

Enhancing Academic Advising

Institutions participating in FSSE have provided examples demonstrating uses of FSSE's diagnostic, actionable information on instructional staff perspectives to catalyze vital, sometimes challenging conversations on campus about the quality of undergraduate education. This brief focuses on one theme among these examples.

Academic advising offers opportunities for students to directly engage with instructional staff and to discuss important matters relating to degree completion, academic interests, and factors influencing retention and success. FSSE data guides the enhancement of academic advising as an area of strength through questions in FSSE's core survey as well as in the Academic Advising Topical Module.

For example, FSSE's core survey collects information from instructional staff on

- the amount of weekly time devoted to advising,
- their perceptions of student interactions with academic advisors, and
- their interactions with students they teach or advise.

FSSE's academic advising module focuses on the advising practices of instructional staff and the frequency of their advising interactions with students. Combined with FSSE's core survey items, the module gives institutions a nuanced view of instructional staff perceptions of this vital facet of the undergraduate student experience. Institutions that use the academic advising module with both NSSE and FSSE have a unique opportunity to view student and instructional perspectives to gain greater insight.

VANTAGE POINT FOR CLOSER EXAMINATION

Advising has been a focus at Indiana State University (ISU) for several years, and ISU has used FSSE as a window into academic advising on its campus. Having administered the Academic Advising Topical Module with both NSSE and FSSE, ISU has had two views by which to examine, evaluate, and respond to these faculty-student interactions. By using both instruments, they looked at advising issues from student and faculty perspectives and they also captured how first-year students, seniors, and faculty think about advising. Handouts created from module results showing areas of alignment as well as tension between instructional staff and student perspectives have been springboards for fruitful campus discussions.



Indiana State University

This way of displaying and sharing results has also allowed ISU to drill down to college-level results, stimulating faculty conversations about areas of strength as well as opportunities for improvement across the university. Specifically, a task force on faculty advising used FSSE results to develop new directions for their advising approach and to think about ways to reward and train faculty for advising.

WHAT IS YOUR FSSE DATA USE STORY?

Our growing collection of stories about how FSSE institutions use their results is a shared resource for colleges and universities, and assists in our continuing efforts to improve the quality of the undergraduate experience. Please contact us to share examples highlighting your institution's uses of FSSE data, usage strategies, and special activities.

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