



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Results of the 2017 Academic Advising Survey

Abstract

The study presents results from the Undergraduate Advising Survey at Boise State in spring 2017 to examine the type and quality of the advising they have experienced. Overall, frequency of and satisfaction with advising has increased since the spring 2014 survey, and this increase is concentrated among lower division students. In-person advising continues to be highly desired among most students, and satisfaction with peer advising is now on par with advising by faculty and professional advising staff. Students continue to request skill development and greater availability of those who advise them.

Overview

The purpose of the triennial Advising Survey was to assess students' experiences with academic advising within the past calendar year and to solicit input for improving academic advising services at Boise State University. Ultimately, the Boise State University professional and faculty academic advising community hopes to use the findings to identify areas of success, areas in need of improvement, and service "gaps" that may require additional attention. To highlight areas of progress and/or identify areas in need improvement, 2017 study results are compared to those from the 2014 study.¹

The survey solicited responses to three general types of questions: (1) *mode* of advising (i.e., what type of academic advising students sought, how often they received it, and from whom); (2) students' *awareness/understanding* of the advising process and sense of *engagement* in the exchange; and (3) the *perceived outcomes/effectiveness* of the students' advising experience. An additional set of questions focused on students who indicated that they had not been advised in the past year.

This survey was administered online in the spring of 2017 to all undergraduates (N=15,090). The response rate was 20%, resulting in a margin of error of +/- 2%. The next section details key results of the 2017 survey and compares them to 2014 results, where applicable.

Results

Mode of advising

Compared to 2014, more students are receiving advising and on a more frequent basis: Almost ninety-five percent were advised at least once in the past year (see Table 1), an increase of 8.8 percentage points. In 2017, three-quarters of students reported being advised at least twice (2014: 57%). Freshmen were most likely to have been advised (96%), whereas post-baccalaureate students were least likely (86%) to be advised.

¹ Belcheir, Marcia. 2014. Results of the 2014 Academic Advising Survey. Available at <https://ir.boisestate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/RR-2014-12-Results-of-the-2014-Academic-Advising-Survey.pdf>

Table 1. Frequency of meetings with advisor by academic level.

Academic Level:	Never		Once		2-4 times		5+ times	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Freshman	9.1%	4.0%	39.1%	27.0%	45.0%	61.6%	6.7%	7.4%
Sophomore	13.1%	2.9%	39.2%	18.9%	49.9%	68.9%	5.8%	9.2%
Junior	11.6%	5.2%	29.0%	19.0%	52.1%	61.5%	7.3%	13.9%
Senior	14.7%	5.7%	26.2%	17.5%	48.1%	61.3%	11.0%	15.3%
Post-baccalaureate	24.9%	14%	29.0%	19.4%	37.6%	51.2%	8.6%	15.5%
Total	13.6%	5.1%	29.4%	19.9%	48.3%	62.5%	8.7%	12.4%

In terms of *type* of advising (Table 2), in-person personal advising has increased for all groups (overall increase from 78% in 2014 to 85.2% in 2017). This increase was least prevalent for post-baccalaureates (63% – 65.1%) and most pronounced for freshmen (82% – 90.7%). Sophomores reported double the amount of group advising (7% – 14%). Advising by phone is more common in 2017, with an overall increase of 5.9 percentage points (12.9%). Electronic advising is also up to 37.6%. These increases may be related to increased challenges in scheduling in-person advising appointments (see Comments analysis on p. 8).

Table 2. Percent experiencing each type of advising by academic level.

Academic Level:	Individual in-person		Group advising		Phone		Electronic (email, Skype, chat, etc.)	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Freshman	82.0%	90.7%	20.0%	20.9%	7.0%	10.3%	14.0%	25.9%
Sophomore	83.0%	90.5%	8.0%	14.2%	6.0%	13.7%	18.0%	31.8%
Junior	80.0%	86.2%	7.0%	8.0%	6.0%	13.1%	22.0%	37.8%
Senior	75.0%	81.3%	4.0%	3.9%	8.0%	13.0%	31.0%	45.5%
Post-baccalaureate	63.0%	65.0%	2.0%	1.6%	9.0%	16.3%	27.0%	45.0%
Total	78.0%	85.2%	7.0%	9.7%	7.0%	12.9%	25.0%	37.6%

Turning to the kind of *advisors* with whom students met, there are some distinct differences between 2014 and 2017 survey results (see Table 3). Faculty academic advising increased between 10 and 20 percentage points, with lower-division groups gaining the most. Professional advising increased to a lesser degree, with an overall increase of 11 percentage points (23 – 34%) and lower-division again increasing the most. Peer advising saw a consistent drop in peer advising across all groups from 18% in 2014 to 14% in 2017.

Table 3. Percent working with each type of advisor by academic level.

Academic Level:	Faculty academic advisor		Professional academic advisor		Peer Advisor (student)		I don't know what type of advisor I met with	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Freshman	44%	64%	23%	36%	24%	16%	14%	12%
Sophomore	43%	66%	27%	35%	22%	19%	11%	11%
Junior	53%	70%	25%	32%	18%	15%	7%	9%
Senior	56%	73%	22%	34%	15%	11%	6%	7%
Post-baccalaureate	51%	61%	16%	23%	5%	4%	6%	12%
Total	52%	69%	23%	34%	18%	14%	8%	9%

Note. Students could select multiple types of advisors, so percentages in each column do not add to 100%.

Understanding of and engagement with the advising process

Students who indicated that they had been advised in the last year were then asked a series of questions about their advising experience. Five questions sought to identify the extent to which students gained information and understanding as a result of the advising experience. Table 4 displays the means for these items overall and by academic level. Means have increased across the board for each of the items, indicating greater satisfaction with advising. It is important to note that since 2012 all new, first-term students are required to meet with academic advisors in order to lift enrollment holds placed on their accounts for second semester. As such, students in cohorts prior to 2012 will more often report receiving advising at a lesser rate than students who enrolled in 2012 and later.

The average *overall* increase in the mean score across the five items is approximately one-third of a point (+.30). The largest improvement is observable among freshman, who did so in four of the five items (average item gain: +.41); post-baccalaureates reported the greatest gain in terms of degree requirements and expectations (+.31). Among the five groups of students, statistically significant mean score differences were found for three items: campus resources for students ($p < .001$); academic rules, policies, and procedures ($p < .05$); and advising tools and information resources ($p < .001$).

Table 4. Mean response overall and by academic level to items on understanding of and engagement in advising.

<i>My academic advising experience has helped me gain a better understanding of:</i>		Mean [†]	
		2014	2017
Campus resources for students (e.g. counseling, career services, financial aid, registrar, dean of students, tutoring, university health services)***	Freshman	3.36	3.8
	Sophomore	3.33	3.63
	Junior	3.27	3.58
	Senior	3.13	3.41
	Post-baccalaureate	3.14	3.35
	Total	3.23	3.56
Degree requirements and expectations (e.g., major requirements, GPA, major application process, prerequisites, course sequencing, graduation requisites, application for graduation)	Freshman	3.97	4.23
	Sophomore	4.06	4.27
	Junior	3.97	4.15
	Senior	3.91	4.15
	Post-baccalaureate	3.86	4.17
	Total	3.96	4.19
Co-curricular opportunities (e.g., internships, leadership opportunities, students organizations, leadership, service learning, study abroad, exchange opportunities, honors)	Freshman	3.09	3.51
	Sophomore	3.11	3.36
	Junior	3.08	3.41
	Senior	3.06	3.33
	Post-baccalaureate	3.19	3.38
	Total	3.08	3.39
Academic rules, policies and procedures (e.g., repeat and withdrawal policies, academic appeals, enrollment and registration holds, probation, dismissal, reinstatement, change of major)*	Freshman	3.30	3.72
	Sophomore	3.38	3.60
	Junior	3.27	3.62
	Senior	3.26	3.51
	Post-baccalaureate	3.15	3.50
	Total	3.28	3.59

Advising tools and information resources (e.g., catalog, my planner/degree tracker, academic advisement report/AAR)***	Freshman	3.71	4.06
	Sophomore	3.76	4.06
	Junior	3.71	3.97
	Senior	3.61	3.93
	Post-baccalaureate	3.45	3.56
	Total	3.67	3.97

† Mean ratings based on a 5-point scale where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Perceived outcome/effectiveness of students' advising experience

Students who reported being advised were also asked a set of questions to measure *perceptions* of the advising effectiveness. Eighty-six percent agreed that their advisor offered them a safe and welcoming environment. About three-fourths of students agreed that their advisor showed a genuine interest in them. Both figures are comparable to 2014 results. Majorities agreed that their advising experience provided the following benefits:

- Helped students make progress toward their academic goals (2014: 73%; 2017: 72%)
- Available and accessible when s/he had questions (2014: 74%; 2017: 86%)
- Encouraged them to make more informed decisions about their academic path (2014: 70%; 2017: 78%)
- Helped them to create a clear graduation plan (2014: 69%; 2017: 77.7%)
- Helped them to continue their enrollment (2014: 67%; 2017: 73.4%)

The improvements in ratings for most items reflect a higher portion of students who chose “strongly agree” in 2017. The mean ratings are all higher in 2017, with the smallest gain for a “safe and welcoming environment”.

Total mean scores improved for each item, with the largest increases for creating a clear graduation plan (+.26) and making more informed decisions about one's academic path (+.25) (see Table 5). It is important to note that the 2017 total mean scores are *all* at or above 4 (agree) on a 5-point scale, whereas only one total mean score from the 2014 survey was above 4 (safe and welcoming environment). The only statistically significant difference among the groups was for the item on making more informed decision about his/her academic path; freshmen and sophomores had the same score in 2017, which was well above the lowest group, post-baccalaureates.

Table 5. Mean ratings by academic level to items related to outcomes and effectiveness.

		Mean†	
		2014	2017
My academic advising experience has helped me create a clear and realistic graduation plan.	Freshman	3.62	3.95
	Sophomore	3.80	4.04
	Junior	3.75	3.98
	Senior	3.76	4.02
	Post-baccalaureate	3.62	3.88
	Total	3.74	4.00
My academic advising experience has encouraged me to make more informed decisions about my academic path.*	Freshman	3.71	4.11
	Sophomore	3.89	4.11
	Junior	3.85	3.99
	Senior	3.72	3.96
	Post-baccalaureate	3.65	3.87
	Total	3.77	4.02

My academic advisor showed a genuine interest in me during our appointment(s).	Freshman	3.84	4.12
	Sophomore	3.95	4.06
	Junior	3.96	4.05
	Senior	3.92	4.10
	Post-baccalaureate	3.86	4.04
	Total	3.92	4.08
I found my academic advisor available and accessible when I had questions.	Freshman	3.81	4.06
	Sophomore	3.94	4.06
	Junior	3.89	4.02
	Senior	3.9	4.07
	Post-baccalaureate	3.92	4.01
	Total	3.89	4.05
My academic advisor offered me a safe and welcoming environment.	Freshman	4.15	4.31
	Sophomore	4.22	4.30
	Junior	4.19	4.25
	Senior	4.16	4.31
	Post-baccalaureate	4.05	4.17
	Total	4.17	4.29
My academic advising experience has helped me to continue my enrollment at Boise State University.	Freshman	3.77	4.06
	Sophomore	3.87	4.01
	Junior	3.83	3.99
	Senior	3.75	4.00
	Post-baccalaureate	3.63	3.84
	Total	3.78	4.00
I believe that my academic advising experience has helped me make progress towards graduation and achieve my academic goals	Freshman	3.81	4.09
	Sophomore	3.93	4.11
	Junior	3.82	4.01
	Senior	3.83	4.08
	Post-baccalaureate	3.73	3.95
	Total	3.84	4.07

†Based on a 5-point scale where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree

* $p < .05$

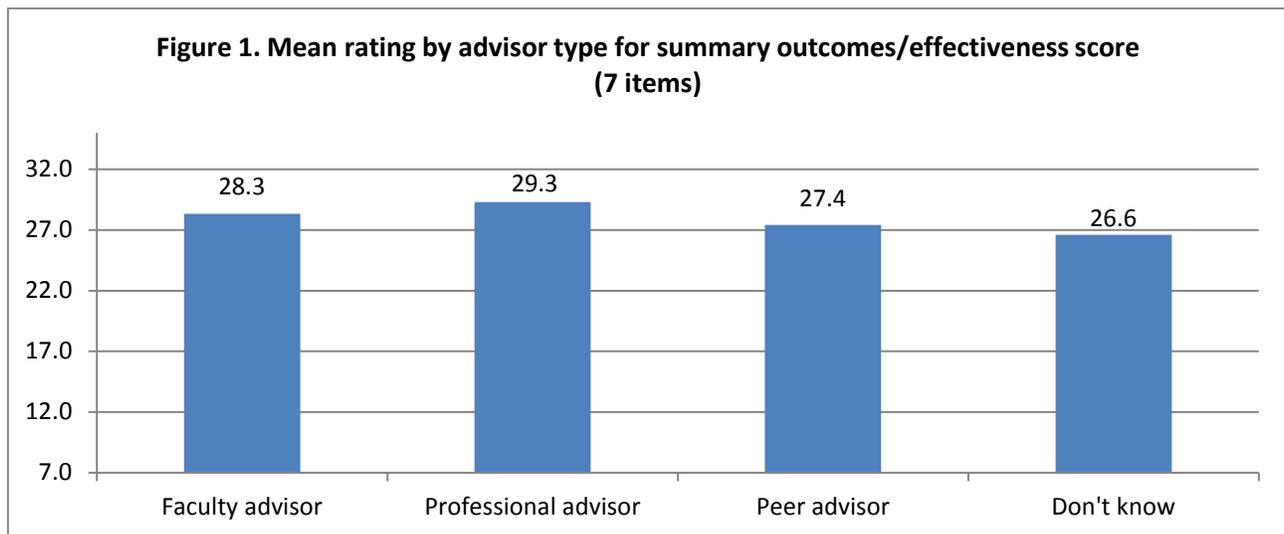
Do advising session perceptions and outcomes vary by type of advisor?

In previous surveys, respondents have sometimes indicated their apparent lack of confidence in peer advising services. Therefore, an analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the type of advisor a student had and their advising experiences.

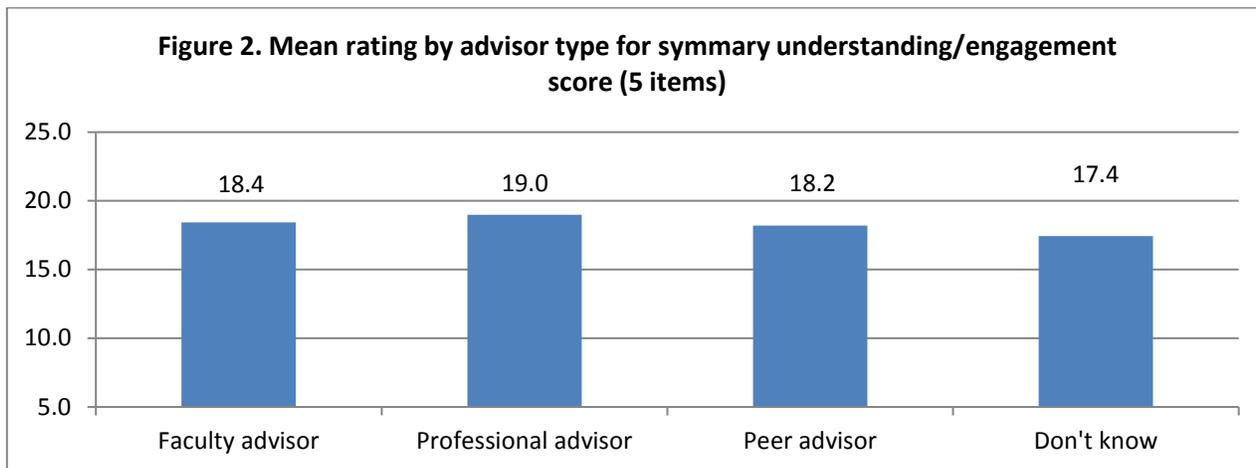
To conduct the analysis, student responses to the seven “outcomes and effectiveness” items were summed to obtain an overall “outcomes” score. Each item was based on a 5-point scale of strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) so scores could range between 7 (strongly disagree on all items) and 35 (strongly agree on all items). The same approach was used to develop a summary scale of responses to the five “understanding/engagement” items. In this case, the summary score could range between 5 (strongly disagree on all items) and 25 (strongly agree on all items). Respondents who did not complete all of the items making up a given scale were *not* included in the 2017 analysis via mean imputation, which is different from the 2014 analysis.

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the two summary scores as the dependent variables and type of advisor as the independent variable. When statistical significance was obtained for the overall comparison, the group means were compared post hoc using Dunnett’s T3. Note that the analysis was limited to students who selected only *one* type of advisor.

Statistically significant results were found for the seven-item outcomes/effectiveness score based on type of advisor, $F(3,1909)=8.153, p < .001$. *Post hoc* analysis indicated that scores were similar between peer and faculty advisors as well as between peer and professional advisors—an improvement for peer advising since 2014, when it was lowest. Students who didn’t know their type of advisor had significantly lower scores compared to those who had either faculty or professional advising ($p < .01$ and $p < .001$, respectively). Professional advising was also slightly higher ranked than faculty advising ($p = .046$). The means are shown in Figure 1.



The same analysis was conducted for the five-item understanding/engagement score. The overall ANOVA was significant, $F(3,1884)=5.612, p = .001$, and post hoc tests showed that faculty, professional staff and peer advisors had similar ratings—again, an improvement for peer advising since 2014, when it was lowest. The “don’t know” group had a mean rating that was lower than that for faculty or professional advising ($p < .05$ and $p < .001$, respectively). These findings are displayed in Figure 2. The practical implications of these findings suggest that: (1) Boise State’s peer advising services appear to have improved as measured by student perception; and (2) students may benefit from their advisor clearly identifying their university status/role (e.g., peer, professional, faculty).



Students who were not advised in the past year

Approximately five percent of students ($n = 312$) indicated that they had not received advising in the past year. Of the 156 of these who provided comments, almost half indicated that they did not want or need to talk with an academic advisor (see Table 6). This is especially true among upper-division students. The next largest group consists of those who indicated “other” reasons. Forty-four percent of this subset are additional instances of the primary reasons listed in the table, with the largest group being those who were not able to contact their advisor or schedule an appointment. Others perceived poor advising, indicated part-time or online status, waiting until they felt ready to be advised, etc. Twelve percent of the unadvised as a whole indicated they did not know they needed to meet with an advisor. Seniors and post-baccalaureates continue to report not knowing how to contact an advisor. Improvement among lower division students may be related to the university’s recent efforts to more aggressively emphasize the benefit of academic advising services. Again, since 2012 all new, first-term students are required to meet with academic advisors in order to lift enrollment holds placed on their accounts for second semester.

Table 6. Reasons why students did not meet with an advisor by academic level.

Academic Level:	Why were you unable to interact with an academic advisor in the last year?					
	<i>n</i>	I did not know that I was supposed to meet with an academic advisor.	I did not want or need to talk with an academic advisor.	I did not know how to contact my academic advisor.	I tried, but was not able to contact or schedule an appointment	Other (please explain)
Freshman	21	14.3%	28.6%	9.5%	14.3%	33.3%
Sophomore	18	22.2%	27.8%	5.6%	22.2%	22.2%
Junior	37	10.8%	56.8%	0.0%	8.1%	24.3%
Senior	62	8.1%	56.5%	4.8%	6.5%	24.2%
Post-baccalaureate	18	16.7%	44.4%	11.1%	5.6%	22.2%
Total	156	12.2%	48.1%	5.1%	9.6%	25.0%

Future Communication

The survey asked all respondents about the form of communication that they would prefer to use in future advising contacts (see Table 7). Note that in 2014, this question was *only* asked of those who had *not* received advising. The preferred method by far was an in-person meeting. More students preferred it in 2017 compared to 2014 (+10 percentage points), especially among lower-division students. Conversely, phone calls were more preferred among post-baccalaureates and seniors. The desire for online chat dropped by about 50% overall. Half

as many students prefer online chat now compared to 2014, and though desire for text messages was up slightly overall, fewer freshmen prefer it now.

Table 7. Most preferred form of communication by academic level.

	What is the primary form of communication you would prefer to connect with an advisor in the future?							
Academic Level:	In-person meeting		Phone call		Online chat		Text messages	
	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017	2014	2017
Freshman	61.4%	86.6%	13.6%	3.5%	15.9%	5.8%	9.1%	4.2%
Sophomore	72.5%	87.0%	9.9%	5.0%	14.3%	5.0%	3.3%	3.1%
Junior	74.0%	79.8%	6.3%	7.0%	16.7%	8.5%	3.1%	4.6%
Senior	70.2%	78.1%	7.1%	8.2%	20.2%	10.2%	2.4%	3.5%
Post-baccalaureate	78.0%	71.6%	6.0%	10.1%	14.0%	15.5%	2.0%	1.8%
Total	71.3%	81.5%	7.9%	6.5%	17.6%	8.3%	3.2%	3.7%

What Contributes to Higher Satisfaction?

The 2017 survey contained a new item that asked respondents to indicate overall satisfaction with the advising they had received. Responses were measured on a four point scale from “very dissatisfied” (1) to “very satisfied” (4). The overall mean was 3.22 ($SD = 0.87$). Freshmen scored highest ($M = 3.27$), and post-baccalaureates scored lowest ($M = 3.16$). However, an ANOVA indicated no significant differences among the groups $F(4,2914)=1.374, p = .24$.

A multiple regression with *satisfaction* as the dependent variable revealed that several of the variables analyzed above are especially likely to predict higher satisfaction. Predictor variables in descending order were: progress towards graduation and achieve my academic goals, genuine advisor interest in their students, and creating a clear and realistic graduation plan. In other words, students are more satisfied when they have advisors who are interested in them. Overall, the model containing the items that made up the outcomes/perceptions and understanding/engagement scales predict approximately 50% of the variation in respondent satisfaction.

Comments

Respondents were invited to answer the question, “Do you have any additional thoughts, comments, and/or suggestions about your academic advising experience(s) at Boise State University?” Approximately 1,180 (38% of survey participants) provided written responses. The tone of approximately 625 (or 53%) of the comments was positive, whereas approximately 497 (42%) were negative in tone. The remaining five percent were either neutral or featured a mixture of positive and negative elements.²

The comments were assigned to one of the following categories. A single comment could be included in multiple categories.

- communication
- student assignment to advisors
- advisor or advising type
- advisor availability
- other

Approximately 100 positive and 100 negative comments were randomly sampled from the data for closer inspection. A large majority of the positive comments were vague or generic in content, such as:

- I have no suggestions. I think the emails that are sent out to suggest meeting with an advisor is significant enough. It is the student's responsibility to set up the appointment.

² Percentages of comment tone should not be compared to previous years' due to the change in comment coder.

- I think you guys are doing great
- I think it's easily accessible, and easy to find and use so nope!

Nineteen students commented positively on advisor skill; another 20 commented positively on advisor availability. Two-thirds provided other positive comments such as “All of my advisors have been great and really interested in my well-being in and out of school!” and reported feelings of being welcomed. One sub-theme appeared to focus on turning to an advisor after being unable to make self-advising work via DegreeTracker or some other online resource. Numerous positive comments identify specific advisors by name.

Among the negative comments, the largest category pertained to the **skills of the advisor** (40%). This category contains several sub-themes related to perceived inability of advisors to properly inform students regarding graduation/program requirements, perceived failure to express interest in the student and/or the student’s need for time, or lack of proper training. According to one respondent:

I feel like most advisors are in the state of mind of "Figure it out yourself". Each time I have gone into an advisor I have been very dissatisfied. They are always giving the shortest answers possible, they have other things on their minds...

Another common theme is the issue of being assigned to multiple advisors or having to switch advisors due to a bad experience, with complaints about the advisor’s skills or unfamiliarity with the student’s program of study, goals, or other outcome needs:

I had to switch advisors between spring and the upcoming spring semester. With my first advisor I felt like they were not genuine when we met. Now, with my new advisor I feel like they are on top of things. They actually took the time to get to know me and even offered additional help. I appreciate how they are organized and approachable when I have questions.

I get a new adviser every time I make an appointment. My most recent visit was because my schedule from my last adviser was incorrect and left me having to take 8 more classes after this spring 2017 semester when I am supposed to graduate in fall 2017... leaving me out \$\$\$ because I now have to take 3 summer classes to stay on track. There needs to be a system that keeps student records assigning them to one adviser (that isn't changing semester to semester) and keeping the schedule up to date with their graduating catalog. Accepting too many incoming students is spreading the advisers too thin.

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I was assigned to several academic advisors during the past year. I was not informed of these reassignments until I attempted to make an appointment with my advisor. If students are reassigned to a different advisor, notification of that change would be VERY helpful and appreciated.

Finally, some students noted that they would like to have been advised regarding topics outside of traditional course and graduation planning, such as planning for careers and engaging in extracurricular applications of their studies. For example:

I would have liked it if my adviser had more information about research opportunities at BSU. When I inquired about this topic he didn't seem to have any information about research opportunities and his only suggestion was to ask my professors about research.

Internships, they are crucial. I would like to learn more about those and how one applies to them, how I go about getting one, and how it can be used towards my earning my degree. Does it count for credit? Can it?

The next largest group of negative responses were related to **advisor availability** (36%):

Availability can be very selective and hard to work around.

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I have had a horrible time getting in touch with my advisor. When I did meet with her in person during my Boise State orientation meeting, I felt like my questions weren't getting answered due to the volume of other students there with questions. Her answers were short, uninformative, and dismissive. I did not feel like I gained any understanding of what I need to do to accomplish my education goals, and to this day still have no idea what I need to complete in order to get my degree. I truly wish

I had a better experience and an advisor who seemed to care and understand my confusion, and wanted to help me figure things out.

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My advisor was not available when I needed her. It takes me multiple emails to get a response back especially for permission numbers to enroll in a class on the day I am supposed to register. I would have to contact the department director in order to get what I need. I would like to get more notice about my register date instead of 4 days before so I can have my permission numbers in time. Instead of getting it the day after my enrollment date.

Another group of negative responses centered on **communication problems** (25%), typically focused on not being informed of advising changes or not receiving clear advice. A smaller number of students experienced what they perceived as harsh advising or felt that the advisor did not want to spend time advising the student. Some students also expressed a desire for better communication in general from the university regarding what advising can do for students. For example:

I didn't know that academic advising could help me with my awful study habits. Perhaps BSU could advertise the services that are offered by academic advising more broadly on campus? I really didn't know that they existed until I heard about them from a friend.

An additional quarter (25%) of the negative comments were **Other** comments that are generic or related to relatively minor issues or individual challenges, such as ...

Finally, the smallest category of negative comments pertained to **advisor assignments** (23%), mostly focused on not receiving an assignment or being assigned to multiple advisors (as opposed to choosing to switch due to a problem):

I was never assigned an academic advisor. I had to call Boise state multiple times in order to find someone who could help me. Once I finally met with someone, they gave me false information and signed me up for classes that did not relate to my major. I have had to talk to multiple offices including the dean's office in order to get accurate information. Luckily someone finally referred me to the advisor I have now.

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The advisor that I met with once and have been emailing with is not my academic advisor. She is an advisor that I was required to meet with when I transferred over from a different university. I have yet to meet with an academic advisor but hope to do so in the near future.

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My academic adviser last semester was not assigned so I made an appointment within the art department with ___ and ___ was very unhelpful. ___ did not even pull me up on [the] computer and I left the meeting feeling very confused and upset. ___ basically told me to drop one of my dual majors. I then decided to meet with my professor ___, and ___ was able to help me much more than my other adviser did. Thankfully ___ is now my adviser, but I am just appalled at the lack of advising I got from someone who is supposed to be the general adviser in the ___ department.

Respondents were also posed the question, "What suggestions can you provide for how Boise State University could better inform students about academic advising services?" Thirty-seven percent ($n = 1,144$) provided some sort of reply. Because most of the responses were neutral, tone was not coded. However, they were coded for content using the categories listed above.

Most common (48%) involved **communication**. While many seemed satisfied, many expressed a desire for the university to communicate early, more frequently, and across multiple channels about the advantages/services provided by advising:

Have professors in general classes speak up about advising and how important it is to help you graduate in 4 years.

I think maybe posters, emails, and/or coming into a class such as UF 100 would be beneficial to reach out to all students.

I would encourage each adviser to reach out to students once a year to set up a meeting (in person or other). If possible, the adviser should also check in with the student before the meeting to find out what topics the student wants to discuss. For example: classes, graduation, intern/RA/TA positions, post-graduation possibilities, graduate school application process., etc.

In terms of the remaining categories:

- Sixteen percent (~186) made up the **other** category, mostly a mixture of neutral, unclear, or miscellaneous responses.
- Fourteen percent (~159) discussed **advisor availability**, mostly focus on a general desire for greater accessibility, ease of making appointments, having more advisors on campus and greater proactive outreach by advisors.
- Twelve percent (~140) discussed **advisor assignment**, many of which mention the importance of informing students who their advisor is or having advisors better suited to guiding students through their major requirements as opposed to covering generic university requirements.
- Eight percent (~94) discussed **advisor skills**, typically in terms of general skills and being familiar with catalogues and online resources.
- Six percent (~65) discussed **advisor/advising type**, but there are no particular patterns in the comments other than lingering dissatisfaction with peer advising and faculty advisors who are less than completely helpful.

Summary

- Satisfaction in 2017 is up compared to 2014, especially among lower-division students.
- Students' experiences with advising are better in 2017 compared to 2014, with more students getting advising more often.
- The gap in outcomes measures between those advised by peers and faculty or professional staff is no longer statistically significant. However, professional advisors rank higher than faculty advisors.
- A stronger desire for in-person advising may be generating frustration due to availability issues.
- Students desire increased communication across multiple technologies and persons, particularly regarding the benefits/requirements of advising itself.

Implications and Recommendations for Advising Practices

- Respondents' higher satisfaction with advising services may be associated with the University's increased investment in professional advisors made possible with Complete College Idaho funding in 2015. The University might want to continue to advocate for targeted increases in advising capacity in the areas of highest need.
- An increase in advising staffing would also address survey respondents' growing preference for in-person advising and apparent frustration with advisor availability.
- University advising officials should continue to investigate new modes of communication to students to emphasize benefits of advising services and facilitate access to advisors. (AASC currently in talks with OIT to pilot direct-text advising messaging.)

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