, complete, GPA, I think that is probably the number one, number one thing that we could do is have that automatic degree audit working again because I think that would take a lot of the fear out for the advisor of like, 'Oh God I can really see. I'm not having to interpret this and maybe I'm giving wrong information.'

Technology is also utilized at BSC through other formal and informal resources. One key administrator suggests that there are electronic resources often shared between advisors that could be helpful to all, "We've got some informal things that float around every once in a while. People have developed spreadsheets. It's nice that they bubble up but then they don't get used across the board, and nobody gets training on them." This administrator, also an advisor, thinks that the sharing of informal resources could "normalize[ing] or institutionalize[ing]" resources that would then be helpful to faculty advisors. Whether or not electronic resources need to be formalized, some advisors are not aware of what exists to help them. As demonstrated in the below contrast between Paula and Nancy's awareness of graduation check sheets, faculty advisors often learn about resources from their students.

Paula, an advisor for three years, talks about curriculum check sheets that she learned about from one of her advisees. These check sheets, in essence, serve the same purpose that a degree audit through TheSIS would:

> I know for each of these different majors what courses they're supposed to be taking by the time they graduate. They give us that information. It's pretty organized on the website. Each major has a different sheet where I can tell you're supposed to take this, this, and this. It might be in academic records. I think it's new this year. There are these forms...like checklists for each major. One of my students told me about them in the first place. In

terms of following that, I can do that because it's pretty straightforward. In terms of what order they should be taking the courses in, if that information isn't on the sheet then I wouldn't know.

Nancy, a faculty advisor for four years, speaks about a resource similar to the one Paula did:

> One time we had a VP of Advising. She created a page...on Moodle, like Blackboard...and created checklists for each major. That stuff changes all the time, but someone would just have to manage it. If we had a place to go show that and other people would pull it and use it that might be good. It might also be helpful if that was out there for the students...where they could go and pull those checklists. Maybe that would be a better way to do it

Faculty advising model. As previously noted, BSC utilizes an all-faculty advising model and all tenure-track faculty are required to advise. The model is generally well-received, and both faculty advisors and key administrators note that it is an important part of their residential liberal arts college. There are disparate opinions, however, about aspects of the experience that result from the faculty advising model. As it relates to utilization of resources, the faculty model emerges in reference to distribution of work, assessment, and rewards.

Distribution of work. Many faculty advisors and key administrators feel that the advising distribution of work needs to be reconsidered. Brenda, who has nineteen advisees, offers, "I think a different view at workload is needed - so the people who care about advising and want to do it, can be given the time to do it, and the faculty that don't can be given be other work." The advising structure at BSC is such that no advisor has a predetermined number of advisees, and at any point students can switch to an advisor of their choice. Faculty advisors and administrators have varying perspectives on if all faculty should advise, and if so, why and whom. Lucy, who has fifteen advisees, thinks,

> I think that everyone should advise students, particularly first-year students. I think that ideally everyone would be as good as everyone else. That's not ever to going to happen, but if it's a choice...then we lose a universal commitment and buy-in to our institution.

In many cases, the advising structure is seen as positive aspect of the liberal arts curriculum, although the burden placed on advisors was evident. Michelle Behr, provost, offers,

> I think the fact that students are advised by faculty when they come irrespective of major, I think is a really interesting model consistent with a liberal arts philosophy. But, at the same time, I think sometimes when they get deeper into their program of study, not having a faculty member in their major can be problematic. But, at the same time, we also don't have the same number of majors to faculty number ratio. So doing that would overburden faculty. Some faculty would have two or three advisees, while others would have fifty.

Faculty advisors and administrators offer their thoughts on why the workload isn't equal, and in many cases believe there could be a solution. Samantha, who has less than twenty advisees, says "equalizing the work" is "certainly more crucial for some colleagues than for [her]." She describes,

> I've spoken to colleagues in other areas who will have thirty, forty, fifty advisees and I've got twelve. Part of that is because people don't migrate to me because we don't have as many language students as we do students in other areas. But some people are really over-burdened with advisees, which makes it all the more important that work be evenly spread.

If it's not, there needs to be some other form of equity.

The provost thinks it would be helpful to examine workload both quantitatively and qualitatively and then create flexibility in faculty expectations based on those findings. She does not necessarily think everyone should be an advisor, but admits that they have to be based on the way expectations are currently set for faculty. A revised structure, she says, could entail:

> Faculty who love advising and are good at it could take on a double dose of advisees in exchange for doing a little less something else. Or a faculty member who was at a point in their career where they were deep into a research project and really needed some time could maybe teach less for some period of time to attend to that. Or a faculty member who was maybe late in their career, and was done with scholarship, could maybe teach more or advise more.

Most faculty advisors think that if advising were to be optional, their colleagues should have to take on some other form of work. Samantha thinks that other work assignments are only fair:

> I do believe that if some faculty members are going to be given a pass on advising, for whatever reasons, because they have asked for the pass, because students are fleeing them en masse, then there should other expectations placed on them to compensate.

Nancy, who has twenty-five advisees, thinks that other work assignments could align with one's skills and interest. She also notes that she and other faculty would volunteer to take on more advisees from colleagues who are not good at advising in exchange for other types of work:

> I think they should be reassigned to something that fits their skill set better. I would think an extra committee assignment would be a good role for that. I would happily take on ten more advisees if someone wanted to take on a committee. I think they shouldn't be forced to.

One administrator, who also serves as an advisor, suggests that playing into others' skillsets could be important because not everyone is a quality advisor. The administrator says, "I don't know if maybe it's time to reevaluate that and have some different skillsets, certain faculty members who advise, others don't. I think maybe what I'm bringing into the question is a personal perception of people who shouldn't be advising students."

Assessment and rewards. No area of the faculty advising model has more contrasting opinions and understanding than that of assessment and rewards. All faculty advisors and administrators think that advising should be assessed, although it is common among interviews to hear that it is not. One faculty advisor shares that "Advising is not assessed, but used as a criterion for promotion and tenure. You only have to list the number of advisees." Another faculty advisor offers, "When we apply for promotion and/or tenure, and we write our application, we're supposed to mention advising. That's one of the boxes we're supposed to check and comment on, but that's not assessing." Another faculty advisor says, "You can be a crappy advisor and if you are doing well in teaching and researcher and no one will ever care you are a crappy advisor." Finally, an advisor notes,

> We self-assess in our yearly or bi- or tri-yearly faculty self-evaluations. We talk about our advising and we are required to on that form and so it is a topic of conversation with our area chairs and the provost eventually reads those things, or the associate provost. There is no formal assessment, there's no rubric, there's no formal way of saying, 'Here are some

things based on what you've said or what your advisees have said that you need to work on,' or, 'My God, you are so good at this. Could you give a workshop for the rest of our advisors about that?' There's none of that.

Most advisors and administrators do not agree on exactly what or who should be assessed, and there is no common articulation of what should result from an assessment. Nancy explains that conversations about assessment have occurred in the past and asks,

> Should the faculty be assessing the students and their preparation for the advising meetings? Or, are we talking about assessing the faculty and how well of a job they're doing? We couldn't figure out who should be assessing who. Should the department chair be assessing their faculty members?

Of those advisors who think advising should be assessed, there are different outcomes they expect from such an evaluation. In some cases, the outcome is an evaluation of the advisor. Prince suggests that students could be surveyed to discover things such as, "What they thought of the advising process or of their advisor. Did they somehow get sent down the wrong path?" Billy thought assessing students could serve as notice for some of his colleagues because "the bad advisors might not know they are bad advisors." Some advisors, though, think that any assessment should be intentional and tied to the mission of the institution. As Harry suggests,

> You could do it when they enter and when they leave. You could do a senior survey. One cool thing could be you have seniors not just do this punch list of things, but one idea would be to haul out the college's mission statement and hand it to them and say, "Did your advisor help you realize, live this or not?"...I don't think we know because I also don't think we know what their needs are. It'd be really cool to see what students think we should be doing. I don't think we know. I mean, we really don't.

Many advisors think there is value in assessing both students and advisors so that the entire advising program would benefit. Nancy offers, "I think we ought to assess our students' readiness, preparedness. And then I really do think we should assess the job people are doing. Otherwise, I don't think we can really make any changes." Through a comprehensive assessment, it appears a universal understanding of advising could emerge. Lucy says,

> I think it should be part of our overall assessment plan. I think the definition would be what is our goal, what is academic advising and how are we going to assess that. Faculty should have some part in this. Students should have some part in this. Supervisors or whomever should have a part in that assessment, but I would not like to see us go to a student happiness quotient.

Among most key administrators, advising is seen as an expectation of being on the faculty, and therefore something that should be assessed and tied to promotion and tenure. One administrator gives a terse opinion on advising and tenure: "If you aren't a good advisor, you shouldn't be getting tenure at a place like this." The provost suggests that BSC needed clearer expectations on advising if it were to be a part of an evaluation for tenure:

> For those faculty who are on the tenure track, they are evaluated on the traditional three-legged stool: scholarship, instruction, service. But the only area in which there are any sort of

articulated, specific-ish expectations is in scholarship. Teaching, people are supposed to be excellent, but nowhere is it defined exactly what that is and how you would know it if you saw it. And the same is true for service. If you're an early career faculty member on the tenure track, it's hard to know what you need to do and exactly what that means. We have a really crappy instrument student evaluation for teaching and nothing for advising.

While the provost does not explicitly state which of the legs of the "three-legged stool" advising would fall under, other administrators do. Kent Anderson says,

> To my mind advising is teaching. On this campus, advising is more often perceived as service. It's like being on an institutional committee, which more or less, people do reluctantly. But if it's part of teaching, that is then my job to help them make sense of things and think critically about what they're doing.

For some administrators, the question isn't whether to assess advising, but how and when to do it. Susan Hagen, the associate provost, offers that advising has been a consideration in tenure decisions in the past, but also recognizes that there has not been a clear understanding of what was being assessed:

> It should be assessed, but I don't know how. I really don't know how. The tensions are, we do NSSE (National Survey on Student Engagement) that has a question on academic advising, but I don't think that tells you anything or much. There are things that the advisor has no control over, so I really don't know...It has been included in the promotion and tenure process...Advising has always been a difficult one to assess.

Other administrators, however, believe that advising could be assessed around specific outcomes. Kent Anderson suggests,

> If I'm gonna tell you that it's teaching, if I'm telling you it's really an instructional strategy, that means we should be articulating some learning outcomes, so we should be doing some assessment around those learning outcomes. How would we know that students are really learning what we want them to learn...Those are both good for the student, 'Does the student understand why they're getting the education that they're getting?', but it also gives us information that we can say to the outsiders, 'You don't think this stuff's good? Look at what our students do. They come in thinking that they want to be "X" they leave understanding "Y".

Finally, one administrator offers that to ensure they understand the multiple expectations of them as faculty at BSC, prospective faculty should be told about advising during the recruitment process:

> I also think that that needs to maybe come to play in some way when we're interviewing people for faculty positions because it's real hard in a small school like this where our faculty serve as advisors, to have a magnificent intellectual who's doing great things within a department but...there's no connect point there. Maybe that is just something that we need to communicate better when we are doing searches.

Faculty advisors and key administrators have wildly different thoughts on whether advising should be rewarded and what an appropriate reward would be. For some, faculty advising is part of what it

means to be at a liberal arts institution and think that it does not warrant rewards. Samantha enthusiastically states, "No [academic advising isn't rewarded]. It is an expectation of our job performance. [It shouldn't be rewarded] at a place like BSC, no." Lucy comments,

> I think academic advising should be rewarded in that academic advising should be recognized as something that is really valuable. I think a reward for academic advising would be...that we set aside some time from 3 o'clock to 5 o'clock as academic advising. Do you know what I'm saying? Not necessarily rewarded but remarked upon perhaps.

One administrator fears that rewarding advising could impact the quality of the program: "The only reward is personal...What are the intrinsic rewards for doing it? The things that actually motivate people on campus to do it is that they care about students, and so I don't want to extinguish that motivation."

Faculty advisors and key administrators often connect rewards back to assessment. For one advisor, there is no articulation of what is expected through advising, and that affects his opinion on rewards: "I mean, in order to be recognized or rewarded in some way it has to be assessed in some way and so there has to be some semblance of a rubric or a baseline of what's required." Another faculty advisor says, "If you could compare across professors...who's really going above and beyond in being an advisor and who's doing the bare minimum...and if that information could feed into a reward of some sort for being a good advisor that would be great." One administrator thinks, "It should be rewarded, not big level, but it certainly should be filtered into the annual and tenure review processes so that it's seen as not only the general expectation but there's some performance evaluation criteria of what constitutes good advising on this campus."

Some faculty advisors and key administrators disagree on if advising should be rewarded monetarily. One advisor offers that "a small amount of money...would be a good incentive," while another comments that they are "not amongst the most highly paid professors" and "any little bump is nice." The provost, however, who thinks advising could be rewarded says, "Good performance in any area should be rewarded, but not gratuitously. On the other hand...faculty need to be engaged in a whole variety of ways and not expect extra compensation. So, I struggle with that balance."

The resources identified by faculty advisors and key administrators that would positively affect the delivery of advising would supplement a job most already enjoy. Small changes in training, support, and themes associated with a faculty advising model would be well-received and could align well with a residential, liberal arts college.

Discussion of Findings for Study Question III

Study question three, developed from the institution's explanation of the problem, ostensibly suggests that effective or ineffective use of resources affects the advising outcome for students. The findings for this particular study question have important implications for decisions that are made regarding the academic advising program at BSC. According to the findings, there are areas where BSC's advising program aligns and misaligns with best practices as outlined in the CAS standards and NACADA Concept. Some of these findings reveal that BSC's current utilization of resources may have an adverse effect on faculty advisors which may, in turn, affect the advising outcome for students, although the findings for first and second study questions generally support the notion that students are relatively pleased with the advising program.

While the CAS standards suggest continued professional development for advisors, such

development is not present for BSC Advisors. Some advisors with varying years of experience expressed a dearth in knowledge about BSC's curriculum, as well as how to work with students based on their social identities and solve non-academic problems with which students may present. The findings also reveal that advisor training lacks a focus on students' social identities. A more intentional focus on students' social identities during training adheres to the NACADA Concept on curriculum and pedagogy, and the CAS standards' edict that advising programs reflect the student population and that advising programs "provide personnel with diversity, equity, and access training and hold personnel accountable for applying the training to their work" (CAS, 2013). In addition, some advisors lacked knowledge regarding the intricacies and philosophy behind the Explorations curriculum, which is grounded in the liberal arts and meant to align with the mission and culture of BSC, a residential liberal arts institution.

The findings also have significant implications for BSC's use of a faculty advising model. Many advisors and administrators suggested that BSC should reexamine the faculty workload, and where possible, distribute the work in a more intentional way. Many suggested exempting some deficient faculty from advising while giving them assignments that maintain value to the institution. The faculty advising model also emerged in the discussion about assessment and rewards. Pedagogy, a component of the NACADA Concept is especially relevant in this regard, as it suggests that advising programs should include documentation and assessment of advising interactions (something that does not happen at BSC). While some suggested that assessment should evaluate student preparation or the advising program itself, most advisors and administrators agreed that an assessment of their advising should tie directly into tenure and promotion decisions, and create an opportunity to discuss how advising might be rewarded, if at all.

The findings also suggest that BSC's technology resources may not be designed and/or utilized to their full potential, specifically advising functionality within TheSIS and Starfish retention software. In addition, the inability for students to run a degree audit on their own is putting undue pressure on faculty to be in-person degree audit checkers, rather than holistic advisors, a role much more suited to their skillsets. This is antithetical to the CAS standards insistence that "academic advising programs must have technology to support the achievement of their mission and goals" (CAS, 2013).

Faculty did find some of BSC's support resources particularly helpful, particularly the pre-health career advisor, faculty peers, and advising coordinator Kim Lewis. These findings suggest that when valuable resources were made available to faculty, they utilized them. However, some of these resources, most specifically the advising coordinator, are heavily taxed. The findings suggest that many faculty care deeply for students and are informally advising students outside of their advising workloads. In sum, while many of the faculty have a passion for student success, they may not be set up to be successful advisors with the training resources, technology, and support they need to ultimately be successful holistic advisors.

<div style="text-align: center;">**Limitations**</div>

Through foundational conversations with the client and in qualitative interviews, it became clear that the financial resources of the institution are limited. We are mindful of this institutional context in advancing our recommendations. For both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study, the team has concerns that the more proactive students were more likely to participate in the studies. Therefore, there is a chance that the voices of the very students that may be at highest risk to not receive adequate advising are missing from this study. Additionally, the research team did not access the opinions of those students who had not been retained at BSC. As the previous capstone indicated concerns about retention, interviewing such students could have proven illuminating. The generalizability of these results across institutions seems limited, particularly as methods of delivery for academic advising vary greatly among institutions.

Limitations of Quantitative Analysis

While there are multiple theories as to how best deliver academic advising, and scholarship highlights the importance of assessing advising, little exists in the realm of best practice for such assessment. Existing tools do not seem to match the expanding needs of today's college student. BSC only began collecting first-generation status in the fall of 2015. We also did not ask about first-generation status in the demographic section of our study. Based on previous research, this could have been a significant factor not only impacting retention but also satisfaction with advising. In addition, the qualitative analysis revealed that pre-health students receive additional advising from Sue Buckingham. Had we done this analysis first, we would have been able to collect pre-health status in the quantitative study and done this more specific analysis rather than assuming that all hard science students are also pre-health. The response rate (representing 12.2% of the student body) certainly does not represent the opinions of the entirety of BSC students, but the sample is fairly representative (except perhaps in class year and an overrepresentation of minority students). Being overrepresented by upper-class students may skew the results more positive, as those with less favorable opinions of the advising program may have transferred in earlier years.

Limitations of Qualitative Analysis

Due to the limited time and scope of the project, the team was not able to perform observations of particular aspects of the academic advising program that could have been particularly useful for the project analysis. Such observations could have included advisor training, peer advisor trainings, and first-year advising meetings. Additionally, the population of students interviewed was not particularly representative of the student body. There was an overrepresentation of students who identify as Black/African American and Asian/Asian American, and an underrepresentation of students who identify as White. No student participants identified as Hispanic, American Indian or Alaskan Native, or Multiracial, despite BSC having students from those demographics enrolled at the institution during the time of this study. In terms of class year, there was an underrepresentation of first-year and sophomore students, and an overrepresentation of juniors and seniors. This limitation is especially notable, as the population file provided to the study team indicated that the enrollment numbers per class year at BSC drop precipitously from year-to-year through the first and senior year.

Summary of Findings

In this section, we summarize our findings for each of the project's study questions. These summary points follow.

The first study question sought to discover to what extent the current advising program is meeting the personal and academic needs of BSC students. Students are generally satisfied with the program and its structure and report that their personal and academic needs are being met. Where firm personal connections exist, students are especially pleased with the personal guidance and academic progress with which their advisors assist. Quantitative findings for this question reveal that while students are generally satisfied with the academic advising program, there are some who desire a greater level of connection with their faculty advisors outside the realm of academic progression. The qualitative findings further expand on the quantitative findings, revealing that students with advisors who made and used personal connections to advance academic guidance, were especially pleased. Moreover, the qualitative findings highlight the particular value that pre-professional advisors might offer as a supplement to general academic advising.

The second study question sought to identify any groups of students whose needs were not being met by BSC's current academic advising program. Overall, there is no identifiable group of students with particular unmet needs, although an increased focus on personal identity by advisors may increase the extent to which needs are being met. Quantitatively, the research team looked specifically at minority students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, students in the natural sciences, and student-athletes. The quantitative analysis did not find any statistical significance highlighting specific groups of students whose needs were not being met by the advising program, although it did find significant results for student-athletes and hard science majors. Existing support structures for pre-health students, many who intend to or have declared majors in the hard sciences, may have resulted in statistically significant findings regarding the personal guidance students in the hard sciences receive. Similarly, existing support structures for student-athletes may have resulted in statistically significant findings regarding the basic structure of the advising program as it relates to athletes. Using qualitative analysis to supplement the quantitative data, the findings reveal that an understanding of identity was important to students and faculty advisors in consideration of how to best relate to students and better meet their needs.

The third study question explored to what extent faculty and administration perceived resources were effectively used to deliver academic advising services to students. Better use of human, fiscal, and technological resources, would improve advisor effectiveness and ultimately, positively affect the delivery of advising services to students. Exploration of this question relied solely on qualitative data. Findings reveal that BSC's utilization of resources may have an adverse effect on faculty advisors, which in turn, inadvertently affects students. The findings highlight areas for growth and continued discussion as it pertains to advisor training, support for faculty advisors, and the use of a faculty advising model.

Recommendations

We offer one overall conclusion about academic advising at BSC. This project reveals unexpected information about the state of the academic advising program at BSC. Students are mostly satisfied with the program, and outside of some minor changes related to personal connections and identity, their needs are being met. Faculty advisors appear to enjoy the opportunity to work with students outside of the classroom setting, although to improve their effectiveness, greater attention may need to be placed on advisor preparation and ongoing professional development. The findings derived from the three study questions serve as a catalyst for the comprehensive set of recommendations that follow.

Leadership and Staffing

BSC's top leadership must continue to emphasize the importance of advising as teaching, and a tool for retention in public speeches and written communication. BSC faculty are, by in large, student-centered and leadership should leverage this. The role of advising must be clearly present in academic leadership and faculty job descriptions, and questions regarding advising expertise should be asked and held as a priority in the interview processes. In their brief, *Meeting Student Demand for High-Touch Advising* (2009), The Educational Advisory Board suggests socializing faculty as advisors in multiple settings, including faculty orientation and departmental meetings.

Kim Lewis is clearly a well-utilized and essential part of the academic program. However, a rethinking of staffing structures may be in order. In particular, staffing changes should provide additional resources around advising and, to bridge the gap between advising, student development, and retention. It may be impeding the long-term success of the program for solely Kim to retain both the degree-audit specialist and coordinator for advising role, while also teaching and advising all transfer students. There must be more support in order for the recommendations below to be addressed properly. More support will also create space for visioning, building administrative structures, and encouraging follow through. This could include shifting degree audit responsibilities to another member of the registrar's office, shifting responsibilities of transfer students to another staff member, or (if resources allow) hiring a staff member to assist with advising. There may also be ways to creatively use faculty time to assist in these endeavors (as explained in the *faculty peers* recommendation).

Program Structure

The mission and learning outcomes for BSC's advising program must be crafted to speak to the holistic nature of advising that students need, faculty enjoy, and the CAS standards recommend. BSC should consider reviewing, for itself, the CAS Self-Assessment guide for academic advising. As its first directive, the Standards call for academic advising programs to "develop, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions" that "must reference student learning and development." Faculty, staff, and students should be engaged in the reframing of the mission of academic advising. The CAS standards Learning and Development outcomes, and the sample learning outcomes from the NACADA Concept of Advising (2006) could be used as a foundation to create mission and outcomes for the program. Advising should be conceptualized and addressed as teaching.

In the process of assessing the mission and purpose of the academic advising program as suggested

above, the strategic programming initiatives of the academic advising program should be assessed and evaluated. There are opportunities to further integrate the academic advising program in the student experience at BSC. Given the proposed expansion of the orientation program for first-year students, BSC could create other ways for faculty advisors and students to connect and start to build meaningful relationships. Faculty could be encouraged to attend or participate with their advisees to help provide the academic, personal, and emotional support that the literature and findings indicate that student need/want. The advising program could also be more seamlessly integrated into existing programming, such as campus cultural events or homecoming weekend. New programming, such as major declaration day, could also be utilized to expand the relationship with faculty advisors. These opportunities would allow for students and faculty members to get to know each other in an informal way. Ultimately, this integration would help the relationship that needs to exist for students to feel supported, create a safe space for difficult conversations and for the development that BSC is committed to in its students.

Faculty Peers

Faculty peers clearly play a large role in advisors' socialization into advising. Several faculty advisors created their own documents/advising resources that were shared among other faculty, specifically within particular departments and majors. BSC should leverage excellent faculty advisors by engaging them in additional development. One such possibility would be the development of a faculty advising fellows program. Fellows could receive additional training and development opportunities with the expectation that they fulfill hours doing projects for advising. Course release could be granted for fellows. A program similar to this exists at the Global Education Center at Elon University. In the program, fellows have both course release and hour requirements within the administrative office they are collaborating with, to work on projects to advance the department's mission (Isabella Cannon Global Fellows Program, 2017). In addition, faculty at Duke University lead group dialogues and exchanges on advising, as well as assist with trainings, which could assist with buy-in (Education Advisory Board, 2009).

Academic Progress

Though it was implemented in 2011, the Explorations Curriculum is still not fully understood by all faculty advisors, and certainly not by many of the students. For faculty advisors, additional training is needed about the curriculum, its intent, and how it fits within a liberal arts education. Further marketing or branding of Explorations could make faculty advisors and students more receptive of the curriculum and willing to engage with it as a learning experience rather than a task. Understanding of and engagement with the curriculum will contribute to academic progress and satisfaction. The worksheet provided to advisors during training may not be a clear and fully understood resource by all that need to utilize it (although some of this could be addressed by the technology recommendations listed hereafter).

In addition, BSC must develop more strategic and collaborative interventions to catch and respond to students in crisis, not progressing through the curriculum, or considering leaving the institution. Currently, there are limited mechanisms that exist for these purposes. While many faculty reported receiving info from Starfish, few reported entering data into the system. In addition, students are only flagged for intervention if they are in danger of failing a particular class, if they do not take a particular required course in the first year, and in the grad check in their junior.

Many colleges are utilizing analytics as a way to design interventions and shape programs. Baer and Norris (2016) outline seven ways in which colleges and universities leverage analytics to optimize student success. Among them, is using cross-campus teams to identify students in need of support based on their behavior in initial semesters and/or information the institution knows about them upon matriculation. Systematic process changes and targeted interventions should emanate from such analytics. Baer and Norris (2016) suggest developing student success teams to develop such strategic interventions.

Personal Guidance

This study revealed that students appreciated advisors assistance through the curriculum, but students with particularly positive views of the program had developed meaningful personal relationships with advisors. Though personal satisfaction emerged as a priority for students, it was not a point of emphasis in mission, training, or expectations of faculty advisors. Expectations of faculty should be reframed with an emphasis on developing meaningful relationships with students, with the goal of faculty being able to make the most appropriate referrals within the curriculum and for career and life discernment.

The EAB, in their brief *Meeting Student Demand for High-Touch Advising* (2009), highlights the developmental elements for advisor trainings that Penn State University uses to prepare advisors. In their document, *The Penn State Adviser*, the university includes information about challenges encountered by new advisors, preparing for and conducting advising meetings, and how to help students reflect on their educations. BSC should incorporate these and other elements of training into their initial advisor trainings and continued professional development.

Training

Faculty advisors need more foundational training and ongoing professional development. Faculty need to better understand recent changes to the curriculum and additional mechanisms need to be created to communicate future changes to advisors. Supplemental trainings regarding social identities, wellness, and approaches to advising should be available and highly encouraged. The once a year option, when receiving first-year students, is not enough to get a sense of the needs of the students. Going through hypotheticals of working with students, exploring the needs of students depending on their class year, and understanding the needs of students based on various demographics are important in helping to serve current and future students. In addition, professional development sessions presented by other campus resources (e.g. career advising, experiential learning, exemplary faculty advisors) should be regularly offered. These trainings should be available at a time that is convenient for faculty, such as Common Hour (a time midday when there are no classes, dedicated to campus programming).

Foundational scholarship in advising supports this recommendation. The CAS standards call for "continuing and regular professional development" of advisors and goes on to list a litany of focus areas of such training, many of which are not currently available to faculty advisors. These include "theories of student development, student learning career development and other relevant theories," "institutional and community resources and services," and "strategies for building strong relationships and connections with students from diverse backgrounds through a variety of advising interactions." In their brief, *Meeting Student Demand for High-Touch Advising* (2009), the EAB lists developmental elements largely absent from training, which include, "advisor responsibilities and challenges," "characteristics of today's students," "communication strategies," "advising students

about major," "career planning," and "referring students to additional resources." Many of these elements are absent from BSC training and the BSC training materials and should be included in the future.

Diversity, Equity, and Access

The findings suggest that BSC's academic advising program should incorporate a stronger focus on diversity, equity, and access in its mission, goals, and practice of academic advising. As referenced in the recommendation around training, education of advisors around relevant equity issues to students is an important start. The CAS standards call for academic advising programs to "advocate for sensitivity to multicultural and social justice concerns by the institution and personnel." To this end, the CAS standards reference this as "provid[ing] personnel with diversity, equity, and access training and hold personnel accountable for applying the training to their work." In line with these recommendations, BSC should examine its current structure, policies, and procedures to ensure they are equitable. In addition, training for faculty surrounding social justice, equity, and inclusion should be available. Faculty in this study, by in large, seemed open to this training and many openly acknowledged knowledge the gap in this area.

BSC's academic advising program does well on equality, meaning that students general reported equal advising experience based on identities. However best practice dictates that schools focus not just on equality, but true equity. Kuh et al. (2005) outline the "special support programs" to assist students who are historically underserved and/or have unique needs, including adult and commuter students, transfer students, international students, and first-generation college students. The Division of Student Development has several departments that could be integrated into the advising process to assist in serving these students.

Pre-professional Advising

BSC should duplicate the advising "network" that currently supports pre-health students. It is apparent that pre-health students having both a faculty advisor and a secondary resource on health careers are beneficial for both students and advisors. While advisors exist for other pre-professional disciplines, the pre-health advisor is the only full-time advisor. The sheer number of pre-health students at BSC justifies such an additional resource. Still, BSC should consider course release time for their other pre-professional advisors. More, Dr. Buckingham should be regarded as a key asset for pre-professional advising. Pre-professional advisors should regularly meet with one another to share resources and effective practices. In addition, faculty committees should be developed for each of the pre-professional programs (similarly to the pre-health committee) that share resources, connect about students' needs, and ensure the pre-professional curriculum meets the needs of graduate schools and the current workforce.

Technology

BSC faculty are dedicated to students' development, and many chose BSC as a place to work with the hope of developing strong relationships with students. However, inefficient technologies may be tilting advisors to be primarily focused on course selection and hindering advisors' ability to focus on career guidance, life discernment, and personal guidance. The CAS standards suggest that advising programs and materials should "employ appropriate and accessible technology to support the delivery of advising information." Students and faculty advisors need to be able to run degree audits in a simple and accessible way. In addition, students and advisors should be able to see how a

potential schedule could fit into a degree audit, and how their academic requirements and time to graduate change should they decide to switch majors. In order for advisors to be successful in focusing on holistic advising and personal development, they must be given the resources to minimize the pressures of having to focus primarily on meeting the requirements of the curriculum. This should be a priority for the institution.

Advising records need to be digitized in a way that can be passed from the previous to the new advisor if students switch, and key administrators and student development professionals with advising capacities. This functionality should exist within existing software currently utilized (TheSIS or Starfish). Continued education around utilization of Starfish and its integration into the advising system should be a point of emphasis that emanates not just from Student Development leadership, but from leadership within the Office of Academic Affairs as well. Information on advisees should be kept up to date on TheSIS.

The advising website should be rewritten to articulate a more holistic definition of advising. A contact email or phone number should be included and clearly present for students who have questions regarding academic advising. All resources listed on the website as places to receive guidance, including Counseling and Health Services, Career Counseling, and the Records Office should be linked for ease of access.

Assessment and Rewards
Faculty advising must be assessed regularly. Faculty should be instrumental in designing such assessments and as the CAS standards suggest, "must articulate an ongoing cycle of assessment." The Education Advisory Board (EAB) brief, *Evaluation of Faculty Academic Advising* (2012) lays out a framework for instrument development, administration, and data application for academic advising. One key tenet of the brief includes the formation of a task force of diverse faculty to "develop evaluation instruments suited to their institutions' advising systems and missions" (p. 6). The brief gives guidance on task force composition, process, generation of faculty support, communication, administration, training, and support.

In addition, academic advising should be a more integrated part of the faculty tenure and promotion process, framed in the context of advising as a form of teaching. According to EAB, "the advising community is currently lobbying to relocate advising from the 'service' to the 'teaching' component of faculty expectations" (2009, p. 36). The brief also suggests, and we affirm, considering including advising within the "teaching" aspect of promotion and tenure (instead of service), even renaming the category "teaching and advising" (2009, p. 36).

Such assessment of faculty should not rely solely on self-reporting. Faculty should be part of developing the process for assessing advising to ensure buy in. Longer serving faculty spoke about how the advising program made them a better, more understanding teachers. Self-assessments should incorporate how faculty advising and teaching works in tandem.

Based on their varied skills, faculty should be able to request release from academic advising, to be used at their discretion and on a limited basis. Conversely, committee or workload release should be available for excellent faculty advisors. Faculty advisors were largely in favor of allowing their peers to be released from advising responsibilities if it is not in their skill set, on the contingency that workload distribution was equal. To maintain workload, key administrative staff with excellent advising skillsets may be utilized as advisors with permission from the advising coordinator.

A Final Thought

The tensions surrounding BSC's advising program are not unlike the tensions that many liberal arts colleges face today. On the administrative side, budgets are tight and the pressure to retain and graduate students is greater than ever. On the student side, there are increasingly growing expectations of connecting with faculty as mentors and life advisors. In addition, first-generation college students need mentorship to assist in bridging the cultural capital gap it may take to succeed in higher education. In order to meet all of these demands, BSC will have to proceed strategically and thoughtfully toward a culture of advising that is comprehensive and robust. BSC is a "high touch" institution, with lots of caring faculty and staff dedicated to the student experience. The time has come to couple this deep commitment with formalized structures that will ensure every student, not just the most present and proactive students, are receiving the advising they need. BSC now has two consecutive Vanderbilt capstone projects, one on retention and one on academic advising. The two are inextricably linked. By crafting comprehensive, student-centered support networks and removing the barriers to success for its students, BSC can chart a path forward that will ensure the health of the institution for a long time to come.

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Appendix A

Literature Review

Literature Review

To understand the future of academic advising, it is helpful to understand its past. Academic advising as we know it today is a relatively recent venture in American Higher Education. "From 1636 until about 1870 all the students took the same courses and no electives were available" (Kuhn, 2008, p.4). This stemmed from the classical view of higher education that had existed for hundreds of years prior as a universal experience of expanding the mind. "The mind was viewed as a tool to be sharpened, and subjects like Latin, Greek, and mathematics were favored sharpening stones. Religion was included in the curriculum to ensure appropriate moral training" (Kuhn, 2008, p. 4).

It was the expansion of the elective system in the 1870s that really spawned institutions to think more broadly about advising. "In 1870 Harvard President Charles W. Eliot appointed the first administrator in charge of student discipline and development and initiated the elective system that created the need for advisement about course choices (Rudolph, 1962; Veysey, 1965)," (Tuttle, 2000, p.15). The response of institutions to choice in the curriculum was to develop systems to ensure students were still making intelligent choices about which courses they should take to round out their education. Faculty were entrusted to preserve the curriculum in spite of choice. "In 1876 Johns Hopkins University established a faculty advisor system, and by the 1930s most colleges and universities had developed organized approaches to academic advising (Grites, 1979; Bishop, 1987)"(Tuttle, 2002, p.15). While student services expanded considerably after World War II, academic advising remained in the arena of the faculty for some time. "But as the research focus of faculty, the diversity of the student body, and concerns about student retention increased, so did the need for professional advisors and comprehensive advising systems (Frost, 1991)" (Tuttle, 2002, p.15).

While comprehensive systems of advising began to exist at this time, they were largely unexamined activities. Kuhn noted that Critical scholarship on the topic of advising emerged in the 1970's, with such theories as prescriptive and developmental advising (2008). Crookston, the foremost scholar on developmental advising, defined it as "dealing not only with a specific personal or vocational decision but also with facilitating the student's rational processes, environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness, and problem-solving, decision-making, and evaluating skills (1972, p. 5). Crookston's work, along with O'Banion's (1972) on a five-stage academic advising model "changed the face of academic advising in U.S. higher education and opened the door to the professionalization of the field (Habley, 1988)." Kuhn identified the first national conference on academic advising in 1977, the chartering of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) and the development of the *NACADA Journal: The Journal of the National Academic Advising Association* in 1981 as seminal moments in the history of academic advising (2008). NACADA continues to be the foremost organization for professional development for advising resources today, and provides a plethora of resources and scholarship for advisors of all types.

Organization and Delivery

Habley (2004) is the preeminent scholar on the structure of advising, identifying seven models. The *faculty-only model*, where all students are assigned to an instructional faculty member for advising, was the original model of academic advising. In this model there is no

advising office. Across all institutional types, the *faculty-only model* predominates, but its use has declined nationally and is employed at only 15 percent of public, four-year institutions (Habley, 2004). The model still exists primarily at liberal arts colleges and four-year private colleges (Habley & Morales, 1998). Similarly, Habley (2008) describes the *supplementary model* as one in which all students are still assigned to an instructional faculty member for advising, but there is an advising office that provides general academic information and referrals for students. Typically in this model, the student's faculty advisor continues to approve advising transactions.

The *split model*, is the model in which specific group of students (usually students who are undecided on a major) are advised in an advising office, while other students are assigned to academic units or faculty advisors. This model is trending in popularity and is now used at 27 percent of all institutions. Almost half of all four-year public institutions and 30 percent of two-year institutions have adopted the split model (Habley & Morales, 1998). The tensions between faculty and professional administrative advising will be explored later, but this model seems to satisfy both the desire to expose students to faculty outside of the classroom, coupled with the time, availability, and curriculum expertise that professional advisors bring.

In the *dual model (also called the supplementary model)*, a student has two advisors: one member of the instructional faculty advises the student on matters related to the major and an advisor in an advising office advises the student on general requirements, procedure and policies (Habley, 2004). This is the third most popular type of advising, existing primarily at private colleges (Habley & Morales, 1998). In the *total intake model* staff members of an administrative unit are responsible for advising all students for a specific period of time or until some specific requirements have been met. After meeting these requirements, students are assigned to an academic subunit or member of instructional faculty for advising. In the *satellite model*, schools or departments are given the freedom to develop their own approach to advising. Finally, many community colleges and for-profit colleges use the *self-contained model*, where advising for all students from the point of enrollment from beginning to end is done by staff in a centralized unit (Kuhn, 2008, p. 7).

Selecting an Academic Advising Structure

When starting a campus advising system, it might seem natural to start with structure, but the research suggests making data based decisions based on those who need advising most. Kuhn's summary of the research asserts "Advising takes many forms, making it difficult to tease out the effects of advising by staff advisors or faculty members. Research that does not control for student characteristics produces mixed results in terms of the quality of advising" (2008, p. 70). In addition, while Kuhn encourages systems designed around the students that need it most, institutions with similar demographics seem to not necessarily share advising systems. As an example, HBCUs don't have a particular trend in regards to model (Kuhn, 2008). Though so many variant factors make determining the success of particular systems of advising difficult, research does exist that suggests having a comprehensive system in itself is essential for success.

Kuhn (2008) does point to Tinto's (2004) work asserting that advising does yield positive growth in retention and graduation when focused on students who are undecided, change

majors, and first-generation college students. There is data to suggest that academic advising continues to be important to students. Kuhn points to the 2005 NSSE survey stating that most students (88 percent) take advantage of advising in the first year. Almost 50% of students saying their advisor is their primary source of advising, with friends and family coming in second at 27% for first year students (2008). In addition, "the quality of academic advising is the single most powerful predictor of satisfaction with the campus environment for students at four-year schools. Satisfaction with advising drops off considerably for part-time students" (Kuhn, 2008, p.71). Though it seems to be known that advising is important, debate continues as to who is most qualified within the academy to deliver competent advising to students throughout their enrollment. Next, the roles of both faculty advisors and professional advisors will be explored.

Faculty in Advising

In *Academic Advising: A Comprehensive Handbook,* Hemwall (2008) speaks to the previous work of Tinto (1993) as well as Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) who link faculty interaction with student success and retention. This research is at odds with the way in which we prepare and reward faculty for the role of advising. Habley and Morales (1998) report that "less than one-third of all campuses include advising in the evaluation of performance, or in a reward structure for faculty (Hemwall, 2008, p. 257). With demands on faculty to publish, teach, and do service, academic advising does not seem to have made its way to the forefront the expectations of faculty. Hemwall (2008) implores that advising be put back into the context of learning in both language and structure, rather than simply student development, which detaches faculty from the task.

In addition to changing the language and reward structure, Hemwall (2008) suggests a variety of other changes to encourage more effective faculty advising including: discussing advising in interviews with faculty, putting advising in faculty contract negotiations, having an identifiable structure, leader, and vocal advising leadership in positions of power. In addition, having clear written guidelines and expectations for faculty as well as accountability within promotion and tenure structures for advising service are also essential. Additional pay, professional development opportunities around advising, release time, and reduction in load in support of advising are also suggested. It is clear that if faculty advising is to continue, institutional leadership must step up its efforts to connect faculty to the resources and reward structure that will make such an endeavor a fruitful one. NACADA provides a plethora of resources for faculty advisors including advising syllabi, educational resources, and access to awards for exemplary service. As previously discussed, faculty advising continues to decline, which may lead some to wonder if faculty will be called on for the task of advising at all in the future.

Professional Staff

The prevalence of professional advisors, as opposed to faculty, has expanded across the higher education landscape. Self (2008) points to time as being one of the primary benefits of having full-time professional advisors. "Unlike faculty advisors, whose primary focus is on teaching or research, professional academic advisors are able to spend the majority of their time and availability meeting with students or participating in advising-related activities (Self,

2008, p. 269)." Self also lists availability, familiarity with institutional procedures, and technology as additional advantages of full time professional advisors (2008).

There are some significant challenges that go along with the academic advising profession. Kramer (1981) and Twombly and Holmes (1981) speak to some of these concerns:

> They must contend with issues of marginality within and a lack of coordination across the university: perceived splits between professional advisors and faculty advisors, between academic advising and career counseling, and between academic affairs and student affairs. And external constituencies, such as parents and alumni, criticize advising with little knowledge of current practices, whereas governing boards, which incorporate retention of students into account- ability demands, expect that the advising program will solve all attrition problems, (p. 19).

The authors also describe the experience of some advisors as *firefighting*, or competing with time constraints and competing interests with little chance of being effective with such divisions.

The research accompanying professional advisors show the profession as both static and satisfying. A NACADA survey found that "two-thirds of members found a career ladder to be important, but a majority indicated that a career track was unavailable to them" (Self, 2008, p.269). The author goes on to say even with this lack of career ladder, these advisors still tend to be satisfied with their work and career. "Despite this lack of advancement opportunity, 95 percent were either satisfied or very satisfied with their work. Because most were attracted to the field because student contact was important to them, and noting the high advisor-advisee ratios, the academic advisor position appears to provide a highly satisfying match for most who enter the field" (National Academic Advising Association Task Force, 1987, p.18).

Controversies and Tensions

In addition to the previously stated tensions between faculty and professional staff advisors, additional tensions linger throughout the field. As the demographics of higher education change, advisors and advising systems face new critical challenges. Kennedy and Ishler outline some of these challenges, including an increase on our campuses of students with mental health concerns, increased international populations, low income students, LGBT students, and students with disabilities (2008). Advisors must be increasingly equipped to deal with such issues and many more, as the landscape of students continues to shift. Shifts in technology also impact the availability and delivery of student support systems.

Kennedy and Ishler (2008) cite the research of Junco and Mastrodicasa (2007) that concluded technology has had a positive impact on student experiences, but a "digital divide" exists for students related to "race, gender, class, and academic backgrounds, with women, minority students, etc. at the greatest disadvantage," (p. 136). Advisors should continue to embrace technological advances to assist with advising practices, but recognize that online-only systems present challenges that may exacerbate inequities.

Advising of student athletes continues to be a hot topic in the advising world. In 1981, Grites wrote, "student athletes have been the subject of much recent controversy. The

scandalous disclosures of altered transcripts, grades issues for courses not attended…and the questionable integrity of administrators has heightened awareness of the unique academic conditions under which student athletes must exist," (p. 77). This statement could be written today with the recent scandal at the University of North Carolina, where a practice was to "create no-show classes that would keep under-prepared and unmotivated players eligible. Over nearly two decades, professors, coaches, and administrators either participated in the scheme or overlooked it, undercutting the core values of one of the nation's premier public universities," (Stripling, 2014). Undoubtedly, the tensions of financial constraints in higher education and the rise of accountability standards will increase the pressure on advisors to deliver quality advising that yields high graduation rates with stagnant budgets. Academic advisors must be prepared to respond to these and other controversies that will arise moving forward. Continued professional development and efforts by organizations such as NACADA to develop a strong ethic and standard of practice can help to ensure this preparedness.

Best Practices

While the structures vary, the best practices of advising really lie in the methods that universities use to support students regardless of structure. In *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter,* Kuh et al. (2005) expound upon the Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) project, which "outlines what the best performing colleges and university do to promote student success and boost graduation rates" (p.xvi). Among those practices that relate to advising, creating comprehensive and networked systems of support seem to be the most prominent themes. "Many DEEP schools tie advising to first-year experience initiatives to provide students early on with the information and tools they need to make good decisions about course sequencing" (Kuh, et al., 2005, p. 246). In addition, the DEEP schools all have multiple safety nets. These include early warning systems, multiple staff and faculty advisors, and collaborations amongst faculty and staff to identify students at risk. These colleges and universities also had academic support structures within the residential environment.

In addition, Kuh et al. (2005) outline the "special support programs" to assist students who are historically underserved and/or have unique needs, including adult and commuter students, transfer students, international students, and first generation college students. Grites advocated for these targeted approaches in 1982 in *Developmental Approaches to Academic Advising*, explaining that advisors need to be able to respond to the unique needs of students, and for advisors to "be aware that they may not be effective in advising all types of students…so that they can be most effective in certain situations and be able to make appropriate referrals in others (p. 81)."

Standards and competencies for academic advising are set forth not only by NACADA's "core values", but also the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) guidelines for academic advising (Gordon et al., 2008). The NACADA core values espouse that advisors are responsible for the individuals they advise, to their institutions, to higher education and the education community and for their professional practice. It also asks advisors to involve others in the advising process where appropriate (referrals to international advisors, personal counselors, etc.) (Gordon et al., 2008). The CAS standards call for academic advising programs to "identify relevant and desirable student learning and

development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes" (Gordon et al., 2008). Such outcomes include intellectual growth, independence, effective communication, clarified values, and personal as well as educational goals.

Assessing Academic Advising

Much of the scholarship centered on assessment of academic advising addresses the complicated nature of doing so. He & Hutson (2016) report "the assessment of academic advising practices is far from satisfactory, and rarely considers multiple perspectives" (p. 214). The authors continue by citing multiple sources that indicate that student surveys regarding their satisfaction with advising services remains the most predominant form of assessment (Habley, 2004; Macaruso, 2007; Powers, Carlstrom, & Hughey, 2014).

In their briefing, *Approaches to Examining the Efficacy of Academic Advising,* the Education Advisory Board (EAB) warns against survey instruments assessing only student satisfaction (2014). The briefing warns that these surveys "often reflect extreme or polarized student attitudes" and "advisors often do not have influence over many factors that may affect student's perception of advising services (e.g., course availability, prerequisites, financial aid)" (2014, p.4). Instead, the authors advocate for a "multifaceted approach that incorporates assessment of learning outcomes, appraising advisor performance, and evaluating impact and effectiveness" (2014, p.7).

The CAS Standards call for academic advising programs to develop "assessment plans and processes" and gives scaffolding as to how such assessment plans and processes should be utilized (2014). Among the directives, the standards call for academic advising assessment plans to:

• specify programmatic goals and intended outcomes;
• identify student learning and development outcomes;
• employ multiple measures and methods;
• develop manageable processes for gathering, interpreting, and evaluating data;
• document progress toward achievement of goals and outcomes;
• interpret and use assessment results to demonstrate accountability;
• report aggregated results to respondent groups and stakeholders;
• use assessment results to inform planning and decision-making;
• assess effectiveness of implemented changes;
• and provide evidence of improvement of programs and services.

In addition, the NACADA website provides several examples of assessments utilized by particular institutions, but there is no nationally utilizes standard tool. As stated previously, the scholarship points to development of assessments that fit the particular institution context.

Literature Review Summary

Though the methods and models of academic advising vary, certain trends seem to hold true. Faculty advising is slowly giving way to the professionalization of advising. In addition,

the summation of the standards and best practices within academic advising called for a more networked, targeted, and data driven approach that takes holistic student success seriously. The research calls for institutions to pay considerable attention and dedicate adequate resources to the task of student success through advising. In light of graduation rate based critiques, this investment would seem to be a wise one.

Appendix B

Quantitative Survey Instrument

Perceptions of Academic Advising Survey
DRAFT

-------------------------------------*[NEW SURVEY PAGE]*---

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

[q1]What is your academic class standing?

- o Freshman (1st year)
- o Sophomore (2nd year)
- o Junior (3rd year)
- o Senior (4th or more years)
- o Irregular/Transient/Special Status
- o Other than any of the above

[q2]In what department are you currently pursing your degree? (drop down will be provided based on the list of departments/programs currently available at BSC)

[q3]When did you enroll in your studies at Birmingham Southern College?

- o I enrolled at BSC directly after completing high school.
- o I enrolled at BSC 1or more year(s) after completing high school.
- o I enrolled at another undergraduate institution directly after completing high school, then transferred to BSC.
- o I enrolled at another undergraduate institution 1 or more year(s) after completing high school, then transferred to BSC.

[q3a] (If b or d) What did you do before enrolling in your studies and after completing high school?

- o I worked full-time.
- o I worked part-time.
- o I enrolled in a certificate or other program full time.
- o I enrolled into a certificate or other program part time.
- o I traveled for 5 or more months.
- o I entered and served in the military.
- o Other (please describe):
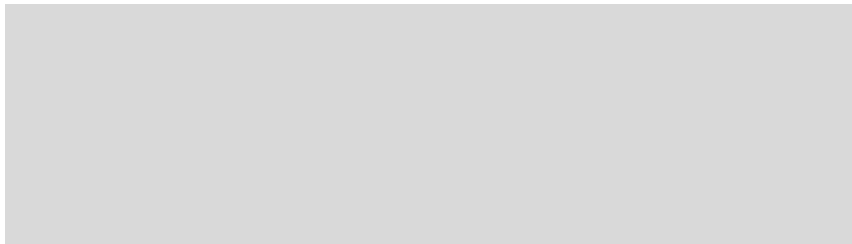
[q4]What is your employment status?

- o Work full-time
- o Work part-time
- o Not currently employed but looking for work
- o Not currently employed, not currently looking for work

-------------------------------------[NEW SURVEY PAGE]---------------------------------------

Academic Progress

[q5a] The following questions refer to your current faculty academic advisor. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
My advisor is a good source for academic advice about college & university procedure (e.g. forms & deadlines).	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor is a good source for accurate information regarding academic policies (e.g. add/drop, waiver/substitution, grading).	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor is a good source for advice about my major and career choice.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I feel that I was assisted in identifying realistic academic goals based on my academic history.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Following a meeting with my advisor, I feel that I learned more about courses and about my degree program.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor suggests important considerations in planning a schedule and then gives me responsibility for the final decision.	1	2	3	4	5	0

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[q5b] The following questions refer to your current faculty academic advisor. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
My advisor helps me choose what options/minors or courses work best for me.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor helps me evaluate my progress toward graduation (e.g. how many credits fulfilled each requirement, how many left).	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor offers me good academic advice so I can make sound judgments about my post-academic future.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor provides me with accurate information regarding graduation requirements (number of credits, baccalaureate core, department requirements).	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor tells me what would be the best schedule for me.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor understands my choice of major and the requirements of the program.	1	2	3	4	5	0

--*[NEW SURVEY PAGE]*--

Personal Advice/Guidance

[q6a] **The following questions refer to your current faculty academic advisor.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
I talk with my advisor only about academic courses and program	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor listens closely to my concerns and questions, whether they are academic, professional or personal.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor is a good source for accurate information about campus resources (e.g. career center, learning centers, counseling services).	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor provides guidance on where to seek information regarding different	1	2	3	4	5	0

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educational opportunities (e.g. graduate programs, national and international exchange programs).						
My advisor asks me if I have any questions or concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	0

Diversity Inclusion

[q7] **The following questions refer to your current faculty academic advisor.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
I feel that I am treated as an individual with unique needs and interests.	1	2	3	4	5	0

--*[NEW SURVEY PAGE]*---------------------------------

General Satisfaction

[q8a] **The following questions refer to your current faculty academic advisor.** To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
There are sufficient resources online regarding academic advising to get the information I need.	1	2	3	4	5	0
It is generally easy to make an appointment with my advisor.						
When I meet with my advisor, I understand it's my responsibility to come prepared with questions and ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor deals with me in a professional manner.	1	2	3	4	5	0
My advisor is available and accessible when needed.	1	2	3	4	5	0
After meeting with my advisor, I feel more comfortable about my academic future at Birmingham Southern College.	1	2	3	4	5	0
I would recommend my advisor to a friend or class colleague.	1	2	3	4	5	0

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[q8b]To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Mark one for each row.)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/NA
I understand that I can change my faculty advisor at any point.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Academic Advising should be mandatory for all students at BSC.	1	2	3	4	5	0
Academic Advising should only be required for freshman at BSC.	1	2	3	4	5	0

-------------------------------------*[NEW SURVEY PAGE]*---

Student Demographics

[q9]What was your age at your last birthday? [fill in the blank]

[q10] Gender Identification:
- o   Man
- o   Woman
- o
- o   Another Identity (please describe):

- o   Prefer not to say

[q11] Ethnicity:
- o   African American/Black
- o   American Indian/Alaska Native
- o   Asian
- o   Latino
- o   Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- o   White/Caucasian
- o   Multiracial
- o   Other

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o   Prefer not to say

[q12]Are you a U.S. citizen or hold permanent residency status?
- o   Yes, I was born in the U.S., U.S. territory, or of U.S. citizen parent(s) abroad
- o   Yes, I became a U.S. citizen through naturalization.
- o   Yes, I hold permanent residency status in the U.S.
- o   No, I do not hold either U.S. citizenship or permanent residency status.
- o   Prefer not to say

[q13]Which of the following best describes the majority of the academic advising you have received this academic year?
- (a) Advised individually by assigned faculty advisor
- (b) Advised individually by other faculty member
- (c) Advised individually by a staff or administrator at the institution
- (d) Advised with a group of students
- (e) Advised by a peer (student) advisor
- (f) Advised in conjunction with a course in which I was enrolled
- (g) Advised in a manner other than the alternatives described above
- (h) No advising received.

[q14] Do you have the same academic advisor you were assigned to your first year at BSC?

[q14a] If not, please select the primary reason you changed advisors?
- (a) Advisor left BSC
- (b) switched to faculty advisor in my discipline/academic program
- (c) switched to someone I connected with better
- (d) my academic advisor was not helpful
- (e) other (please describe)

[q15] Approximately how much time was generally spent on each advising session?
- (a) Less than 15 minutes
- (b) 15-30 minutes
- (c) 31-45 minutes
- (d) 46-60 minutes

[q16]How many academic advising sessions have you had this academic year?
- (a) None
- (b) One
- (c) Two
- (d) Three
- (e) Four
- (f) Five
- (g) Six
- (h) Seven
- (i) Eight
- (j) Nine or more

-------------------------------------*[NEW SURVEY PAGE]*---------------------------------------

Thank You!

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Thank you so much for your time in completing this survey.

You have completed the survey and may now close it.

Appendix C

Qualitative Survey Instruments

Perceptions of Academic Advising Qualitative Instruments
DRAFT

Qualitative Instrument - Faculty Advisors

Academic progress/completion

1. How often do you meet with your advisees in a semester?
2. Is the frequency with which you meet with your advisees more than the required amount of meetings?
3. Do you conduct all required meetings in person?
4. Describe a typical one-on-one meeting with an advisee.
5. What skills/competencies do you think students should possess when they come to college?
6. Is it the role of the academic advisor to develop or cultivate any competencies in students? If so, what specific competencies?
7. Do your advisees express academic interests in fields other than your own?
8. Tell me how you are prepared by BSC to offer guidance to students on general course selection.
9. Tell me how you are prepared by BSC to offer guidance to students on their interest in specific majors.

Personal advice/guidance

10. What kind of information do advisees typically seek from you?
11. Are there issues/topics you raise with advisees, regardless of what they ask you? If so, what?
12. What specifically stands out in your mind about conversations as most important?
13. Is it important that advisors care about their advisees as a person, beyond academics?
14. How do you demonstrate to your advisees that you care about them as a person, beyond academics?
15. What do you perceive students' attitudes toward the advising process to be?
16. In addition to the formal academic advisor, where else do students receive academic advice?
17. Are there students that you advise that are not assigned to you through the Academic Advising program? How or why do you advise those students?

Diversity/inclusion

18. This is what Birmingham Southern says about diversity through the information about the Diversity Engagement Team: "Diversity is comprised of complex aspects of identity by which individuals distinguish themselves, including race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression & identity, age, religion, language, education, family structure, marital status, socio-

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economic status, physical characteristics, and abilities." How do you see those values reflected or not reflected in the academic advising program?

Overall Advisor Satisfaction

19. Do you believe advising should be an expectation for all faculty at BSC? Why or why not?
20. What are the strengths and challenges of the current advising system?
21. How would you characterize your experience as an academic advisor?
22. What do you find to be the most rewarding part of academic advising?
23. In what ways can the academic advising system at BSC be improved?
24. How is advising assessed? If it isn't, should it be?
25. How is advising rewarded? If it isn't, should it be?
26. What type(s) of additional personal or institutional support do you think would make the advising process more effective for advisors?
27. What type(s) of additional personal or institutional support do you think would make the advising process more satisfying for advisors?
28. Is the academic advising program at BSC meeting student needs? How or how not?

Demographic questions/information

29. For how many years have you been an academic advisor?
30. How many advisees do you have in total?
31. How many of your advisees are first-year students?

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Qualitative Instrument - Students

Academic progress/completion

1. What are the characteristics of an excellent academic advisor?
2. Before you first met with your advisor, what did you think he/she would do?
3. What kinds of information did you think your advisor would or should have?
4. How often do you meet with your advisor in a semester?
5. Is it your responsibility to come prepared to meetings with questions for your academic advisor? Why or why not?
6. Is the frequency with which you meet with your advisor more than the required amount of meetings?
7. Describe a typical one-on-one meeting with your advisor.
8. Is your advisor effective in giving you guidance on general course selection? How so or not?
9. Is your advisor effective in giving you guidance on selecting a major or taking courses for a major? How so or not?
10. Could you progress through BSC without the assistance of an academic advisor? Why or why not?

Personal advice/guidance

11. Are there issues/topics your advisor raises with you, regardless of what you plan to discuss with him/her? If so, what?
12. What specifically stands out in your mind about conversations as most important?
13. Is it important that advisors care about their advisees as a person, beyond academics?
14. How does your advisor demonstrate to you that they care about you as a person, beyond academics?
15. In general, what do you perceive students' attitudes toward the advising process to be?
16. Do you seek academic advising from anyone other than your assigned advisor? Why or why not? If so, from whom?
17. What type of advice do you get from others that is helping you progress through BSC?

Diversity inclusion

18. How do your social identities (for example: class, race, gender) factor or not factor into your relationship with your advisor?
19. This is what Birmingham Southern says about diversity through the information about the Diversity Engagement Team: "Diversity is comprised of complex aspects of identity by which individuals distinguish themselves, including race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression & identity, age, religion, language, education, family structure, marital status, socio-

economic status, physical characteristics, and abilities." How do you see those values reflected or not reflected in the academic advising program?

Overall Student Satisfaction

20. How would you characterize your attitude toward academic advising?
21. Do you believe advising should be an expectation for all faculty at BSC? Why or why not?
22. Overall, how would you rate the academic advisement system at BSC?
23. What are the strengths and challenges of the current advising system?
24. In what ways can the academic advising system at BSC be improved?
25. Is the academic advising program at BSC meeting your needs? How or how not?

Demographic questions/information

26. What is your academic class standing?
27. What is your academic program?
28. First-generation college student?
29. Athlete?
30. Race/ethnicity?

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Qualitative Instrument - Academic Affairs Staff

Academic progress/completion

1. How often are advisors required to meet advisees in a semester?
2. Describe what should happen in a typical one-on-one meeting between advisor and advisee.
3. What skills/competencies do you think students should possess when they come to college?
4. Is it the role of the academic advisor to develop or cultivate any competencies in students? If so, what specific competencies?
5. Tell me how advisors are prepared/trained to offer guidance to students on general course selection.
6. Tell me how advisors are prepared/trained to offer guidance to students on their interest in specific majors.

Personal advice/guidance

7. Are there issues/topics you expect advisors to raise with advisees, regardless of what they ask? If so, what?
8. What specifically stands out in your mind about conversations between advisor and advisee that you would label most important?
9. Is it important that advisors care about their advisees as a person, beyond academics?
10. What do you perceive students' attitudes toward the advising process to be?
11. In addition to the formal academic advisor, where else do students receive academic advice?

Diversity inclusion

12. This is what Birmingham Southern says about diversity through the information about the Diversity Engagement Team: "Diversity is comprised of complex aspects of identity by which individuals distinguish themselves, including race, ethnicity, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression & identity, age, religion, language, education, family structure, marital status, socio-economic status, physical characteristics, and abilities." How do you see those values reflected or not reflected in the academic advising program?

Overall Advisor Satisfaction

13. How would you characterize faculty advisors' attitude toward advising?
14. Do you believe advising should be an expectation for all faculty at BSC? Why or why not?
15. What are the strengths and challenges of the current advising system?
16. How is advising assessed? If it isn't, should it be?
17. How is advising rewarded? If it isn't, should it be?

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18. In what ways can the academic advising system at BSC be improved?
19. What type(s) of additional personal or institutional support do you think would make the advising process more effective for advisors?
20. What type(s) of additional personal or institutional support do you think would make the advising process more satisfying for students?
21. Is the academic advising program at BSC meeting student needs? How or how not?

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Appendix D

Matrices

Concepts/Themes from Student Interviews

CAS- Programs should be intentionally designed, guided by theories of knowledge and learning of development, reflective of the student population, and universally accessible.

EAB- Assessment should be a multifaceted approach that incorporates assessment of learning outcomes, appraising advisor performance, and evaluating impact and effectiveness.

NACADA learning outcomes for advising include that students will:craft a coherent educational plan based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values; assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements; use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals; cultivate the intellectual habits that lead a to lifetime of learning

* Required

1. **Pseudonym** *

2. **Year (26)** *

3. **Major(s) (27)** *

4. **First-gen? (28)** *

5. **Athlete (29)** *

6. **Race/Ethnicity (30)** *

Constructs Based on Conceptual Framework

For any theme you list, try to identify a key quote "evidence" that demonstrates it. Try to be consistent with the theme titles you use from interview to interview.

Construct 1: Basic Structure of Program

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Program (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 16, 21, 23)

7. **Theme & Evidence** *

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8. **Theme & Evidence**

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9. **Theme & Evidence**

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10. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 2: Student Needs

Academic progress (3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 25); Personal guidance (3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 25);
Satisfaction (15, 20, 22, 24, 25)

11. **Theme & Evidence** *

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12. **Theme & Evidence**

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13. **Theme & Evidence**

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14. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 3: Improvement and Recommendations

Best practices, things that aren't working, things that are working well (21, 22, 24, 25)

15. **Theme & Evidence** *

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16. **Theme & Evidence**

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17. **Theme & Evidence**

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18. **Theme & Evidence**

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Additional Info

19. **Is there anything else we need to consider/note about this interview?**

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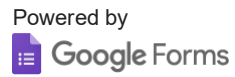
Concepts/Themes from Faculty Interviews

CAS- Programs should be intentionally designed, guided by theories of knowledge and learning of development, reflective of the student population, and universally accessible.

EAB- Assessment should be a multifaceted approach that incorporates assessment of learning outcomes, appraising advisor performance, and evaluating impact and effectiveness.

NACADA learning outcomes for advising include that students will:craft a coherent educational plan based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values; assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements; use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals; cultivate the intellectual habits that lead a to lifetime of learning

* Required

1. **Pseudonym** *

   _____

2. **Years as advisor (29)** *

   _____

3. **Total number of advisees (30)** *

   _____

4. **Number of first-year advisees (31)** *

   _____

5. **Department** *

   _____

Constructs Based on Conceptual Framework

For any theme you list, try to identify a key quote "evidence" that demonstrates it. Try to be consistent with the theme titles you use from interview to interview.

Construct 1: Basic Structure of Program

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Program (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30)

6. **Theme & Evidence** *

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7. **Theme & Evidence**

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8. **Theme & Evidence**

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9. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 2: Student Needs & Advisor Needs

Academic progress (5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 28); Personal guidance (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 28); Student satisfaction (15) Advisor satisfaction(20, 21, 22, 24, 25)

10. **Theme & Evidence** *

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11. **Theme & Evidence**

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12. **Theme & Evidence**

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13. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 3: Improvement and Recommendations

Best practices, things that aren't working, things that are working well (19, 20, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28)

14. **Theme & Evidence** *

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15. **Theme & Evidence**

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16. **Theme & Evidence**

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17. **Theme & Evidence**

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Additional Info

18. **Is there anything else we need to consider/note about this interview?**

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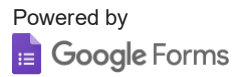
Concepts/Themes from Academic Affairs Staff Interviews

CAS- Programs should be intentionally designed, guided by theories of knowledge and learning of development, reflective of the student population, and universally accessible.

EAB- Assessment should be a multifaceted approach that incorporates assessment of learning outcomes, appraising advisor performance, and evaluating impact and effectiveness.

NACADA learning outcomes for advising include that students will:craft a coherent educational plan based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values; assume responsibility for meeting academic program requirements; use complex information from various sources to set goals, reach decisions, and achieve those goals; cultivate the intellectual habits that lead a to lifetime of learning

* Required

1. **Name** *

2. **Title/Role** *

Constructs Based on Conceptual Framework

For any theme you list, try to identify a key quote "evidence" that demonstrates it. Try to be consistent with the theme titles you use from interview to interview.

Construct 1: Basic Structure of Program

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Program (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14,,15, 16, 17)

3. **Theme & Evidence** *

4. **Theme & Evidence**

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5. **Theme & Evidence**

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6. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 2: Student Needs & Advisor Needs

Academic progress (7, 8, 11, 21); Personal guidance (8, 9, 11, 12, 21); Student satisfaction (10)
Advisor satisfaction(10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)

7. **Theme & Evidence** *

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8. **Theme & Evidence**

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9. **Theme & Evidence**

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10. **Theme & Evidence**

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Construct 3: Improvement and Recommendations

Best practices, things that aren't working, things that are working well (14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)

11. **Theme & Evidence** *

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12. **Theme & Evidence**

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13. **Theme & Evidence**

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14. **Theme & Evidence**

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Additional Info

15. **Is there anything else we need to consider/note about this interview?**

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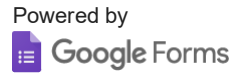
Appendix E

Concepts and Themes from Qualitative Interviews

Concepts and Themes from Qualitative Interviews

Students	
Major Concepts	**Associated Themes**
Advising w/in the Major	Advisors Pushing their Discipline; Switching Advisors
Academic Progress	Advising as Task; Advising Coordinator; Advisor Knowledge of the Curriculum; Confusing Curriculum; Graduation; Graduation Checks; Pre-engineering; Pre-health; Registration; Retention; Student Responsibility; Training; Unclear Requirements
Holistic Advising	Advising Impact; Campus Resources; Culture; International students; Personal Connections; Race; Social Identities
Faculty Advising Model	Advising Load; Career Guidance; Pre-professional Advising; Time Constraints
Informal Advising	Coaches; Fraternity; Friends; Teammates; Other Faculty
Faculty Advisors	
Major Concepts	**Associated Themes**
Holistic Advising	Academic Progress; Career Guidance; Culture of Care; Intrusive Advising; Liberal Arts; Personal Connections; Pre-professional Advising; Retention; Social Identities
Faculty Advising Model	Advising w/in Major; Assessment; Distribution of Work; Job Expectation; Liberal Arts; Promotion; Rewards; Scholarship; Teaching; Tenure, Time Constraints
Informal Advising	Family; Friends; Peer Advisors; Peer Mentoring
Training	Changing Demographics; Curriculum; Social identities
Support	Advising Coordinator; Faculty Peers; Grad Checks; Pre-professional Advising; Starfish; TheSIS
Key Administrators	
Major Concepts	**Associated Themes**
Holistic Advising	Academic Progress; Connections to Campus Resources; Connection to Institution; Culture of Care Decision Making; Engagement w/ Curriculum; Liberal Arts; Orientation; Peer Advisor; Personal Connections; Problem Solving; Retention; Small-group Connections; Social Identities
Faculty Advising Model	Advising as Teaching; Distribution of Work; Engagement w/ the Curriculum; Faculty Expectations; Faculty Recruitment; Liberal Arts Philosophy; Philosophy of Advising; Residential Liberal Arts Institution; Standardize Expectations; Unequal Delivery of Advising
Informal Advising	Coaches; Peers; Student Development Staff
Training	Philosophy of Advising; Problem Solving; Professional Development; Retention; Social Identities
Assessment & Rewards	Advising as Teaching; Expectations in Scholarship; Learning Outcomes; Promotion; Standardized Expectations; Tenure
Structure/Support	Advising Coordinator; Degree Checks; Starfish; TheSIS

Appendix F

Concept Map

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │        BSC Academic Advising program     │
                    └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                                        ⬇

                            Basic Research Questions:

                                                        ┌──────────────────────┐
          ┌─────────────────────────┐                   │ Future: Program       │
          │ Current Program State   │                   │ changes/Resources     │
          └─────────────────────────┘                   └──────────────────────┘
                      ⬇                                              ⬇

 ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌───────────────┐    ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌───────────────┐
 │ Students │  │ Faculty  │  │ Administrators│    │ Students │  │ Faculty  │  │ Administrators│
 └──────────┘  └──────────┘  └───────────────┘    └──────────┘  └──────────┘  └───────────────┘

 ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐    ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐
 │ Survey & │  │ Interviews│ │ Interviews│    │ Interviews│ │ Interviews│ │ Interviews│
 │ Interviews│ └──────────┘  └──────────┘    └──────────┘  └──────────┘  └──────────┘
 └──────────┘
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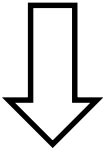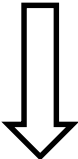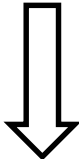
Study/Research Layout
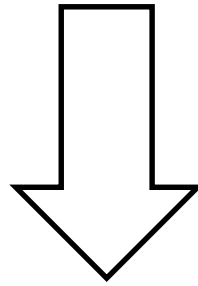
Student Needs: What are they?

According to Lit Review – Needs are (academic & personal advise, satisfaction)

Are they being Met at BSC?

Who's Left out?

According to Lit Review best structures to capture all students are?

Review of Current structure with strengths & weaknesses according to students, faculty & admin

How to improve program? Recommendations?

Lit Review: best practices include?

Assessment, based on current resources and how to integrate services

Student Perceptions of Current Advising Program
(quantitative outline)

Student Background Characteristics

Personal Characteristics (including demographics)
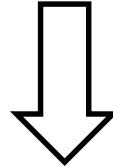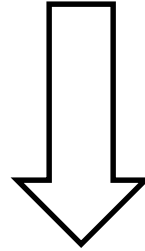
Academic Background
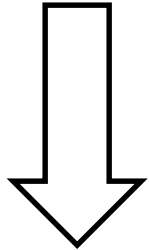
Questions:
3, 4,5, 15, 16, 17, 18
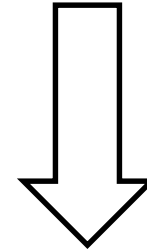
Questions 1, 2

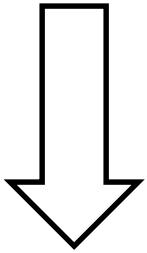Student Perceptions of Current Advising Program
(quantitative outline)
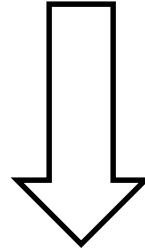
Basic Structure:

Needs: Academic Progress

Needs: Personal Guidance

General Satisfaction
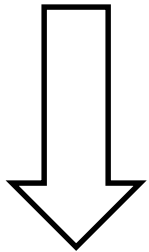
Questions 12 8), 12(9), 12(10), 19, 20, 21, & 22
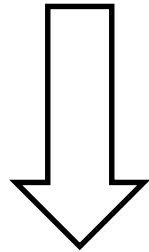
Questions 6 (1), 6(2), 6(3), 6(4), 6(5), 6 (6), 8(1), 8(2), 8(4), 8(5), 8(6), 9(1), 9(2)
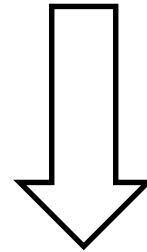
Questions 8(3), 9(2), 9(3), 9(4), 9(5)
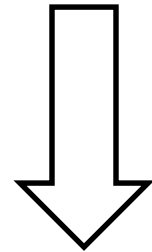
Questions: 11, 12(1), 12(2), 12(3), 12(4), 12(5), 12(6), 12(7), 12(8)

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Student Perceptions of Current Advising Program       │
│              (qualitative outline)                       │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

        ┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │    Student Background Characteristics    │
        └─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                          ⬇

┌──────────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Personal             │              │ Academic             │
│ Characteristics      │              │ Background            │
│ (including           │              │                      │
│ demographics)        │              │                      │
└──────────────────────┘              └──────────────────────┘
           ⬇                                     ⬇

┌──────────────────────┐              ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Questions:           │              │                      │
│ 27, 28, 29,          │              │ Questions            │
│ 30, 18, 19,          │              │ 25, 26, 27           │
│                      │              │                      │
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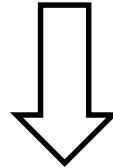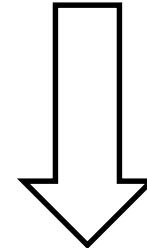
Student Perceptions of Current Advising Program
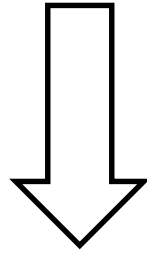(qualitative outline)

Basic Structure:
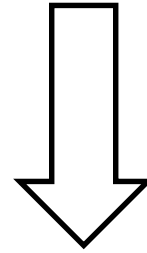
Needs: Academic Progress
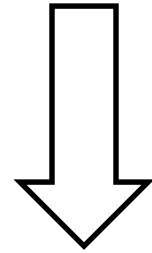
Needs: Personal Guidance

General Satisfaction

Questions: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 16, 21, 23,
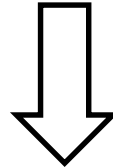
Questions:3, 8,9,10, 17, 25, 16

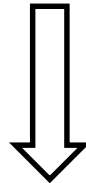Questions :3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 25, 16, 18, 19

Questions: 15, 20, 22,24, 25

Current Advising Program (qualitative outline)
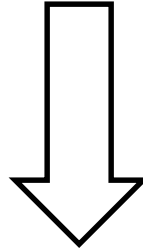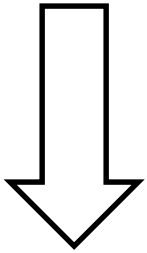
Faculty Background Characteristics

Personal Characteristics (including demographics)

Questions: 28, 29, 30, 31

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Current Advising Program (qualitative outline)     │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ↓

┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
│ Basic Structure: │  │ Needs: Academic  │  │ Needs: Personal  │  │ General          │
│                  │  │ Progress         │  │ Guidance         │  │ Satisfaction     │
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        ↓                     ↓                     ↓                     ↓
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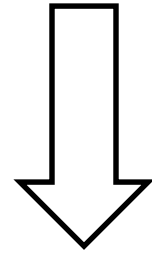
Basic Structure:

Questions:
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,11, 12,16,17,19, 20 21, 23, 24,25, 26, 27, 30

Needs: Academic Progress

Questions:
5, 8,9,10, 11,12, 28

Needs: Personal Guidance
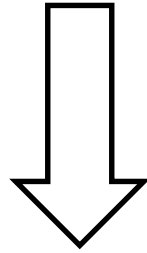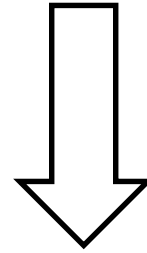
Questions:
10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 28, 16, 17

General Satisfaction

Questions:
15, 20, 21,22,24, 28, 25