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Vanessa Massalyn Johnson Dedeaux

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AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH ACADEMIC
ADVISING AND STUDENTS' IMPRESSIONS OF ACADEMIC
ADVISORS AT A RURAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By

Vanessa Massalyn Johnson Dedeaux

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Community College Leadership
in the Department of Leadership and Foundations

Mississippi State, Mississippi

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This study was the first attempt to evaluate the college's career/technical current advising practices. The purpose of this study was to investigate career/technical students' satisfaction with academic advising at a rural community college and to investigate whether there were any relationships between students' satisfaction and various demographic characteristics. The study also investigated students' impressions of the academic advisors and whether there were any relationships between students' impressions and various demographic characteristics. The researcher purchased the Survey of Academic Advising, Copyright 1997, from ACT, Inc. The Survey of Academic Advising was developed by the Evaluation Survey Service (ESS) and ACT and was used to measure students' satisfaction and impressions.

Students were most satisfied with four items: scheduling, registration, academic progress, and drop/add procedures. Female participants were more satisfied than male students. Married and unmarried participants were more satisfied than separated participants. Participants who were part-time enrollees were more satisfied than those who were enrolled as full-time students.

The participants in this study had high or very high impressions of their advisors. The participants considered their advisors to be easy to talk to, helpful, and effective. They also thought that the advisors had a good sense of humor. Female participants tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than the male participants, and 18 year old participants tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than those participants older than 18. Part-time students tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than full-time students. Finally, those participants who worked 1-10 hours per week tended to rate their impressions of their advisors higher than participants who worked more than 10 hours per week and those who were unemployed.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Jessie Pearl Breland Johnson and the late Edward Johnson. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Eldridge, and to my children, Lloyd and Jessica.

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First, the author would like to give honor to God, who makes all things possible. Sincere thanks are extended to Dr. J. T. Johnson of the University of Southern Mississippi for his statistical guidance, encouraging words, and support. The author expresses her sincere appreciation to the dissertation committee members: Dr. Connie Forde, Dr. James Davis, and Dr. Marty Wiseman. A special thank you is extended to the dissertation committee chair, Dr. Anthony Olinzock, for his patience and direction. A special thank you is extended to Dr. Willis Lott, Dr. Mary Graham, Dr. Janet Moody, and Ms. Cheryl Bond of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College for allowing me to conduct the research on the Perkinston campus.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Academic advisement has played a vital role in academia. According to King (1993), academic advising is the only structured service on the college campus that guarantees the student some type of interaction with a concerned college representative and provides a direct line to other support services such as counseling, career planning, financial aid, and tutoring.

The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA; as cited in Cook, 1999) indicated that academic advising appeared as early as the late 1820s at Kenyon College in Ohio. Each student was paired with a faculty member who served as the student's advisor. As noted by Hardee's (1970) historical accounts, Rutherford B. Hayes—the 19th president of the United States—was a student at Kenyon College around the dawn of the academic advising movement. While attending Kenyon, Hayes wrote a letter to his mother describing his first experience with what is now referred to as academic advising. In his letter, Hayes briefed his mother on a new concept whereby each student was required to select a faculty member who would serve as advisor and friend to the student.

NACADA (as cited in Cook 1999) indicated that around 1877, Johns Hopkins introduced the first faculty advising system. A decade later, Edward Herrick Griffin was appointed chief of faculty advisors at Johns Hopkins. The 20th Century brought about a multitude of curriculum changes and program specializations. Advising turned sharply

toward specialized areas including personal and vocational. The concept of personal advising centered on the student's psychological needs; while vocational advising was career oriented. The focus of advising was evolving. In the early 1900s, faculty still held the primary advising function.

Cook (1999) noted that advising centers emerged during the 1970s and 1980s. Advising centers became a delivery system for advising, and the number of full-time professional advisors increased. In 1982, many colleges incorporated University 101 into the curriculum. University 101 was initially designed as an advising and orientation seminar for undecided students. By 1983, the need for advisement in higher education was still rising.

According to Cook (1999), the American College Testing (ACT) and NACADA took great leaps to further the profession of academic advising by establishing national recognition for academic advisors and advising programs. The academic advising field gained further exposure and expansion when, in 1986, the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) prepared standards for academic advising. The new standards paid significant attention to the advising mission, administration, resources, facilities, and ethics.

Significance

The academic advising services offered on the community college campus are crucial to the student's ability to transfer to an institution of higher learning, to obtain a certificate or degree, and ultimately to the student's ability to remain in school.

According to L. J. Campomenosi, a long-term adjunct professor at Tulane University, a student may develop negative impressions of the college if the student does not have

positive interactions with faculty members and academic advisors. (L. J. Campomenosi, personal communication, June 15, 2005). Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College uses faculty members to provide advising services. As reported by Crockett (1982), there are several problems with faculty advisors. For example, faculty advisors tend to be subject matter orientated and do not have information related to the whole institution. At times, faculty advisors may distribute inaccurate or outdated information to the students. Also, Crockett (1982) stated that some faculty advisors are inaccessible to students and others do not possess the temperament or interest level to provide effective advising.

The results of this study informed the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College administration about the career technical students' impressions of the academic advisors and the career technical students' satisfaction levels with the current academic advising services.

Statement of the Problem

Comments by students and faculty indicated that academic advising services were not being used by the community college in a manner that would promote student retention and encourage students to set goals. The researcher believed that there might have been an academic advising gap between the kind of advising services students expected to receive and the reality of the kind of advising services provided. According to Winston and Sandor (1984), students want to be considered partners in the advising process, not just recipients of advice. Students desire to be involved in course selection, career planning, and the overall advising process. Therefore, students' impressions of the advisors and students' satisfaction with advising would be important factors to be

considered if college administrators were dedicated to providing the students with the proper tools to create, maintain, and strive toward educational goals.

After talking with various academic advisors at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, the researcher concluded that advising caseloads and the time set aside for advisement were not consistent with CAS guidelines. According to M. D. Heim, professor, advisor and department chair at Mississippi Gulf Community College, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College currently has, in some cases, one advisor assigned to as many or more than 50 advisees (M. D. Heim, personal communication April, 3, 2006).

The focus of this study was to investigate career/technical students' satisfaction with academic advising at a rural community college and to investigate whether there were any relationships between students' satisfaction and various demographic characteristics. The study investigated students' impressions of academic advisors and whether there were any relationships between students' impressions and various demographic characteristics. The researcher used the Survey of Academic Advising from ACT, Inc. The Survey of Academic Advising was developed by the Evaluation Survey Service (ESS) and ACT and was used to measure students' satisfaction and impressions (See Appendix A).

Purpose

This study was the first attempt to evaluate the college's career/technical current advising practices. The purpose of this study was to determine how the career/technical students' perceived the college's advising system. The study investigated students' satisfaction with advising and students' impressions of their advisors. The college might

use the data obtained from this study to provide feedback to the career/technical advising faculty. The feedback will show the advisors where they are excelling and which areas need work. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College might want to expand on this study by administering the ACT Survey of Academic Advising to the entire student body.

Research Questions

The researcher used the following research questions to guide the study:

1. How satisfied are students with advisors' assistance on topics discussed? (As identified by the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)
2. What are the relationships between satisfaction with advisors' assistance on topics discussed and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? (Demographics on the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)
3. What are students' impressions of the academic advisors? (As identified by the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)
4. What are the relationships between students' impressions of their academic advisors and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? (Demographics on the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)

Delimitations

The study was conducted during the fall semester of 2010. Only students enrolled in career/technical classes at Mississippi Gulf Community College, Perkinston campus,

were asked to participate in the study. The Perkinston campus is considered a rural community college. The study was limited to career technical students at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College

Limitations

The results of this research were limited to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston campus career/technical students who participated in the survey. Findings were not generalized to any other rural community college or any other campus within the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College system.

The study was not generalized to anyone other than the study participants. The level of satisfaction with advisors' assistance on topics discussed and students' impressions of the academic advisors varied based on the individual faculty member's ability to provide academic advising to students. The students' honesty in responding to the survey questions may limit this study. The demographic variables investigated include: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average.

Definition of Terms

Terms that were technical in nature, subject to multiple interpretations, or unique to this study are defined as follows:

Academic advising is a systematic process whereby advisor and advisee share a close relationship that is intended to aid the advisee (student) in developing achievable personal, career, and educational goals. The term is often used interchangeably with counseling (Winston, Ender, & Miller, 1982).

Career education as defined by Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (Catalog, 2010-2011), leads to the diploma track. Students who complete the requirements receive a diploma of completion from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. The program may be completed in one year. Students who complete the diploma requirements may elect to pursue an Associate of Applied Science degree in another field. Career education programs include landscape management technology and welding.

Centralized advising most often includes an advising center, center director and advising staff members housed in one central location (Pardee, 2000).

Decentralized advising occurs when faculty or staff members in their perspective academic departments advise students (Pardee, 2000).

Developmental advising is a rational process whereby students and advisors share responsibility for the nature of the advising relationship and the quality of the advising experience (Crookston, 1972).

Faculty-Only advising model occurs when faculty members conduct all advising in their offices (Pardee, 2000).

Technical education, as defined by Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (Catalog, 2010-2011), leads to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Associate of Applied Science degree. Technical education programs include Business and Office Technology, Local Area Networking Technology, Child Development Technology, Graphic Design Technology, Computer Servicing Technology, Drafting and Design Technology, Horticulture Technology, Funeral Service Technology, Golf/Recreational Turf Management Technology, and Web Development Technology.

Traditional or prescriptive advising is based upon a relationship built on the influence of the advisor and the limitation of the student; for example, the student brings a problem to the advisor for elucidation. Advisors tend to answer clear-cut questions but rarely address more far-reaching academic concerns (Crookston, 1972; Fielstein, 1994).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic Advising in America's Colleges

According to Smith and Gordan (2003), academic advising provides an opportunity for the student and advisor to engage in an essential personal relationship, which is on-going throughout the college career of the student. The advising relationship is two-sided, whereby the advisor and student share in the decision-making process. Advisors are responsible for monitoring academic progress, explaining general education requirements, helping students to identify activities and programs that are reflective of the student's interests, and referring the student to other resources. As a crucial part of the academic advising process, the student is responsible for making his or her own decisions based upon the advice or information the advisor offers (Smith & Gordan, 2003). Pizzolato (2008) stated, "An academic advisor who has built a one-on-one relationship with a student over an extended period is in an ideal position to become a partner in helping shape the advisee's academic experience" (p. 18).

Miller (2001) noted that because academic advising is such an essential part of the collegiate educational process, people with an interest in professional advising work to establish guidelines for academic advising. The guidelines are intended to inform and to promote the proliferation of academic advising efforts on college campuses nationwide. According to Miller (2001), academic advising has been influenced strongly by CAS. CAS develops and promulgates standards that enhance the quality of student learning

experiences in higher education. The CAS philosophy includes beliefs about excellence in higher education, collaboration between teacher and student, ethics, student development, and student responsibility for learning (Miller, 2001).

Miller (2001) indicated that CAS was established in 1979 first as the Council for Student Services/Development programs and included a consortium of professional associations representing student affairs practitioners. Members of nearly 30 professional groups pooled talents and resources to develop and disseminate professional standards and guidelines about educational programs and services, of which academic advising is one. Miller noted that, according to CAS, academic advising is essential to the student's collegiate experiences. Also, academic advising is common to all colleges and universities. At one time, only faculty delivered academic advising. More recently, academic advising has been delivered by professional full-time staff members, graduate students, and at times, undergraduates (Miller, 2001).

The CAS name was adopted in 1992 and includes all programs for students enrolled in all higher education divisions including students classified as traditional, nontraditional, undergraduate, or graduate. Miller (2001) noted CAS is responsible for overseeing the systematic review and periodic revision of existing standards and guidelines. The guidelines relate to the following areas: mission, program, leadership, organization and management, human resources, financial resources, facilities, technology and equipment, legal responsibilities, equal opportunity, access and affirmative action, campus and community relations, diversity, ethics, assessment and evaluation (Miller, 2001).

Mission

According to Farren and Vowell (2000), the mission of the academic advising program must be clearly stated and visibly connected to the institution's mission statement to be effective. The fundamental focus of an academic advising program is to assist students in creating educational plans and life goals. This focus is similar to what is found in most college mission statements. Therefore, the fundamental focus should be evident in the college's academic advising mission statement (Farren & Vowell, 2000).

According to White (2000), the institution's mission drives the development of the academic advising mission statement. White explained that career schools that prepare students for the world of work should place heavy emphasis on career development in the advising program; which would be contrary to that of a liberal arts school whereby education may be seen as an essential element for preparing students to enter the workforce. White concluded that the mission of any advising program should espouse the program's commitment to helping students in the development and implementation of educational goals.

Theoretical Framework

According to Frank (2005), an advisor at Penn State University, advising is simple. Frank encouraged his advisees to figure out what they enjoy and everything else will follow. He encouraged his students to try different things and if those things did not work out to try something else. For many students, this trial and error tactic is too time consuming and they need a more organized strategy. Most academic advising theories avoid such methods. Titley and Titley (1982) took a more logical approach. They suggested, when devising curricula, programs, and advising services, greater attention

should be given to the educational and vocational stages appropriate for college level students.

The concept of self-authorship was first described by Kegan (1994) and later expanded upon by Baxter-Magolda (2001). Self-authorship explores three areas: cognitive dimension, intrapersonal dimension, and interpersonal dimension. Students who are self-authored would be more likely to choose majors that are of interest to them and engage in critical thinking about the choices that they make and develop healthy relationships with others.

Pizzolato (2008) stated that by establishing one-on-one relationships with students, advisers could have a hand in molding the advisee's academic experience over an extended period of time. Pizzolato discussed using as a guide the principles of the Learning Partnership Model (LPM) in order to restructure academic advising. The principles of LPM include: validating students as knowers, situating learning in the student experience, and defining learning as mutually constructing meaning. Advisers could use these principles to promote student development and learning because the advising relationship extends beyond a one-time experience.

Hirsch (2001) proposed a multiple-intervention model, which provided a comprehensive approach to identifying academic problems and building intervention systems. In Hirsch's model, motivation was synonymous with readiness to study. In this particular model, motivation was measured on three levels. According to Hirsch, students classified as Motivation Level 1 were not motivated at all or were pressured into their study. The Motivation Level 2 students were more undecided and thought of their study as a second choice; however, the Motivation Level 3 students were highly impelled and driven to succeed in their pursuit of academic excellence. The Motivation Level 3

students were more likely to have clear reasons for selecting their academic program of study.

According to King (2006), advisors should help advisees focus on identifying and achieving realistic goals, make connections between academic courses so that learning may become more integrated, and become in tune with how one's own life and academic experiences connect. Students may be more successful if they work from goals that they create for themselves. Baxter-Magolda (2001) stated that if students adopt goals developed by someone else, they might become dissatisfied and find it desirable to shift courses later. Establishing goals for oneself and working to accomplish those goals during the college years is better than trying to change the course later in life.

Advisor Caseloads

Academic advising caseloads are often taxing on college faculty. As early as 1953, Maclean referred to academic advising as a clerical activity filled with random conferences with students over curricular issues. Maclean (1953) also alluded to the premise that the majority of college professors hated the tedious tasks associated with academic advising. Decades after Maclean's statements, a NACADA (2000) member survey revealed that some academic advisors were satisfied or very satisfied with specific areas of academic advising. The results concluded that advisors were content with the following areas of advising: direct advising workload (71%), advising associated workload (61%), advisee load (54%), administrative workload (53%), institutional backing (35%), and level to which advisors opinions were considered (33%).

According to Miller (2001), CAS states that caseloads must be consistent with the time that is required for effective advisement. In other words, an institution should

consider the number of students each advisor is assigned and should guarantee that ample time is provided so that each student receives adequate and timely advisement without being rushed or poorly advised. Habley (2004) found that a frequent topic of discussion among advising professionals related to an appropriate ratio of advisors to students. However, according to Habley (2004), the advising field has not produced enough critical research on the relationship between advisor caseload and either advisor effectiveness or student satisfaction.

Leadership

Miller (2001) found a thriving advisement program has successful and effective leadership. A good academic advising program leader is a visionary and should have a firm understanding of academic advising and how it fits into the institution and how it fits with the students.

As recorded by Beatty (1991), Toni Trombley was an academic advising leader in the late 1970s. She forged the way for the professional field of academic advising by helping to create the first conferences and the first national academic advising professional association, NACADA. During the early years of academic advising development, Trombley made the following statements regarding academic advising: (a) advising has a measurable impact on students; (b) advising must be recognized within the institution; (c) advising must have well-articulated goals; (d) components and criteria for quality advising must be isolated for the purposes of research, improvement, and evaluation; (e) research is needed to discover new advising methods and to improve present methods; and (f) central coordination of advising is necessary to prevent fragmentation and to maintain advising excellence.

Technology

According to Allen and Seaman (2008), online education enrollments are rising. Online education opportunities are available and advising services are needed to guide these students toward educational goals. Betts and Lanza-Gladney (2009) suggested several academic advising tactics to connect online students to the college community and to retain online students. The strategies included online chats with advisors, Internet broadcasts of campus events, blog and resource portals, and mentoring programs. According to Steadman (1995), the following forces might impede implementing technology into the advising process: economic constraints, regulatory compliance, and the need for better student records systems.

According to Betts and Lanza-Gladney (2009), Drexel University implemented Online Human Touch (OHT) into the online Master of Science in Higher Education Program. The OHT was designed tackle student attrition. The OHT program engaged students and helped to personalize the educational endeavor. As a result of the OHT, the university experienced lower student attrition and higher student satisfaction.

Organization and Management

Not only is leading important, but also so is organization and management. Creating an environment in which the college and the students function in harmony is critical to any college administration. Banning (1989) described the interactions between the student and the campus environment as the campus ecology. Policy and procedures help to maintain a healthy campus ecology and indemnify that the institution functions effectively and to the good of all involved. A written book of policies and procedures relating specifically to academic advising should be available to faculty and advisors. According to Miller (2001), CAS guidelines require that policies and procedures relating

to organizational structure, written expectations for employee performance, effective communication, conflict resolution and conflict management should be in place. Recognition and reward processes should also be available. The academic advising program should be organized in such a way that it is compatible with the institution's organizational structure and student needs. Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly defined, published, and disseminated to advisors and students.

Human Resources and Satisfaction

Staffing is important but so are the morale and the satisfaction levels of staff members. An acute focus on advisor satisfaction is essential to the advising program. Understanding and meeting the needs of the academic advising program and the advising staff is crucial. A study conducted by Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, and Morrell (2000) found administrators and faculty members in higher education are less satisfied in their jobs than others in the general populace. However, as reported in a national survey of academic advisor job satisfaction by Donnelly (2009), both by average ratings and frequencies of responses, academic advisors were mostly satisfied with their occupations. Of those who responded to the survey, 79% agreed or strongly agreed that they were overall satisfied, 76% enjoyed coming to work, and 68% were not planning to leave the advising profession. In a qualitative study, Epps (2002) concluded that advisors were, in general, satisfied with their work and were predominantly satisfied with the support they received from supervisors and colleagues, with work variety, and with the high level of independence the profession provided.

Moser and Chong (1995) suggested that advisors were expected to understand their jobs, receive adequate job training, and be aware of the interpersonal nature of the

advising work. Barnett, Roach, and Smith (2006) recommended that advisors use effective listening and communication skills when dealing with advisees.

Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrill, and Haase (1968) created a Microskills Hierarchy. Microskills can be used in the advising session to help the advisor interact more readily with the advisee. The Microskills include attending and listening. Listening includes asking questions, observing, guiding conversation, and reflecting upon feelings. Attending may be defined as using eye contact, body language, and vocal tone.

The professional staff should be competent enough to provide help to the students and work to help each student establish educational goals. Professionals should actively analyze student goals to determine if the student and institution are compatible. The admissions professional should be knowledgeable of guidance counseling on all admissions matters and concerns, including, but not limited to, marketing, financial aid, testing, and sensitivity to diversity. All information about programs and activities should be presented to the students in an objective and ethical manner. Personnel should be familiar with the college catalog, all academic programs, admission policies and other services and social characteristics of the institution (Miller, 2001).

Facilities, Accessibility, and Satisfaction

Facilities, technology, and equipment are important when considering adequate access, health, and safety. Donnelly (2009) concluded, as reported in a national survey of academic advisor job satisfaction, that academic advisors need sufficient workspace to thrive and advise successfully. The work environments should promote effective communication and clear communication channels. The NACADA member survey (2000) revealed that 34% of the advising professionals, who were surveyed, rated their

office space inadequate or quite inadequate. Advisors should work in an area that is conducive to communication and is susceptible to free mobility.

According to Miller (2001), the academic advising program must have sufficient and properly located facilities. Technology and equipment should be up-to-date and be able to support the programs' mission and goals. In other words, academic advisors should be available to students in areas that meet federal, state and local requirements and be totally accessible to all students including those with physical disabilities. Advisors must have access to computing equipment connected to local networks, student databases, and the Internet. Facilities should be created so that students and advisors function in a private counseling area that is free of visual and auditory distractions.

No matter how accessible the academic advising services and facilities are to the students, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to seek out academic advising services. Moreover, according to research conducted by Henning (2009), those who are highly motivated toward academic excellence are more likely to follow through on their intentions to access academic advising services than those who are at lower motivational levels. Motivational Levels might be classified as motivational levels one (high), two, and three (low). Henning found that 40% of those surveyed at Motivation Level 3 and 24% of those surveyed at Motivation Level 1 intended to access academic services and received services. Like Henning (2009), Eccles and Wigfield (2002) researched students and their access to academic advising services. They outlined factors that might be involved in the student's choice to access academic services. Those factors might be related to the student's apparent fundamental value of academic services, sense of usefulness of the services, and the concept of time and convenience of the services.

Legalities

According to Lords (2000), the Richland Community College District in Dallas, Texas, was fined over \$250,000 for advising errors over a 10-year period. In order to prevent advising errors, Richland employed a computer software program that would warn the advisor of some potential advising hazards and errors, especially if students tried to enroll in classes that required a certain test score. According to Miller (2001), it is important for academic advisors to understand the legal ramifications associated with academic advising. Advisors should look to specific sources for legal obligations and limitations when advising students. These sources include constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law. Other sources include mandatory laws and orders stemming from federal, state, and local governments. The institution's policies should also be followed in order to limit the liability of the institution and its officers. Academic advisors must employ the best practices available to limit the liability of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. Overall, it is the responsibility of the institution to keep advisors and students informed of the changing legal obligations and potential liabilities. The institution should provide advisors with the needed legal advice to carry out assigned duties (Miller, 2001).

Demographics, Diversity, and Student Impressions

The idea of diversity in advising became a discussion topic in the 1980s. According to King (1993), students came to community colleges from a broad variety of backgrounds. Many were first generation students, and some were undecided about their education or career plans. Many of the community college students arrived on campus completely underprepared for college and required reading, writing, or math remediation. There were a vast number of students who were from underrepresented populations.

Previously, Boyer (1988) noted that community colleges enrolled 55% of Native American students, 43% of African American students and 42% of all Asian students who attend institutions of higher learning in America.

Earlier accounts reported by Schein, Laff, and Allen (1987), revealed that people of color brought an array of issues with them to the college campus. Those issues ranged from ethnic pride to the debilitating effects of racism and discrimination. For advisors to successfully advise across cultures, it was imperative that advisors become aware of cultural backgrounds and differences. Later, Brown and Rivas (1995) stated that a student's past experiences with immigration, naturalization, or some other bureaucratic agency might cause one to be reluctant to participate in the advising process. As noted by Brown and Rivas (1995), past experiences with racism and prejudices might cause many people of color to be leery of people from different backgrounds. Distrust by the minority student, might lead the student away from academic services. For example, in a study conducted by Sanchez and Atkinson (1983), Mexican American students preferred to work with helping and caring professionals who shared their same ethnicity. Ultimately the student might seek a counselor or advisor who was culturally sensitive rather than one who was not. For example, research conducted by Pomales, Claiborn and LaFramboise (1986) concluded that African American students viewed counselors as competent, if the counselor was sensitive to cultural differences.

Ramirez and Evans (1988) conducted a study of minority students on academic probation. They found several factors that would contribute to students' not progressing satisfactorily. Among those factors were poor scheduling and inappropriate course selection, low student use of support services, job schedules, financial difficulties, and the lack of a mandatory advising process. Ramirez and Evans (1988) concluded that

minority students on academic probation are high-risk students and effective advising would be relevant to the success and retention of high-risk students.

Diverse age groups are found on the community college campus. Many community college students may be classified as non-traditional students. Richter-Antion (1986) once noted that nontraditional students exhibited a greater sense of purpose, had stronger consumer orientations, and had an array of non-school related responsibilities. Nontraditional students usually did not have an age cohort and often experienced scarce social tolerability and support for their student position.

According to Miller (2001), the CAS standards indicated diversity enriches the collegiate community. Therefore, the academic advising program should promote an educational environment whereby similarities and variations among people are accepted and respected. In other words, the advising program should nurture cultural education practices that intensify the understanding of one's own culture and heritage and that encourage respect of similarities, variances, and histories of different cultures. Academic advising program personnel must concentrate on the needs and characteristics of a diverse populace when developing and employing policies and procedures.

Overall, according to Miller (2001), the CAS standards indicate, academic advising personnel should practice good ethical behavior when dealing with funds, technology, students, and other staff members. Harassment, demeaning behavior, intimidation, and any other hostility directed towards students should be prohibited. Academic advisors are expected to avoid personal conflict of interests and actions in regards to students while continuing to promote an advising community filled with fairness, objectivity and impartial treatment toward all students and staff.

Assessing and Evaluating Advising Programs

Academic advising is difficult to evaluate. Cremer and Ryan (1984) reported the staff at West Virginia University became deeply concerned about whether the university was providing relevant academic advising to its students. Previously the college evaluated teacher performance in the classroom, but started to consider that teachers may perform exceptionally well in a classroom yet perform poorly in other areas of teaching. The need to evaluate teaching performance was always considered necessary, but evaluating student perceptions toward the teacher as an academic advisor became an issue at West Virginia University. Around 1984, the School of Journalism at West Virginia University used a questionnaire to measure students' perceptions of the quality of academic advising. While the university worked to develop the questionnaire, faculty members had the opportunity to critique the questionnaire and provide comments. The questionnaire was pilot-tested twice during development. The questionnaire was disseminated, and the findings suggested the quality of academic advising could be monitored successfully over time. Based on the data collected, each time the questionnaire was distributed at the university, the quality of academic advising improved over time. According to the data, some advisors did what was necessary overtime to improve students' perceptions of the quality of academic advising. The results of the university's questionnaire were used specifically to encourage faculty members to improve their advising techniques and not used to punish teachers who scored poorly (Cremer & Ryan, 1984).

Richland Community College in Dallas was also interested in providing better advisement and orientation services to its students. The college evaluated and assessed its overall situation and developed an orientation program by CD ROM that turned

around a deficient advising and orientating plan. According to Lords (2000), Richland Community College created a budget of \$740,000 that was dedicated to advising and orientating students. Richland was a largely diverse school, especially in the areas of age, race, and economic background. At the time, the average student was 32 years old and 80% of the students who attended Richland were employed. Lords also reported that an alarming 60% of Richland students were enrolled in remediation courses, and many of the students had not taken the ACT or SAT. Apparently many students were unprepared and needed proper advising and orientation. Richland decided to create an advising and orientation CD ROM. The CD ROM package was a huge success. More than 100 computer terminals were available for students to use on campus. Sixty percent of the Richland students owned a personal computer. The college made watching the CD ROM mandatory for all students who failed the Texas Academic Skills Program Test (Lords, 2000).

National Academic Advising Association

Miller (2001) noted that NACADA works to support academic advisors and their programs. Miller also indicated NACADA is an organization of professional faculty, administrators, advisors, students and others from various settings who conduct academic advising or work to promote quality academic advising on college campuses. NACADA provides an opportunity for debate, discussion, and the exchange of ideas pertaining to academic advising through various activities and publications. Members of NACADA represent over the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and several other countries (Miller, 2001).

According to Beatty (1991), NACADA blossomed from the first National Conference on Academic Advising in 1977. NACADA membership included most higher education institutions and was comprised of professional advisors, counselors, faculty, administrators and students who served as peer advisors.

The birth and rise of NACADA played a vital role in the development of academic advising. Beatty (1991) also indicated NACADA grew from the vision of Toni Trombley. Trombley was the director of academic advising services at the University of Vermont. The first NACADA conference was held in October 1977 in Burlington, Vermont. From the first conference came a national association, a journal of academic advising, and a set of standards for academic advising. Between 1977 and 1978, Trombley went to great lengths to create a task force dedicated to developing an organizational structure and bylaws, planning future conferences, creating a system for regional planning and membership drives. The task force was responsible for coining the NACADA acronym. The association was officially named at the second conference in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1978, incorporated in Vermont in 1979, and the bylaws were confirmed at the third national conference in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1979 (Beatty, 1991).

Beatty (1991) reported the first two NACADA conferences in 1977 and 1978 were laden with experts in the advising field. Keynote speakers included N. T. Winston, Thomas Jones, and Alexander Astin. During the 1977 conference in Burlington and the 1978 conference in Memphis, keynoters and conference sessions focused on the direct impact of advising and how advising made a difference. Conference sessions addressed such issues as the development of advising models, advisor training, assessment, peer advising, computer-assisted advising, advising special populations, advisor handbooks and faculty and professional advisors. Many topics that were addressed at the early

conferences revolved around issues that were far-fetched at the time but are common place in the 21st century; for example, they addressed such issues as computer assisted advising, special populations, adult students, honors students, and paraprofessional students (Beatty, 1991).

Since its beginning, NACADA (2005) has been dedicated to the betterment of academic advising as a profession and to the importance that advising holds in the institution. In 1991, a group of NACADA members began to develop a code of ethics to be followed by anyone who provided academic advising services. In 1994 the final draft was submitted to the association and adopted. This code of ethics is called NACADA's Statement of Core Values.

The Core Values (NACADA, 2005) serve as a reference point for professional use and should be used to validate academic advising conduct. The Core Values are stated as follows:

1. Advisors are responsible to the students and individuals they serve.
2. Advisors are responsible for inviting others, when proper, into the advising process.
3. Advisors are responsible to the college or university in which they work.
4. Advisors are responsible to higher education generally.
5. Advisors are responsible to the community (including the local community, state, and region) in which the institution is located.
6. Advisors are responsible for their professional role as advisors and as an individual.

Models of Academic Advising

Academic advising may be decentralized or centralized. In the decentralized organizational model, faculty or staff in their academic departments provide services while a centralized model consists of an administrative unit usually called an advising center. The advising center usually has a director and an advising staff housed in one department.

Decentralized Models

Habley and McCauley (1987) identified two decentralized organizational advising models: the Satellite Model and the Faculty-Only Model. The Satellite Model provides for advising to take place in centrally located offices within each academic subunit of the institution. For example, colleges within a university would be responsible for advising students who are majoring in areas associated with that college or school. The Faculty-Only Model is common in smaller settings like rural community colleges. Decentralized advising centers may be costly due to spacing, staffing, and operating funds. Another weakness associated with the decentralized model deals with transitioning from one advising center to the other. According to Gordon (1992), students who are undecided or who change majors may experience difficulty when transitioning from one advising center to the other.

As reported by Habley and McCauley (1997) in the 1997 ACT National Survey of Academic Advising, of respondents, 28% of 754 responding institutions identified using the Faculty-Only Model, while 6% cited using the Satellite Model. The Faculty-Only Model tended to be preferred by smaller two-year and four-year institutions and the Satellite Model was used predominately in larger institutions with more than 10,000 students.

Centralized Models

Habley (1983) referred to the Self-Contained Model as meeting the criteria of a centralized organizational structure. In this instance, a central administrative unit provides all advising. That administrative unit, which is headed by a dean or director who manages all advising tasks for the institution, provides all advising of students, from initial orientation to graduation.

Habley (1983) identified four models with both centralized and decentralized systems: the Supplementary Model, the Split Model, the Dual Model and the Total Intake Model. In the Supplementary Model, all students have departmental advisors. The advising offices serve the department advisors by providing advising information systems, policies, and advisor training. The Split Model allows students with the same major to be assigned to faculty of the same major. Undeclared students or students without a major are assigned to staff members residing in the advising center. The Dual Model permits students to have two advisors who guide them through their degree program. The Dual Model provides the student with one advisor from the major department and one advisor staff member from the central advising office. The advisor staff member serves as a liaison to handle general education issues, college policies, and academic procedures. The Total Intake Model allows all initial advising to occur in a central advising unit, for example, the office of undergraduate services, a freshman center, or counseling center. Once students have met specified criteria, such as completion of a required number of credits or fulfillment of general education requirements, the student is referred to the academic subunit of that student's major. The remainder of the advising takes place within their academic programs. The Total Intake Model recognizes the importance of trained staff and central access and takes into

account the balance of resources offered by advisors in the academic departments (Habley, 1983).

Model Utilization

As reported by Habley and Morales (1998), the 1997 ACT National Survey of Academic Advising revealed patterns of model utilization. For example, 28% of respondents from 754 mostly smaller two-year and four-year institutions with fewer than 5,000 students cited using the Faculty-Only Model. The survey revealed that 54% of 754 institutions used one of the shared organizational structures. The Split Model was most typically cited by 27% of the respondents with a relatively even distribution among schools with fewer than 5,000 students, midsize schools with fewer than 9,999 students and larger schools with more than 10,000 students. According to the 1997 ACT Survey, the Split Model was the choice of both two-year and four-year public institutions. Of the schools surveyed, 20% employed the Supplementary Model. The survey revealed that the Supplementary Model appeared to be used more frequently at small to medium sized institutions that were two-year and four-year, and were used more often in mostly private institutions rather than public.

Belcheir (1999) conducted research at a large public university that employed several different modes of advising. The university offered advisement by faculty members, advisement by peer counselors, advisement by advising center staff, and some students did not use an advisor. Belcheir's research also revealed that students were most satisfied when they were advised by advising center staff. The next most satisfied group consisted of the students who were advised by faculty. In terms of satisfaction

with the advising system, Belcheir found very little difference between being advised by peer counselors and having no advisor at all.

Developmental and Traditional Academic Advising

There are basically two types of advising— traditional and developmental. Traditional advising may also be called prescriptive advising. According to Creamer and Scott (2000), the prescriptive advising approach is concerned with requirements for a specific course or degree. Crookston (1972) defined traditional advising as a relationship built on the authority of the advisor and the limitation of the student. For example, the student will bring problems to the advisor for solutions. In the traditional advising situation, the advisor tends to answer specific questions but usually does not address more comprehensive concerns.

Ender (1997) referred to developmental advising as a special relationship between advisor and advisee, in which the relationship is supportive of the student's quest for a better educational experience. He also stated that the developmental academic advising relationship involves an ongoing student and advisor interaction activity that functions as an organized method. The developmental process goes beyond course registration and scheduling and utilizes a full range of community and college resources to aid the student in attaining educational and personal goals. In summary, Ender noted the developmental academic advising process helps the student to seek out the greatest possible benefits of higher education. Like Ender, Frost (1991) referred to a model of shared responsibility as a practical means for accomplishing developmental advising. Frost stated, "When developmental advising enhances the decision-making skills of students and outcomes

are measured, evaluation can be used to demonstrate positive education outcomes for students” (p. 66).

Creamer and Scott (2000) stated that developmental advising requires advisors to be knowledgeable on a broader range of topics. The developmental process is intentional and encourages students to discuss and set personal, life, and career goals. According to Ender and Wilkie (2000), a college should validate and develop the student’s life purpose. They believed that graduating from college should lead to a meaningful outcome. For that reason, it is the duty of the advisor and the advising program to encourage students to develop a life purpose plan and development can occur throughout the advising relationship. The wise advisor considers the students’ interests, aptitudes and chosen academic or career path. Lifestyles, graduate school, and geographic preferences are paramount when helping a student to plan life goals.

According to research conducted by Herndon, Kaiser, and Creamer (1996), both men and women prefer developmental academic advising to traditional academic advising. Women were found to have a significantly higher preference for the developmental method than male students.

Developmental academic advising takes a much different approach than prescriptive advising. According to Raushi (1993), developmental academic advising is an ongoing process. It reflects the idea of movement and progression. According to Raushi, to advise developmentally is to view the student at work on life tasks and in context of his or her whole life setting that includes the college experiences.

Early academic advising research concluded that developmental advising was reflective of human development. In 1979, Egan and Cowan proposed that human development is a function of the interaction between people and human systems in which

they are involved and of the interaction between these systems. They suggested that any approach to meeting the developmental needs of people must keep individuals and the systems in which they live in focus at the same time. Miller and McCaffrey (1982) identified basic principles common to human development. Human development is continuous, follows the simple-to-complex continuum, and tends to be orderly and stage related. According to these principles, developmental academic advising focuses on the whole person and works with the student where the student is at a particular stage in life.

Ender, Winston, and Miller (1982) embraced the principles identified by Miller and McCaffrey. They moved beyond the work of Miller and McCaffrey by identifying characteristics of developmental advising and defined the developmental orientation process as follows: (a) developmental advising is a process, (b) developmental advising is concerned with human growth, (c) developmental advising is goal related and its goals are central to its purpose, (d) developmental advising requires the establishment of caring human relationship, (e) advisors serve as adult role models and mentors, (f) developmental advising is the cornerstone of collaboration between academia and student affairs; and finally (g) developmental advising utilizes all campus and community resources.

Student Retention

Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) stated that students who convey a greater involvement or engagement in academic work or the college experience attain a greater level of knowledge acquisition and general cognitive development. In other words, students who are highly involved in school might not be as prone to drop out. Those who seek out knowledge are likely to stay in school and attain their educational goals.

According to Cohen and Brawer (1987), the community college student is considered at risk with regard to student retention. Many community college students have barriers to academic success. Family pressures and poor academic skills may sometimes hinder student degree attainment. The lack of support may also hinder student retention. According to research conducted by Hagedorn, Maxwell, Rodriguez, Hocesvar, and Fillpot (2000) student clubs, concerts, art events, and athletics do not play major parts in the community college student's daily campus activities. In other words the classroom is the community college student's primary focus.

To understand how far advising has come, it is paramount that one understand the advising research of the past. Some of the first academic advising studies were conducted in the 1970s. Many of the earliest studies, concerning academic advising, pointed to academic advising services as a key to student retention. Glennen (1976), Noel (1976), and Cartensen and Silberhorn (1979) all conducted studies relating to student retention in college and how it applies to academic advising services. Several experts conducted research in the advising field and their findings pointed to the idea that effective academic advising would improve student retention. Among those experts were Crockett (1978), Lenning, Sauer, and Beal (1980), Lewis, Leach, and Lutz (1983), and Noel (1976). Another study conducted by Farmer and Barbour (1980) concluded that academic advising substantially improved student retention. Crockett (1978) believed that effective academic advising was necessary for student retention. Crockett noted that effective advising: (a) helps students develop more mature education and career goals; (b) strengthens the relationship between academia and the world of work; and (c) contributes to a more positive attitude and better performance. Past research has proven that effective academic advising will retain students.

Tinto (1987) cited a number of statistics about retention. First, he noted that only 29.5% of the entering cohort in a two-year college would continue over a two-year period of the initial college enrollment. Second, Tinto discovered that 46% of all two-year college entrants would eventually obtain a two- or four-year degree. Tinto also stated that most students are more likely to exit higher education during the first year of college whereby it is higher during the first six weeks of the first semester.

Like Tinto (1987), Beal and Noel (1980) conducted retention studies. According to research conducted by Beal and Noel, inadequate academic advising was the strongest negative aspect related to student retention, while a considerate attitude displayed by faculty and staff and high quality advising surfaced as the strongest positive factors affecting retention. Epps (2002) stated that most colleges were concerned with student retention and conducted research to determine ways to retain students; however, many of these institutions missed the mark by not attacking the issues relating to the academic advisors—a key dynamic in student retention.

Smith (1983) surveyed non-returning students in a community and technical college. Smith found that counseling and advising services were listed as the most important factors in retaining students. Smith found that if those services had been effective, students would have been encouraged to stay in school. A few years later, Web (1987) identified effective academic and career advising and friendship with at least one faculty member as factors associated with student persistence or retention.

Studies conducted by Wilkie and Jones (1994) indicated that work-study for a limited number of hours is associated with higher retention and academic performance. Work-study participation, therefore, may benefit the student thorough campus and

community integrations. Work-study also teaches positive work habits and helps the student to develop relationships with professionals and other students.

Astin (1984) stated that student involvement in campus life is an important retention factor and is essential for students to grow as they learn. Student involvement also refines the student's perspective towards citizenship, work, and preprofessional skills.

Ultimately, as stated by Tinto (2006), academic advisors may be instrumental in refining a student's expectations for success by helping the student to achieve an interest and push towards scholarship. The advisor is responsible for providing clear and practical educational guidance to the student. The advisor is instrumental in developing systems of cognitive and emotional support. The advisor has the task of promoting the student as an important member of the institution. In other words, the advisor should create an astute sense of belonging and a drive to succeed in the student.

Student Satisfaction, Perceptions, and Impressions

According to Cohen and Brawer, (1987), in many situations, the community college student might be classified as at risk for dropping out of school. Bean (1980) found some community college students suffer from poor high school achievement. Others experience high pressures at home including job responsibilities (McArthur, 2005). In order to retain students, student satisfaction and impressions of the academic advisors and the advising program are important factors to any institution of higher learning. L. J. Campomenosi (personal communication, July 10, 2008) stated if students are satisfied with the services that they are receiving, they might be more likely to stay in school, reach graduation, or complete a certification. L. J. Campomenosi (personal

communication, July 10, 2008) also indicated if students have good impressions of their advisors and perceive their advisors as accessible and helpful, students may be more inclined to stay in school, complete a program, or take more classes. Research by Pace (2001) concluded that more student-faculty exchanges encourage higher levels of satisfaction with the college experience.

The National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report (Noel-Levitz, 2006) revealed that students who attended four-year public institutions rated academic advising as one of the most important areas on campus. The campus personnel surveyed in this same report did not share the students' opinions. The college personnel placed higher emphasis on instructional effectiveness. The students who participated in the survey placed high importance or high satisfaction on issues related to the following topics: My advisor is knowledgeable about my major requirements; My advisor is approachable; Students feel welcomed to the campus; Drop/add procedures are reasonable; and Faculty members are available after classes and during office hours.

King (1993), citing an ACT survey, indicated that insufficient advising surfaced as the strongest negative aspect in student retention, while high quality advising and a compassionate manner of faculty emerged among the strongest positive factors. Students want to be advised by helpful and competent instructors.

Belcheir (2000) reported findings from a study designed to look into the students' perceptions of advising at Boise State University. The Boise State study focused on junior and senior level students. These particular students were primarily advised within their departments. Only 13% of the students reported that they did not have an advisor. About 80% of those surveyed thought that the current academic advising system adequately met their needs. Most of the students reported that they met with their

advisors on a regular basis. Some of the problems the Boise State students faced were accessibility to the advisors and the advisors' inability or unwillingness to help the student with advising issues. Many of the Boise State students were pleased with their advisors and stated that they had positive relationships with their advisors. Nearly 52% of the Boise State students agreed that their advisors helped them explore careers of interest. The Boise State study included a section whereby students were asked to rate their advisor on a variety of items that characterized good advising practices. The top five items with which students most agreed with were as follows: 79% of those surveyed rated the advisor as approachable and easy to talk to; 81% of those surveyed rated the advisor as on time for appointments; 78% of those surveyed stated that the advisor knows who he or she is; 81% of those surveyed rated the advisor as a good listener; and 71% of those surveyed stated that the advisor checks for mutual understanding between the advisor and advisee. The top five items with which students least agreed with were as follows: 52% of the those surveyed rated the advisor as helpful in career exploration; 52% of those surveyed rated the advisor as being knowledgeable about courses outside of the major field of study; 58% of those surveyed rated the advisor as one to keep the student current with academic changes; 64% of those surveyed rated the advisor as one to be familiar with the student's academic history; and 63% of those surveyed rated the advisor as one to refer the student to other sources when necessary.

The Noel-Levitz consulting firm (2007) produced the National Satisfaction and Priorities Report. The firm compiled data from thousands of students who were attending private and public two-year and four-year institutions across the country. The firm reported on various satisfaction levels of the students as satisfaction related to various demographics and the likelihood of re-enrollment. According to the data, African

American students, attending career institutions had the lowest satisfaction ratings and likelihood to re-enroll. Female students at community colleges reported higher levels of satisfaction and greater likelihood to re-enroll than male students.

As reported by Noel-Levitz (2003) in the Adult Student Priorities Report, adult students viewed instructional effectiveness, academic advising, and campus climate as the most important features of the college experience. According to the National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report produced by the Noel-Levitz Consulting Firm (2007), the top three areas on campus that mattered most to students included: instructional effectiveness, registration effectiveness, and academic advising/counseling. The survey results revealed that the top three areas that mattered most to campus personnel included: concern for the individual, instructional effectiveness, and campus climate.

Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino (2004) conducted a study that used a policy capturing approach to examine the advising variables that contributed to student satisfaction. The study did not find differences in the relative weights allotted to the advising variables across participant cultural background or year in school. The study revealed that students ages 25 years and younger preferred that the advisors knew them by name more than those over the age of 25 did. The study did reveal that women favored a warm advising relationship more than men did. According to Eagly (1987), unlike men, women are socialized to be more relationship driven.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College has in place a comprehensive advisement system, which has been designed to help students to select a major, to explore educational goals, and to select and schedule classes. According to the Mississippi Gulf

Coast Community College Catalog (2010-2011), the advisement system stresses the importance of a close association between the faculty advisor and the advisee. The college administration, faculty, and staff encourage all students to check the college calendar for the dates and times of scheduled advisor/advisee meetings. The Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Catalog also indicates the advisement period will usually occur around the late fall and late spring semesters which mark the usual registration periods.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College provides various services through the student services department. Through student services, the college is able to provide to students guidance and counseling services, information regarding educational and occupational opportunities, information pertaining to personal and social improvement, initial orientation to college life, seminars and bulletins, and tips on decision-making skills (Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Catalog, 2010-2011).

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College uses the Faculty-Only Model whereby faculty members in their respective offices do all advising. Every student is assigned a faculty advisor based on his or her major or interests. Usually, the career/technical counselor, academic counselor, or the academic advisor advises undecided students. Heim stated that Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College had, in some cases, one advisor assigned to as many or more than 50 advisees (M. D. Heim, personal communication, May 7, 2006). The institution should consider the number of students each advisor is assigned and should guarantee that ample time is provided so that each student receives adequate and timely advisement without being rushed or poorly advised.

According to Heim (personal communication, May 7, 2006), Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College employs both the prescriptive and developmental advising methods. Heim believed that the developmental method is better for student success and overall retention. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College is very interested in student retention and increased enrollment. Student retention is critical to the livelihood of the two-year college.

According to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Catalog (2010-2011), the college's mission is "We make a positive difference in people's lives every day." (p. 9) The college's mission is derived from the college's core values. One of the college's core values includes providing opportunities for access to quality programs and services. Academic advising may be considered a program and a service and falls under the umbrella of student services. The college realizes the importance of academic advising and counseling and addresses each in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Catalog (2010-2011).

Summary

Academic advising plays a vital role on the college campus. The earliest accounts of academic advising date back to the early 19th Century. Through the combined efforts of the CAS, ACT, and NACADA advising has grown from an idea to a practice, a practice, which is evident in most colleges and universities.

Leaders who understand student development and embrace diversity facilitate effective advising programs. Human resources are an important factor when setting up advising programs. Leaders must put the best people in place for effective advisement. Faculty and staff members who provide academic advising services should be student-

centered, approachable, and knowledgeable about college courses, resources, and transfer requirements. Many institutions that have effective advising programs are mission driven and aspire to help their students create, maintain, and achieve academic or career goals. Goal driven students are more likely to stay in school and complete the desired programs of study. In order to provide the best academic advising services, research has shown that leaders must conduct frequent program evaluations and assessments, which are designed to gauge student satisfaction, as satisfaction relates to academic advising services.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes information relating to the procedures and methods used in this study. The chapter begins with a review of the focus and the problem related to this research. The following other sections are presented: (a) research design, (b) description of the participants, (c) instrumentation, (d) validity and reliability, (e) procedures, and (f) data analysis.

Comments by students and faculty indicated that academic advising services were not being used by the community college in a manner that would promote student retention and encourage students to set goals. The researcher believed that there might have been an academic advising gap between the kind of advising services students expected to receive and the reality of the kind of advising services provided. According to Winston and Sandor (1984), students want to be considered partners in the advising process, not just recipients of advice. Students desire to be involved in course selection, career planning, and the overall advising process. Therefore, students' satisfaction with advising and students' impressions of the advisors and would be important factors to be considered if college administrators were dedicated to providing the students with the proper tools to create, maintain, and strive toward educational goals.

After talking with various academic advisors at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, the researcher concluded that advising caseloads and the time set aside for advisement were not consistent with CAS guidelines. Mississippi Gulf

Community College currently has, in some cases, one advisor assigned to as many or more than 50 advisees (M. D. Heim, personal communication April, 3, 2006).

The focus of this study was to investigate career/technical students' satisfaction with academic advising at a rural community college and to investigate whether there were any relationships between students' satisfaction and various demographic characteristics. The study investigated students' impressions of academic advisors and whether there were any relationships between students' impressions and various demographic characteristics. The researcher used the Survey of Academic Advising from ACT, Inc. The Survey of Academic Advising was developed by the ESS and ACT and was used to measure students' satisfaction and impressions (See Appendix A).

Research Design

The research was not of an experimental nature and was classified as a descriptive/correlational study. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean, and range, were used to measure students' satisfaction with academic advising and students' impressions of the academic advisors. This study was the first attempt to evaluate the college's career/technical current advising practices. The purpose of this study was to determine how the career/technical students' perceived the college's advising system. The study investigated students' satisfaction with advising and students' impressions of their advisors. For this study, the most appropriate methods to analyze the data included descriptive statistics and correlations. For this reason, the research analysis for this study was descriptive and correlational. The researcher used descriptive statistics and correlations to answer the research questions. The researcher used descriptive statistics to describe the data sets. According to Howell (2002),

descriptive statistics are primarily used to describe the data. The researcher used the Pearson correlation to find a correlation between at least two variables, either interval or dichotomous, for example, the correlation between satisfaction and various demographics or impressions and various demographics (Howell, 2002).

According to Ary and Jacobs (1976), the Pearson correlation may be used when it is necessary to correlate data where one variable (satisfaction or impression) is continuous and measured on an interval or ratio scale and the other variable is dichotomous (age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average). Ary and Jacobs also proposed that the correlation coefficient used for measuring the association between such variables is a difference of the Pearson coefficient known as the point-biserial correlation coefficient. The use of the point-biserial correlation coefficient is based on the postulation that the continuous variable is characterized by a normal distribution and the dichotomous variable represents an authentic dichotomy (on a nominal scale).

The Pearson correlation was used in this study to illustrate whether and how strongly pairs of variables were related. For example female students may be more satisfied than male students or full time students may have higher impressions of their advisors than part-time students. The Pearson correlation helped to show what relationships existed between certain demographic variables and satisfaction or impressions (Howell, 2002).

Description of the Participants

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College has four main campuses and four centers. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston is a two-year rural

community college located in Perkinston, Mississippi. This study focused on the Perkinston Campus. The Perkinston Campus is the oldest campus and the only rural campus in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College system. The college is approximately 30 miles north of Gulfport, Mississippi and approximately 35 miles south of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The college primarily serves students in the Mississippi Gulf Coast area. The student population is largely made up of students from Stone, George, Jackson, and Harrison Counties (M. D. Heim, personal communication, September 3, 2010).

According to Mike Knowles (personal communication, September 1, 2010), Coordinator of Institutional Research at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, the total full-time and part-time student enrollment at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus was 1,575 for the fall 2010 semester. That enrollment number included a total of 203 career/technical students; 28 of those students enrolled as part-time and 175 enrolled as full-time.

The researcher received IRB approval (Appendix B). The researcher received permission from the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College administration in order to conduct the research on the Perkinston Campus (Appendix C). The target population for this study included students enrolled in career/technical classes during the fall 2010 semester. According to C. Bond, Assistant Dean of Career/Technical Instruction at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (personal communication, September 7, 2010), the fall 2010 career/technical enrollment at the Perkinston Campus was 203; therefore, the target population for this study included 203 students. Any career/technical student, who was 18 years of age and older, was eligible to participate in the study. However, only the students who agreed to the terms of the consent letter (Appendix D),

and were present on the day the surveys were given were permitted to participate in this study. The study was restricted to Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus, and the researcher did not attempt to generalize the findings of this study to any other college.

The study focused on students enrolled in career/technical programs. Students enrolled in the following career/technical programs during the fall 2010 term were asked to participate in this study: Electronics, Landscape Management Technology, Power Generation Technology, Business and Office Technology, Child Development Technology, Graphic Design Technology, Computer Networking Technology, Computer Servicing Technology, Drafting and Design Technology, Horticulture/Landscaping Technology, Funeral Service Technology, Golf/Recreational Turf Management Technology, and Web Development Technology. Participation was limited to the students enrolled in the career/technical programs, which included 48 career technical classes during the fall 2010 Term.

Instrumentation

According to Mittelholtz and Noble (1993), during the 1970s, ESS and ACT developed surveys designed to measure impressions, goals, opinions, and attitudes of students related to academic advising. After carefully reviewing current practices, ACT instruments and other literature, the researcher chose to use the ESS ACT Survey of Academic Advising to collect the needed data to complete this study.

The researcher used the following sections of the Survey of Academic Advising for this study: (a) background information, (b) academic advising needs, and (c) impressions of your advisor (ACT, 2004/2005).

The Survey of Academic Advising (ACT, 2004/2005) included the following demographic variables and these variables were used in this study: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average. All demographic variables are found in Section I of the survey instrument. The students' satisfaction with advisors' assistance on topics discussed are found in Section III of the instrument, using the total scale of questions 1-18 and were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The total scale of questions 1-18 refers to the fact that Section III has 18 questions about the topics discussed with the advisor and the students' satisfaction with the advisors' assistance. The participants were asked to respond to the 18 questions. The students' impressions of the academic advisors are found in Section IV of the instrument, using the total scale of questions 1-36 and were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. The total scale of questions 1-36 refers to the fact that Section IV has 36 questions whereby the participants were asked to respond (See Appendix A).

There was an overall score for both satisfaction and impressions. High scores equaled high satisfaction or impressions; low scores equaled low satisfaction or impressions. Very high/high scores ranged from 3.51 to 5.00. Very low/low scores ranged from 1.00 to 2.50. Table 4.10 describes the Likert scale of measurement. Table 4.10 also describes Very High/High scores and Very Low/Low scores.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher administered the Survey of Academic Advising from ACT (ACT/ESS, 2004/2005). The survey instrument is located in Appendix A. According to ACT (2007), the instrument is norm referenced, valid, and reliable. Validity and

reliability are assured with all ESS instruments because of how each instrument was created. All ESS instruments were developed in 11 comprehensive steps. The instrument construction began with ESS personnel conducting an extensive review of literature and a review of similar survey instruments; after which, preliminary items and scales were prepared. Once the item and scale preparations were completed, ESS personnel conducted an internal review of items for content and lucidity. After content and clarity were confirmed, the draft instrument was prepared. Content experts, college personnel, and other interested parties reviewed the draft instrument before the pilot instrument was prepared. Once completed, the pilot instrument was reviewed by a sample of students and then a pilot administration of the instrument was conducted. After the pilot data analysis was completed, the final ESS survey instrument was prepared (ACT, 2007).

As noted by ACT (2007), much of ESS reliability is based upon the test retest reliability method. ESS reliability data are reported in terms of the percentages of respondents who chose the same or similar item responses on two separate administrations of an instrument. The numbers range from a low of 92% to a high of 97%. The correlation between the average ratings of satisfaction related ESS survey items on the two administrations of the same instrument resulted in a low of .92 and a high of .95.

Because the ACT instrument has been shown to produce valid and reliable scores, it was not necessary to assemble a panel of experts or conduct a pilot study. All ESS survey instruments were developed after the comprehensive review of applicable literature and after expert consultation from practitioners in the relevant fields. Some of the survey items used in certain ESS instruments were used previously in other major

ACT research studies and research services. ESS places great care upon every survey that is constructed (ACT, 2007).

ESS survey items have been shown to be valid primarily through content expert's consultation, pilot testing of survey instruments, literature reviews, and ACT's experience in instrument design and creation. ESS survey questions were designed in an easy to read manner, and with clear-cut questions that deal directly with specific facets of the college. ESS made every effort to design questions to which students are capable of providing accurate answers (ACT, 2007).

Procedures

Prior to conducting this study, the researcher received IRB approval (Appendix B) from Mississippi State University. The researcher obtained permission from Dr. Mary Graham, Vice President of the Perkinston Campus, and President Willis Lott, to conduct the survey research in the career/technical program area (Appendix C). Once permission was received, the researcher met with Mrs. Bond, Assistant Dean for Career/technical Instruction. Mrs. Bond was instrumental in allowing the researcher to gain access to the career/technical classrooms, faculty members, and students. The researcher used the Survey of Academic Advising (ACT 2004/2005) to collect the data for this study. All students who elected to participate in the study had to read and agree to the informed consent letter (Appendix D).

During the week of September 14-17, 2010, the researcher distributed the ACT surveys and collected the survey responses. The researcher distributed the ACT surveys on the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus in the career/technical classes. Students who were absent on the day of the survey

administration were not included in this study. Students were instructed to only take the survey once. Only students who were present and agreed to the terms of the consent letter were invited to participate in this study. The consent letter is located in Appendix D. Each participant took approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey.

Data Analysis

The researcher entered the raw data into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and transferred the data into SPSS. Descriptive statistics and correlations were used to answer the research questions. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean, and range were used to measure the students' impressions of the academic advisors and were used to measure how satisfied the students were with the advisors' assistance on the topics discussed. The researcher used the .05 level of significance.

Research Question One was: How satisfied are students with advisors assistance on topics discussed? The statistical procedures used to determine Research Question One included descriptive statistics of frequencies, means, and standard deviations. These procedures were used to describe how satisfied the students were with advisors' assistance on topics discussed.

Research Question Two was: What are the relationship between satisfaction with advisor's assistance on topics discussed and various categorical demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? The statistical procedure used to answer Research Question Two was Pearson Correlations. The researcher used the Pearson Correlations to find the relationships between the satisfaction of the students with advisors' assistance on topics discussed and various categorical demographics: age,

race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average. The categorical variables were dichotomized into dummy coded variables for each category.

Research Question Three was: What are students' impressions of the academic advisors? The statistical procedures used to answer Research Question Three, students' impressions of academic advisors, included descriptive statistics of frequencies, means, and standard deviations.

Research Question Four was: What are the relationships between students' impressions of their academic advisors and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? The statistical procedures used to determine Research Question Four included Pearson Correlations. This procedure was used to determine the relationships between students' impressions of the advisors and various categorical demographics. The researcher used the Pearson Correlations to find relationships between the students' impressions of the advisors and various categorical demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average. The categorical variables were dichotomized into dummy coded variables for each category.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter includes information relating to the findings of this study. The chapter begins with a review of the purpose and the problem related to this research. Most of the demographics and findings are presented in table format. The following other sections are presented: (a) demographics, (b) research question one, (c) research question two, (d) research question three, (e) research question and (f) summary.

This study was the first attempt to evaluate the college's career/technical current advising practices. The purpose of this study was to determine how career/technical students perceived the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College advising system. The study was intended to investigate students' satisfaction with advising and students' impressions of their advisors. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College might use the data obtained from this study to provide feedback to the advising faculty. The feedback will show the advisors where they are excelling and which areas need work.

Comments by students and faculty indicated that academic advising services were not being used by the community college in a manner that would promote student retention and encourage students to set goals. The researcher believed that they might have been an academic advising gap between the kind of advising services students expected to receive and the reality of the kind of advising services Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College provided.

The survey population included a total of 203 students who were enrolled and reported majors in the career technical programs at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College on the Perkinston Campus during the fall 2010 semester. A total of 167 of potential participants elected to participate in the survey. Students' decisions to respond to the survey questions were optional.

All demographic data were collected from the survey instrument (Appendix A) Section I—Background Information. Section I provided the researcher with information on age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and grade point average.

Demographics

Table 4.1 describes the age of the participants. The majority of the participants were 20 years old and younger. Only 7.2% of the participants surveyed listed their age as 40 and over.

Table 4.1 Age of Participants

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	35	21.0
19	29	17.4
20	24	14.4
21	14	8.4
22	9	5.4
23 to 25	12	7.2
26 to 29	16	9.6
30 to 39	16	9.6
40 and over	12	7.2
Total	167	100.0

As shown in Table 4.2, a large percentage of the survey participants reported Caucasian as race, while 31.1% reported being African American. Eight people did not indicate race

Table 4.2 Race of Participants

Race	Frequency	Percentage
Caucasian	100	59.9
African American	52	31.1
American Indian	2	1.2
Other	5	3.0
No response	8	4.8
Total	167	100.0

As shown in Table 4.3, 77.2% of the respondents indicated that they were attending Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College to obtain some form of degree or to complete a vocational program. Eight people did not respond to this question.

Table 4.3 Purpose for Attending the Institution

Purpose for attending	Frequency	Percentage
Obtain a degree	97	58.0
Complete voc. program	32	19.2
No purpose	9	5.4
Self improvement	8	4.8
Courses needed to transfer	4	2.4
Job related	8	4.8
No response	9	5.4
Total	167	100.0

As shown in Table 4.4, the participants included both male and female students. More males participated in the study than did females.

Table 4.4 Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	93	55.7
Female	74	44.3
Total	167	100.0

Table 4.5 describes the marital status of the participants. The majority of the students who responded to the marital status question reported being unmarried. Only 13.2% of the participants were married.

Table 4.5 Marital Status of Participants

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Unmarried	136	81.4
Married	22	13.2
No response	9	5.4
Total	167	100.0

Table 4.6 shows the enrollment status of the participants. Of 167 participants, 155 (93%) reported they were enrolled full-time.

Table 4.6 Enrollment Status of Participants

Enrollment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Full-time	155	92.8
Part-time	12	7.2
Total	167	100.0

As shown in Table 4.7, over 50% of the respondents listed that they were unemployed. Three people did not respond to the employment question.

Table 4.7 Employment Status of Participants

Hours worked/week	Frequency	Percentage
0	90	53.8
1-10	12	7.2
11-20	20	12.0
21-30	11	6.6
31-40	17	10.2
Over 40	14	8.4
No response	3	1.8
Total	167	100.0

As shown in Table 4.8, approximately 50% of the respondents reported having a GPA between 3.0 and 4.0. Only 3 people did not respond to this question.

Table 4.8 Grade Point Average of Participants

GPA	Frequency	Percentage
3.5-4.0	39	23.3
3.0-3.49	45	26.9
2.5-2.99	25	15.0
2.0-2.49	16	9.6
1.5-1.99	4	2.4
1.0-1.49	2	1.2
Have not established a GPA	25	15.0
No response	11	6.6
Total	167	100.0

Table 4.9 describes the topics that advisees discussed with the advisors. According to the information provided by the participants, over half of the respondents reported discussing the following topics with their advisors: academic progress, scheduling/registration, and drop/add. Approximately 23% of the respondents reported discussing withdrawal and transfer procedures with their advisors, and 28% reported discussing personal problems with the advisors. Based on the data shown in Table 4.9,

advising for the participants was focused on a more prescriptive or traditional advising method; rather than the developmental academic advising approach. The developmental method focuses on the academic, future, and personal needs of the student, while the prescriptive method is focused on advising as it relates to the scheduling and registration needs of the students.

Table 4.9 Academic Advising Needs

Topic	Did not Need		Not discuss		Discuss		NA	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Academic progress	17	10.2	9	5.4	98	58.7	43	25.7
Scheduling/registration	11	6.6	9	5.4	104	62.3	43	25.7
Drop/add	32	19.2	2	1.2	89	53.3	44	26.3
CLEP and other credit	61	36.5	16	9.6	47	28.1	43	25.7
Select/change major	66	39.5	8	4.8	51	30.5	42	25.1
Meeting graduation requirements	31	18.6	11	6.6	81	48.5	44	26.3
Improving study skills	47	28.1	16	9.6	58	34.7	46	27.5
Match learning styles with courses and instructors	50	29.9	16	9.6	53	31.7	48	28.7
Tutorial	74	44.3	9	5.4	37	22.2	47	28.1
Life and career goals	50	29.9	10	6.0	61	36.5	46	27.5
Identifying career goals	44	26.3	15	9.0	61	36.5	47	28.1
Coping academically	56	33.5	13	7.8	51	30.5	47	28.1
Obtaining financial aid	39	23.4	9	5.4	70	41.9	49	29.3
Obtaining campus employment	58	34.7	15	9.0	51	30.5	43	25.7
Job placement	26	15.6	24	14.4	73	43.7	44	26.3
Continuing education after graduation	47	28.1	16	9.6	62	37.1	42	25.1
Withdrawing or transferring	86	51.5	4	2.4	38	22.8	39	23.4
Dealing with personal problems	72	43.1	4	2.4	46	27.5	45	26.9

Research Question One

Research Question One was: How satisfied are students with advisor's assistance on topics discussed? The satisfactions were rated on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being very satisfied and 1 being very dissatisfied. Table 4.10 shows how to interpret the 5-point Likert scale

as it relates to satisfaction and the mean scores. The mean as used with these ordinal data is used specifically to describe order, but not relative size or degree of difference between the items measured. In this scale type, for example, a 4.5 is higher than a 3.5, indicating students who rated their satisfaction of their advisors as 4.5 had a higher satisfaction than those who rated their satisfaction of their advisors as 3.5.

Table 4.10 Likert Scale Measurement

Level of Impressions or Satisfaction	Mean
Very high	4.51 and greater
High	3.51 to 4.5
Neutral	2.51 to 3.5
Low	1.51 to 2.5
Very low	1.50 and lower

Table 4.11 shows the results of students' satisfaction with advisors assistance. As shown in Table 4-11, participants' overall satisfaction was relatively high, and ranged from a low of 3.78 for obtaining campus employment to a high of 4.37 for scheduling and registration. The highest levels of satisfaction related to scheduling/registration, academic progress, and drop/add procedures. Although not very low, the lowest satisfaction related to CLEP credit, obtaining financial aid, and obtaining campus employment. Therefore, the answer to research question one is students indicated a high level of satisfaction with advisors' assistance.

Table 4.11 Students' Satisfaction with Advisor's Assistance

Topics	Mean	SD
Scheduling/registration	4.37	.73
Academic progress	4.36	.72
Drop/add	4.35	.79
Meeting requirements for graduation	4.29	.75
Identifying career area	4.20	.81
Improving study skills and habits	4.18	.79
Life and career goals	4.17	.78
Matching learning styles with courses and instructors	4.12	.81
Continuing education after graduation	4.07	.85
Select/change major	4.07	.92
Job placement	4.02	.95
Dealing with personal problems	4.00	.91
Tutorial	3.97	.92
Coping with academic difficulties	3.96	.92
Withdrawing or transferring	3.94	.95
CLEP credit	3.90	.98
Obtaining financial aid	3.90	1.18
Obtaining campus employment	3.78	1.09
Overall satisfaction	4.09	.88

Research Question Two

Research Question Two was: What are the relationships between satisfaction with advisors' assistance on topics discussed and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? Table 4-12 describes the relationships between students' overall satisfaction with academic advisor's assistance on topics discussed and by age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollments status, employment status, and overall grade point average. As shown in Table 4-12, there were three significant, but very low associations. Female participants tended to be more satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than male participants. Participants who reported their marital status as separated were

less satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than those participants who were unmarried and married. Participants who were enrolled part-time were more satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than those participants who were enrolled full-time. Female participants and part-time students were more satisfied. Participants who reported separated as a marital status were less satisfied.

Table 4.12 Relationship Between Students' Satisfaction and Demographics

Demographics	PR	Sig (2-tailed)
Age 18	-.06	.47
Age 19	-.13	.10
Age 20	-.12	.11
Age 21	.13	.10
Age 22	.09	.23
Age 23-25	.00	.98
Age 26-29	.03	.64
Age 30-39	.09	.26
Age 40-61	.10	.20
African American	.02	.75
Native American	-.02	.73
Caucasian	.01	.85
No purpose	.05	.52
Self-improvement	.00	.95
Job-related	-.12	.12
Transferring	-.00	.95
Obtain a degree or certificate	-.10	.21
Gender (Female)	.24	.00
Unmarried	.02	.80
Separated	-.16	.04
Enrollment Status	.19	.02
Work zero hours/week	.05	.50
Work 1-10 hours/week	-.02	.82
Work 11-20 hours/week	-.07	.39
Work 21-30 hours/week	-.03	.63
Work 31-40 hours/week	.12	.13
Work over 40 hours/week	-.00	.94
GPA 3.5-4.0	.06	.41
GPA 3.0-3.49	-.01	.82
GPA 2.5-2.99	.03	.74
GPA 2.0-2.49	.03	.76
GPA 1.5-1.99	.09	.27
GPA 1.00-1.49	-.07	.40
Have not established GPA	-.09	.24

Research Question Three

Research Question Three was: What are students' impressions of the academic advisors? The impressions of the advisors were rated on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being very high and 1 being very low. Table 4-10 explains how to interpret the Likert scale of measurement as it relates to impressions and satisfaction. The mean as used with these ordinal data is used specifically to describe order, but not relative size or degree of difference between the items measured. In this scale type, for example, a 4.5 is higher than a 3.5, indicating students who rated their impression of their advisors as 4.5 had a higher impression than those who rated their impression of their advisors as 3.5.

The data in Table 4.13 were used to answer Research Question Three. Overall, the participants rated their impressions of their advisors as 4.26, which is high. Their impressions ranged from a low 4.08 to a high of 4.57. Even the lowest impression was a high on the scale. The participants had the highest impressions of the advisors in the following areas: advisors' ability to be helpful and effective; advisors' ease in speaking with students; and advisors' sense of humor. Although, all ratings of impressions were high to very high, the students had the lowest impressions of the advisors in the following areas: advisors' ability to discuss person problems; advisors' familiarity with the students' academic background; and advisors' ability to encourage the student to talk about himself and college experiences. The answer to research question three is students have very high impressions of their advisors.

Table 4.13 Students' Impressions of Advisors

My advisor:	Mean	SD
Is helpful, effective, I would recommend to others.	4.57	.74
Is easy to talk with.	4.56	.67
Has a sense of humor.	4.55	.73
Knows who I am.	4.55	.73
Is available.	4.52	.70
Provides me with accurate information.	4.52	.73
Is a good listener.	4.51	.74
Encourages me to achieve.	4.51	.74
Keeps me up to date with changes.	4.48	.72
Provides a caring open atmosphere.	4.47	.75
Clearly defines advisor/advisee responsibilities.	4.47	.78
Keeps personal information confidential.	4.47	.72
Checks to make sure we understand each other.	4.46	.73
Seems to enjoy advising.	4.46	.73
Is on time for appointments with me.	4.42	.77
Helps me to identify obstacles.	4.41	.78
Respects my right to make my own decision.	4.41	.73
Is flexible in helping me plan my academic program.	4.40	.75
Allows sufficient time to discuss issues and problems.	4.39	.77
Refers me to other sources for assistance.	4.38	.79
Accepts constructive feedback.	4.38	.77
Helps me select courses that match my interests and abilities.	4.37	.81
Respects my opinions and feelings.	4.36	.79
Shows concern for my personal growth and development.	4.32	.82
Expresses interest in me as a unique individual.	4.31	.86
Encourages my involvement in extra-curricular activities.	4.29	.90
Is knowledgeable about courses outside my major	4.29	.83
Helps me examine my needs, interests, and values.	4.26	.86
Helps me explore careers in my field of interest.	4.26	.85
Takes initiative in arranging meetings with me.	4.26	.91
Encourages my interest in an academic discipline.	4.24	.87
Anticipates my needs.	4.23	.85
Is familiar with my academic background.	4.12	.98
Encourages me to talk about my college experiences and myself.	4.08	.95
Overall impressions	4.26	.79

Research Question Four

Research Question Four was: What are the relationships between students' overall impressions of their academic advisors and various demographics? Table 4.14 describes the significant relationships among participants' overall impressions of their advisors and age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, employment status and grade point average. As shown in Table 4.14, although the associations were all low or very low, there was a negative low association between age and participants' impressions of their advisors. As age increased, participants' impressions of their academic advisors decreased. There was a very low, but significant correlation between gender and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Female participants tended to have higher impressions of their academic advisors than males. There was a very low, but significant association between enrollment status and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Participants who were enrolled full-time had lower impressions of their academic advisors than participants who were enrolled part-time. There was a very low, but significant association between the number of hours worked and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Students who worked one to ten hours per week had higher impressions of their academic advisors than students who worked zero hours per week or more than ten hours per week.

Table 4.14 Relationships Between Students' Impression and Demographics

Demographics	PR	Sig (2-tailed)
Age 18	-.287	.000
Age 19	-.050	.549
Age 20	.010	.904
Age 21	.039	.640
Age 22	.077	.352
Age 23-25	-.009	.909
Age 26-29	.075	.368
Age 30-39	.117	.157
Age 40-61	.159	.054
African American	.023	.780
Native American	-.029	.724
Caucasian	.027	.744
No purpose	-.044	.594
Self-improvement	.104	.209
Job-related	-.080	.335
Transferring	-.088	.286
Obtain a degree or certificate	-.013	.879
Gender (Female)	.183	.026
Unmarried	-.094	.255
Separated	-.068	.412
Enrollment Status	.193	.019
Work zero hours/week	-.021	.796
Work 1-10 hours/week	.163	.048
Work 11-20 hours/week	-.007	.930
Work 21-30 hours/week	.003	.974
Work 31-40 hours/week	-.055	.510
Work over 40 hours/week	-.008	.925
GPA 3.5-4.0	.127	.124
GPA 3.0-3.49	-.118	.153
GPA 2.5-2.99	.013	.880
GPA 2.0-2.49	.046	.583
GPA 1.5-1.99	.058	.480
GPA 1.00-1.49	-.67	.421
Have not established GPA	-.093	.259

Summary

Participants' satisfaction for all variables was relatively high, and ranged from a low of 3.78 for obtaining campus employment to a high of 4.37 for scheduling and registration. The highest levels of satisfaction related to scheduling/registration, academic progress, and drop/add procedures. Although not very low, the lowest satisfaction related to CLEP credit, obtaining financial aid, and obtaining campus employment. Overall, students were satisfied.

In regards to satisfaction and various demographics, female participants tended to be more satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than male participants. Participants who reported their marital status as separated were less satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than those participants who were unmarried and married. Participants who were enrolled part-time were more satisfied with topics discussed during academic advising than those participants who were enrolled full-time.

Overall the participants rated their impressions of their advisors as 4.26, which was high. Their impressions ranged from a low 4.08 to a high of 4.57. Even the lowest impression was a high on the scale. The students have high impressions of their advisors.

Regarding students' impressions and various demographics, some significance was found. As age increased, participants' impressions of their academic advisors decreased. There was a very low, but significant correlation between gender and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Female participants tended to have higher impressions of their academic advisors than males. There was a very low, but significant association between enrollment status and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Participants who were enrolled full-time had lower impressions of their academic advisors than participants who were enrolled part-time. There was a very

low, but significant association between the number of hours worked and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Students who worked one to ten hours per week had higher impressions of their academic advisors than students who worked zero hours per week or more than ten hours per week

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUMMARY

This chapter provides a summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study. Additionally, recommendations for the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College advising program are included.

Good advising is student-centered. Pizzolato (2008) discussed the necessity of one-on-one relationships between advisor and students. King (2006) discussed that advisors should help students to set realistic goals. Barnett, Roach, and Smith (2006) recommended that advisors use effective listening and communication skills when dealing with advisees.

Good advising addresses a diverse populace. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College like other community colleges has a diverse population. The Perkinston Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College reported in 2009 that 56% of the student population was White, 40% was Black, 1% was Asian, and 1% was Native American. In 2009, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus reported 55% of the student population was female and 45% was male. According to the 2009 data, 22 was the average age on the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus. Boyer (1988) noted that community colleges enrolled 55% of Native American students, 43% of Black students and 42% of all Asian students who attended higher education institutions in America.

Student satisfaction and student impressions are very important. According to the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Catalog (2010-2011), the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College mission is “We make a positive difference in people’s lives every day.” (p. 9) Research by Pace (2001) concluded that more student faculty exchanges encourage high levels of satisfaction with the college experience among students. According to the National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report produced by the Noel-Levitz Consulting Firm (2007), the top three areas on campus that mattered most to students included: instructional effectiveness, registration effectiveness, and academic advising/counseling.

The focus of this study was to investigate career/technical students’ satisfaction with academic advising at a rural community college and to investigate whether there were any relationships between students’ satisfaction and various demographic characteristics. The study investigated students’ impressions of academic advisors and whether there were any relationships between students’ impressions and various demographic characteristics. The researcher used the Survey of Academic Advising from ACT, Inc. The Survey of Academic Advising was developed by ESS and ACT and was used to measure students’ satisfaction and impressions (See Appendix A).

In order to facilitate the researcher in investigating the research problem, the researcher used the following research questions:

1. How satisfied are students with advisors’ assistance on topics discussed? (As identified by the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)
2. What are the relationships between satisfaction with advisors’ assistance on topics discussed and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and

overall grade point average? (Demographics on the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)

3. What are students' impressions of the academic advisors? (As identified by the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)
4. What are the relationships between students' impressions of their academic advisors and various demographics: age, race, purpose for attending the institution, gender, marital status, enrollment status, employment status, and overall grade point average? (Demographics on the Survey of Academic Advising. See Appendix A.)

The participants' satisfaction with the advisors assistance on topics discussed was high to very high. Students were most satisfied with scheduling, registration, academic progress, and drop/add procedures. Female students were more satisfied than male students. Married and unmarried participants were more satisfied than separated participants. Participants who were part-time enrollees were more satisfied than those who were enrolled as full-time students.

Overall, the participants in this study had high to very high impressions of their advisors. The participants considered their advisors to be easy to talk to, helpful, and effective. They also thought that the advisors had a good sense of humor. Female participants tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than the male participants, and 18 year old participants tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than those participants older than 18. The part-time students, who participated in the study, tended to rate their impressions of their academic advisors higher than full-time students. Finally, those participants who worked 1-10 hours per

week tended to rate their impressions of their advisors higher than participants who worked more than 10 hours per week and those who were unemployed.

Conclusions

The following section presents the conclusions of the study. The conclusions are organized around each research questions.

Research Question One

How satisfied are students with advisor's assistance on topics discussed?

Participants in this study report being satisfied with the assistance that they have received from their advisors. Perhaps the students who participated in this study were receiving the academic advising services that they expected to receive, and were satisfied with the assistance that advisors were providing to them. Perhaps the advisors were covering what matters most to the students. It is possible that students were concerned most with the student services that they were receiving. The participants in this study rated the highest levels of satisfaction in the following areas: scheduling/registration, academic progress, and drop/add procedures. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of an earlier study that focused on community, junior, and technical college students' satisfaction. According to the National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report produced by the Noel-Levitz Consulting Firm (2007), the top three areas on campus that mattered most to students included instructional effectiveness, registration effectiveness, and academic advising/counseling. This study is consistent with the Noel Levitz study. The areas that students were most satisfied with, related to issues revolving around student services. The drop/add process is related to registration. Scheduling and registration relate to advising and counseling. Instructional effectiveness might be

associated with academic progress. As an academic advisor, this researcher found that students were most interested in what classes to take, how to drop or add a course, and which teacher would provide the most effective instruction. Possibly, if the advisor could help the students with these issues, the students would be satisfied with the service the advisor provided. This researcher concluded that students were satisfied with the assistance that they received from advisor on topics discussed.

Research Question Two

What are the relationships between satisfaction with advisors' assistance on topics discussed and various demographics? Female and part-time participants were the groups most satisfied with academic advising. Unmarried and married participants were more satisfied than participants who listed separated as a marital status. The married and unmarried students were more than 94% of the population surveyed. Females represented 44.3% of the population surveyed. As an academic advisor at both Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and Tulane University, this researcher observed that females were more excited about their status as college students and appeared to be more satisfied as college students. Because part-time students do not spend a large amount of time on campus, part-time students may not be privy to the various academic advising services that are available to the students. One possible reason for the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College career/technical students' high satisfaction may be related to the premise that the students do not completely understand what they are supposed to receive from academic advising services and are satisfied with the services they are receiving.

Research Question Three

What are students' impressions of the academic advisors? The participants' impressions of their academic advisors ranged from high to very high. The participants had the highest impressions of the advisors in the following areas: advisor's effectiveness and helpfulness, advisor's approachability, and advisor's sense of humor. Although still high, the participants had the lowest impressions of the advisors in the following areas: advisor's ability to discuss personal problems, advisor's familiarity with the student's academic background, and the advisor's ability to persuade the student to talk about himself or herself. The findings of this study support many of the findings of the Belcheir (2000) study, which was conducted at Boise State University. Boise State University students and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College career/technical students had similar impression ratings. The Boise students had the highest impressions in the following top three items: advisor's approachability, advisor's ability to keep appointments, and advisor's familiarity with the student. The Boise study had the lowest agreement on the following areas: advisor's ability to encourage the student to explore careers, advisor's ability to be knowledgeable about all courses in and out of the student's area of study, and advisor's familiarity with the student's academic background. The Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College career/technical students and the Boise State University students have high impressions of their advisors. In conclusion, the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College students had high impressions of their advisors.

Research Question Four

What are the relationships between students' overall impressions of their academic advisors and various demographics? From this study, the researcher concluded

that participants who were age 18 had higher impressions of their advisors than did older participants. Perhaps younger participants have very little experience with academic advising processes and do not know what to expect of an academic advisor. One possible reason the older participants have lower impressions of their academic advisors than the younger participants may be that the older participants expect more from the academic advisors. Older students may have more life experiences and have more personal finances invested in education than younger students; therefore, older students may demand more of their academic advisors. Many adult learners enter college to advance or change jobs, to increase the knowledge base, or to receive a degree or certificate (Nordstrom, 1989; Sewall, 1984).

In this study female participants had higher impressions of their academic advisors than male participants. Perhaps female students have higher impressions because they sought out relationships with an academic advisor and worked with the advisors more than male students. Attending college is both a social and an academic experience. As an academic advisor at both Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College and Tulane University, this researcher observed that females were more excited about their status as college students, more inclined to seek out advisement and support services, and looked to create relationships with their advisors. The findings of this study support the research of Eagly (1987), who found that women are socialized to be more relationship driven. Likewise, the findings of this study are similar to a study conducted by Noel-Levitz (2007). The firm produced a National Satisfaction and Priorities Report. The firm compiled data from thousands of students who were attending private and public two-year and four-year institutions across the country. The Noel-Levitz (2007) report revealed various satisfaction levels of the students as satisfaction

related to various demographics. According to the data, female students at community colleges reported higher levels of satisfaction in several areas.

In this study, participants who were enrolled part-time had higher impressions than those who were enrolled full-time. Only 7.2% of the participants in this study listed part-time as an enrollment status. This study was conducted in the career/technical division of the campus. Most of these students are not transferring to a university. Many of the classes in the career/technical programs lead to terminal two-year degrees. Part-time students represent only small part of the target population. Perhaps 7.2% percent is not large enough to identify a difference in impressions.

There was a very low, but significant association between the number of hours worked and participants' impressions of their academic advisors. Students who worked less than ten hours per week had higher impressions of their academic advisors than students who worked 10 or more hours per week. As reported in Table 4.7, only 7.2% of the participants in this study reported working 1-10 hours per week. As reported in Table 4.7, 53% of the participants were unemployed. As reported in Table 4.6, a very small percentage of the participants were part-time students and as reported in Table 4.7, a small percentage were employed 1-10 hours per week. Part-time students might have higher impressions of their academic advisors because they spend less time on campus than full-time students. Another possible reason might be linked to the fact that they may not require academic advising, do not want an advisor, or they may not be degree seekers.

Recommendations and Future Research

Overall the participants were satisfied with the advising services that they are receiving at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. Faculty members provide the

advising to the students on the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus. Students set up an appointment with the advisor and meet the advisor to plan the academic schedule. All advising is provided to the students in faculty offices. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College does not use a centralized advising approach, rather a decentralized advising method. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College does not have a centralized advising area or advisement center. The current advising structure is working well for the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College career/technical programs; but as enrollment numbers continue to increase, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College might want to start an advising center. A centrally located advising center would move advising from the faculty members to full-time advisors located in the advising center. The college already employs a career center and the advising center may be located in this area. According to Crockett (1982), academic advising centers have several advantages, including easier access for students, continuity of contact, adequately trained personnel, timely information, and more consistent monitoring of academic progress.

As reported by the Noel-Levitz group in the 2003 National Adult Student Priorities Report, in order to receive the greatest benefit from a student satisfaction survey, the institution should survey the students annually and compare the students' perceptions over time. Successful institutions focus on the needs of their students and try to improve the quality of their educational services over time (Noel-Levitz, 2003).

The career/technical students at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College have high satisfaction ratings and high impressions of their advisors. By providing the faculty advisors with the findings of this study, the advisors may be able to recognize weak areas and strive to improve advisement in those weak areas. Weak areas are characterized by

lower impressions. As reported in Table 4.13, the students had the lowest impressions with the advisors' ability to discuss personal problems with the students, the advisors' familiarity with the students' academic background, and the advisors' ability to encourage the students to discuss personal college experiences.

The ways the current research was delimited provide possible areas for future research. First, the population did not include the entire Perkinston Campus. Participation was limited to students who were enrolled in the career technical classes. If the Perkinston Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College should plan future assessments of the academic advising services that it offers, the survey instrument should be given to the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus student body. The assessment may even be expanded to include all of the campuses in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College system, which includes well over 10,000 students.

Future research might focus only on those variables that research has shown to impact students' satisfaction with their academic advisors. It is possible that models can be developed that focus on combinations of variables that impact students' satisfaction with academic advisors the most. Research opportunities may be found in comparing the satisfaction levels of students attending a metropolitan community college with the satisfaction levels of those attending a rural community college. Other comparison studies might focus on the difference between satisfaction levels of first year students versus second-year students.

Future researchers might consider measuring faculty advisor job satisfaction and effectiveness as compared to counselor job satisfaction and effectiveness. As a faculty advisor, this researcher often felt ill-equipped to provide advising services to students,

and like many faculty advisors, believed that students would be better served by counselors who were more proficient in the areas of majors, transfer credits, and academic requirements.

Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College is dedicated to student success and encourages their employees to make a positive impact on students' lives. The college would benefit greatly by measuring what type of academic advising services it is providing—developmental or traditional—and determining which advising method students prefer. To any community college, its students are its most precious resource and students' thoughts, feelings, and opinions matter.

Summary

In summary, the findings of this study will be shared with the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College administration. The University Advising Council of Penn State University (2005) stressed the importance of assessing the relationship between advisors and advisees, and that information should be used to improve the academic advising system. Hurt (2004) observed that most assessment is conducted via student satisfaction surveys. This study was intended to gather information regarding students' satisfaction with academic advising and students' impressions of the academic advisors at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Perkinston Campus.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY OF ACADEMIC ADVISING BY ACT, INC

SURVEY OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

DIRECTIONS: The information you supply on this questionnaire will be kept confidential. The data will be used for research purposes and to help improve the academic advising program at this college. If, however, any question requests information that you do not wish to provide, feel free to omit it.

Please use a soft (No. 1 or 2) lead pencil to fill in the oval indicating your response. DO NOT use a ball-point pen, nylon-tip or felt-tip pen, fountain pen, marker, or colored pencil. Some items may not apply to you or to this college. If this is the case, skip the item or mark the "Does Not Apply" option. If you wish to change your response to an item, erase your first mark completely and then mark the correct oval. Select only ONE response for each item.

Note that the term "college," as used in this survey, refers to the postsecondary institution administering this survey and not to a specific unit or department within the institution.

SECTION I—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Marking the single most appropriate response in each case.

Begin by writing your Social Security number in the large boxes at the top of Block A. Then, in the column below each box, mark the appropriate oval. Complete the remaining blocks by marking the single most appropriate response in each case.

A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (Identification Number)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

B AGE

18 or Under

19

20

21

22 to 25

26 to 29

30 to 39

40 to 49

50 or Over

C RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP

African American or Black

Native American (Indian, Alaskan, Hawaiian)

Caucasian or White

Mexican American, Mexican Origin

Asian American, Chinese, Pacific Islander

Puerto Rican, Cuban, Other Latin or Hispanic

Other

I prefer not to respond.

D INDICATE YOUR CURRENT CLASS LEVEL.

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate or Professional Student

Special Student

Other/Unclassified

Does Not Apply to This College

E FOR WHAT PRIMARY PURPOSE DID YOU ENTER THIS INSTITUTION? (Select only one.)

No Definite Purpose in Mind

To Take a Few Courses for Self-Improvement or Personal Satisfaction

To Take a Few Job-Related or Job-Required Courses

To Take Courses Necessary for Transferring to Another College

To Obtain or Maintain a Certification

To Complete a Vocational/Technical Program

To Obtain an Associate's Degree

To Obtain a Master's Degree

To Obtain a Doctorate or Professional Degree

F SEX

Male

Female

G MARITAL STATUS

Unmarried (Including Single, Divorced, and Widowed)

Married

Separated

Prefer Not to Respond

H WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS?

Full-Time Student

Part-Time Student

I WHAT WAS THE LAST TYPE OF SCHOOL YOU ATTENDED PRIOR TO ENTERING THIS INSTITUTION?

High School

Vocational/Technical School

2-Year Community/Junior College

4-Year College or University

Graduate/Professional College

Other

J INDICATE THE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED.

0 or Only Occasional Jobs

1 to 10

11 to 20

21 to 30

31 to 40

Over 40

K WHAT IS YOUR RESIDENCE CLASSIFICATION AT THIS COLLEGE?

In-State Student

Out-of-State Student

International Student

(Not a U.S. Citizen)

L INDICATE YOUR OVERALL COLLEGE GRADE POINT AVERAGE.

A+ (4.0 to 4.50)

A (3.75 to 3.99)

B+ (3.50 to 3.74)

B (3.25 to 3.49)

C+ (3.00 to 3.24)

C (2.75 to 2.99)

D (2.50 to 2.74)

Below D (2.00 to 2.49)

Never Was Enrolled at a High School/College

Does Not Apply

M INDICATE YOUR CURRENT COLLEGE RESIDENCE.

Residence Hall

Fraternity or Sorority House

College-Managed Student Housing

Off-Campus Room or Apartment

Home of Parents or Relative

Own Home

Other

N INDICATE YOUR COLLEGE MAJOR.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

O INDICATE YOUR ADVISOR.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

IF YOUR INSTITUTION HAS PROVIDED A LIST OF ADVISOR CODES, SELECT THE APPROPRIATE CODE FOR YOUR CURRENT ADVISOR. WRITE THIS CODE IN THE BOXES AT THE TOP OF BLOCK O, AND MARK THE APPROPRIATE OVAL IN THE COLUMN BELOW EACH BOX. IF YOU RECEIVE ADVISING FROM SEVERAL SOURCES, RESPOND WITH REGARD TO YOUR PRIMARY ACADEMIC ADVISOR. IF AN ADVISOR CODED, LEAVE THIS COLUMN BLANK AND PROCEED TO THE NEXT ITEM.

PAGE 1 USE A SOFT LEAD PENCIL ONLY

SECTION II—ADVISING INFORMATION

Please respond to the following questions about your institution's academic advising system. Note that the questions refer to only the academic advising program, not to personal or career counseling. If you do not presently have an advisor, respond to questions A and B and then skip to Section VI on page 4. If you receive advising from several sources, respond with regard to your primary academic advisor.

A HOW WELL DOES THE ACADEMIC ADVISING SYSTEM CURRENTLY OFFERED BY THIS INSTITUTION MEET YOUR NEEDS?

- Exceptionally Well
- More Than Adequately
- Adequately
- Less Than Adequately
- Very Poorly

B WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT ACADEMIC ADVISOR?

- Faculty Member
- Advising Center Staff Member (Full-Time Academic Adviser)
- Other College Staff Member
- College-Appointed Peer Counselor (Student)
- I do not have an advisor. (Skip to Section VI on page 4.)

C HOW MUCH INPUT DID YOU HAVE IN THE SELECTION OF YOUR CURRENT ACADEMIC ADVISOR?

- A Great Deal of Input
- Some Input
- Little or No Input

D HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD YOUR CURRENT ACADEMIC ADVISOR?

- 0 to 6 Months
- 7 Months to 1 Year
- 1 to 1-1/2 Years
- 1-1/2 to 2 Years
- Over 2 Years

SECTION III—ACADEMIC ADVISING NEEDS

In Part A, indicate whether or not you and your current academic advisor have discussed each of the following issues/topics. For each topic that you have discussed, indicate in Part B your level of satisfaction with the assistance your advisor provided. (Note: Skip to Section VI on page 4 if you do not have an advisor.)

TOPIC OR ISSUE	PART A: TOPICS DISCUSSED WITH ADVISOR					PART B: SATISFACTION WITH ADVISOR'S ASSISTANCE				
	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	NEUTRAL	DISSATISFIED	VERY DISSATISFIED
EXAMPLE A: Learning about on-campus exchange programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
EXAMPLE B: Obtaining information about the Peace Corps, VISTA, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1. My academic progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Scheduling/registration procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Dropping/adding courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Obtaining course credit through nontraditional means (ALEP, PGP, job experience, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Selecting/changing my major area of study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Meeting requirements for graduation, student teaching, certification, etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Improving my study skills and habits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Matching my learning style to particular courses, course sections, or instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Obtaining remedial/tutorial assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Clarifying my life and career goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Identifying career areas that fit my current skills, abilities, and interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Coping with academic difficulties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Obtaining financial aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Obtaining employment on campus (work study, assistantships, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Finding a job after college/job placement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Continuing my education after graduation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Withdrawing or transferring from this institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Dealing with personal problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>





SECTION IV—IMPRESSIONS OF YOUR ADVISOR

Please respond to the following questions about your current academic advisor. (Note: Skip to Section VI on page 4 if you do not have an advisor.)

MY ADVISOR:	LEVEL OF AGREEMENT					
	DOES NOT APPLY	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1. Knows who I am.	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Is a good listener.	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Expresses interest in me as a unique individual.	0	0	0	0	0	0
4. Respects my opinions and feelings.	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Is available when I need assistance.	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Provides a caring, open atmosphere.	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. Checks to make sure we understand each other.	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Respects my right to make my own decisions.	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Provides me with accurate information about requirements, prerequisites, etc.	0	0	0	0	0	0
10. Keeps me up to date on changes in academic requirements.	0	0	0	0	0	0
11. Refers me to other sources from which I can obtain assistance.	0	0	0	0	0	0
12. Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program.	0	0	0	0	0	0
13. Accepts constructive feedback concerning higher effectiveness as an advisor.	0	0	0	0	0	0
14. Encourages me to achieve my educational goals.	0	0	0	0	0	0
15. Helps me identify the obstacles I need to overcome to reach my educational goals.	0	0	0	0	0	0
16. Takes the initiative in arranging meetings with me.	0	0	0	0	0	0
17. Is on time for appointments with me.	0	0	0	0	0	0
18. Clearly defines advisor/advisee responsibilities.	0	0	0	0	0	0

MY ADVISOR:	LEVEL OF AGREEMENT					
	DOES NOT APPLY	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
19. Allows sufficient time to discuss issues or problems.	0	0	0	0	0	0
20. Is willing to discuss personal problems.	0	0	0	0	0	0
21. Anticipates my needs.	0	0	0	0	0	0
22. Helps me select courses that match my interests and abilities.	0	0	0	0	0	0
23. Helps me to examine my needs, interests, and values.	0	0	0	0	0	0
24. Is familiar with my academic background.	0	0	0	0	0	0
25. Encourages me to talk about myself and my college experiences.	0	0	0	0	0	0
26. Encourages my interest in an academic discipline.	0	0	0	0	0	0
27. Encourages my involvement in extra-curricular activities.	0	0	0	0	0	0
28. Helps me explore careers in my field of interest.	0	0	0	0	0	0
29. Is knowledgeable about courses outside my major area of study.	0	0	0	0	0	0
30. Seems to enjoy advising.	0	0	0	0	0	0
31. Is approachable and easy to talk with.	0	0	0	0	0	0
32. Shows concern for my personal growth and development.	0	0	0	0	0	0
33. Keeps personal information confidential.	0	0	0	0	0	0
34. Is flexible in helping me plan my academic program.	0	0	0	0	0	0
35. Has a sense of humor.	0	0	0	0	0	0
36. Is a helpful, effective advisor whom I would recommend to other students.	0	0	0	0	0	0

PAGE 3 MAKE NO STRAY MARKS ON THIS FORM

APPENDIX B
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



**MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Compliance Division
Administrative Offices
Animal Care and Use (ACUC)
Human Research Protection
Program (IRB)
1307 Hwy 182 West
Starkville, MS 39759
(662) 325-3496 - fax

Safety Division
Biosafety (IBC)
Radiation Safety
Hazardous Waste
Chemical & Lab Safety
Fire & Life Safety
70 Morgan Avenue
Mississippi State, MS 39762
(662) 325-8776 - fax

<http://www.irc.msstate.edu>
compliance@research.msstate.edu
(662) 325-3294

July 9, 2010

Vanessa Dedeaux
17 Johnson Road
Wiggins, MS 39577

RE: IRB Study #10-174: The investigation of students' perceptions toward the quality of academic advising at a rural Mississippi community college

Dear Dedeaux:

The above referenced project was reviewed and approved via administrative review on 7/9/2010 in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). Continuing review is not necessary for this project. However, any modification to the project must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Any failure to adhere to the approved protocol could result in suspension or termination of your project. The IRB reserves the right, at anytime during the project period, to observe you and the additional researchers on this project.

Please note that the MSU IRB is in the process of seeking accreditation for our human subjects protection program. As a result of these efforts, you will likely notice many changes in the IRB's policies and procedures in the coming months. These changes will be posted online at <http://www.irc.msstate.edu/human/aahrpp.php>. The first of these changes is the implementation of an approval stamp for consent forms. The approval stamp will assist in ensuring the IRB approved version of the consent form is used in the actual conduct of research.

Please refer to your IRB number (#10-174) when contacting our office regarding this application.

Thank you for your cooperation and good luck to you in conducting this research project. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at cwilliams@research.msstate.edu or call 662-325-5220.

Sincerely,

[For use with electronic submissions]

Christine Williams
IRB Compliance Administrator

cc: Anthony Olinzock (Advisor)

APPENDIX C
PERMISSION LETTER FROM MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

Willis H. Lott, President
P.O. Box 609
Perkinston, MS 38573
(601) 928-6280

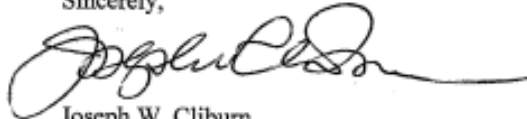
February 8, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Ms. Vanessa Dedeaux has presented a plan to administer the ACT Survey of Academic Advising to Career-Technical programs at the Perkinston Campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College as part of her doctoral research. Her proposal has been reviewed and approved by the campus administration, Central Office administration, and the College President.

If there is any additional information regarding the approval of Ms. Dedeaux' proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me at joseph.cliburn@mgccc.edu or 601-928-6233.

Sincerely,



Joseph W. Cliburn
Vice President for Academic
and Student Affairs

COMMUNITY CAMPUS/
APPLIED TECHNOLOGY AND
DEVELOPMENT CENTER
1038 Express Drive
Gulfport, MS 39503
Telephone: 228-697-4359

JACKSON COUNTY CAMPUS
Highway 50 Unacross Rd.
P.O. Box 100
Grenier, MS 39555
Telephone: 228-497-9800

JEFFERSON DAVIS CAMPUS
2026 Switzer & DeBour Rd.
Gulfport, MS 39507-3382
Telephone: 228-696-3225

KEESLER CENTER
P.O. Box 5806
Keesler Air Force Base, MS 39508
Telephone: 228-433-7178

WEST HARRISON COUNTY
CENTER
21500 N Street
Long Beach, MS 39508
Telephone: 228-688-6057

PERKINSTON CAMPUS
Highway 46 South
P.O. Box 148
Perkinston, MS 38573
Telephone: 601-928-5271

GEORGE COUNTY CENTER
P.O. Box 77
Lumberton, MS 39452
Telephone: 601-947-4591

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Dear Student:

I am in the last year of graduate studies at Mississippi State University. I am beginning my dissertation and I am requesting your help. My dissertation research involves investigating students' perception towards the quality of academic advising at a rural community college. My research will involve surveying students like you who are enrolled in career technical courses during the fall 2010 semester.

To aid in collecting the data needed to complete my research, I have purchased a survey developed by ACT that is exclusively designed to measure student's satisfaction with academic advising services. If you decide to participate in this study, the information you provide on this survey will be used in my dissertation and will also provide feedback to your instructors, advisors, and administrators on the academic advising services that they provide.

Before you agree to participate in this study, it is vital that you are aware of the following information:

1. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' perception towards the quality of academic advising services.
2. You are not obligated to answer each question.
3. There are no risks involved in your participation. As a volunteer, you may decline to participate at any time with no consequences.
4. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.
5. Total confidentiality is guaranteed in both the collection and recording of the information.
6. Summative data may be shared with the college administration.
7. All identifying information will be deleted from the data file.
8. If you have any research related questions you may contact the researcher at 228.209.1847 or the research advisor, Dr. Anthony Olinzock, at 662-325-8267.
9. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in the research.

Completion of the survey indicates your consent to participate. Please keep this letter for your records in the event that you have any questions.

Thank you,

Vanessa Johnson Dedeaux
Researcher

MSU IRB
Approved: 7/9/10
Expires: -/-/-