Electronic Undergraduate Advising Notes Policy

Policy of the Division of Undergraduate Education

I. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is to ensure appropriate use of electronic advising notes.

Electronic advising notes provide the ability to track the history of communications with individual students, supporting continuity in the advising process. Allowing advisors in one office to access information provided by advisors in another office supports our ability to provide seamless and consistent advising; advisors will no longer need to rely on a student's interpretation of what another advisor told them, but can instead see what they were told in the advisor's own words. Documenting information given to students related to policies, requirements, and deadlines provides a written record for later reference.

II. Detailed Policy Statement

Staff and faculty whose access to SSC campus includes the ability to add electronic advising reports or notes to a student's record shall do so in accordance with the attached procedures (see below).

III. Getting Help

The Divisions of Undergraduate Education and Student Success provide training, compliance verification, and assistance to campus advisors and other staff who have a business need to access and create electronic advising notes in SCC Campus.

IV. Applicability and Authority

This policy applies to all staff and faculty whose access to SSC campus includes the ability to add advising reports or notes to a student's record.

The campus Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) is the campus authority for the Electronic Advising Notes policy, with implementation authority delegated to the Vice Provost of Student Success, including the authority to approve exceptions. This policy was reviewed and approved by VPUE, Richard Hughey on 12/14-2015. Next review date is 1/1/2021.

V. Related Policies/References for More Information

UCSC Policy on Privacy of Student Records
http://registrar.ucsc.edu/records/privacy/index.html

UCSC Administrative Procedures Applying to Disclosure of Student Records
http://registrar.ucsc.edu/records/disclosure/index.html

Family Educational Rights and Practices Act of 1974
http://www.ucop.edu/general-counsel/_files/ed-affairs/ferpa101.pdf

Electronic Advising Notes Procedures

Electronic Undergraduate Advising Notes Procedures

Division of Undergraduate Education Procedures

I. Overview/Procedure Description

A. Employees whose access to SSC Campus allows them to write advising reports and notes must follow the procedures below. The procedures have been developed to guide our implementation of shared electronic notes, and apply to both notes and uploaded documents. They are consistent with other institutional policies and with the National Academic Advising Association's (NACADA) Statement of Core Values, which states:

- Advisors respect student confidentiality rights regarding personal information. Advisors practice with an understanding of the institution's interpretation of applicable laws such as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

- Advisors seek access to and use student information only when the information is relevant to the advising process. Advisors enter or change information on students' records only with appropriate institutional authorization to do so.

- Advisors document advising contacts adequately to meet institutional disclosure guidelines and aid in subsequent advising interactions.[1]

II. Procedure Details

A. Verification of Training
- Prior to being granted access to the advising reports / notes functionality through SSC Campus, advisors should complete SSC Campus training, review these policies, and sign an "Employee Verification of Training: Policy on Electronic Advising Notes" (See Appendix A).

B. Procedure Steps/Checklist
- Make and view notes only for students with whom you work in an advising capacity. It is a violation of FERPA and UC/UCSC privacy policies to view information about which you do not have an educational need to know.

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[1] NACADA. (2005). NACADA statement of core values of academic advising. Retrieved from the *NACADA Clearinghouse of Academic Advising Resources* Web site: http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-of-academic-advising.aspx

- Inform the student that you will be keeping notes on information relevant to their academic progress, and that these notes are viewable by other advisors on campus who also serve the student in an advising capacity.

- Electronic advising notes are considered "education records," and as such students have the right to inspect them under FERPA and the CA Information Practices Act (IPA); in addition, they will be accessible by other advisors who are working with the student. Student education records are also subject to disclosure in certain legal contexts, e.g. via subpoena. Ensure that your advising notes appear clear and professional if viewed by the student, other staff, faculty, administrators on campus, or legal representatives.

- Advising notes should document your meeting with a student in an accurate, concise, and clear way. Use objective language, and avoid statements that may seem judgmental or value-laden.

  Example: Instead of:
  "*Student is avoiding math because of fear of not passing. Needs to take issue of major preparation more seriously*," describe the issue in objective terms: "*Has not taken math since high school, and expresses concern about succeeding. Referred to appropriate resources. Advised major declaration deadline is spring 2016, and considered ways to ensure readiness to declare at that time.*"

- Include enough information to be useful for future advising appointments (yours, or other advisors') with the student.

  Example: Instead of: "*Might want a W this quarter*," include specific information along with your advice: "*Advised against W grade in Bio 20A; discussed triple-take policy. Student will talk with professor before deciding, and will return before May 8 deadline if decides on W.*"

- Document specific information you give the student about policies, requirements, or deadlines.

  Example: Instead of "*Two more GE's to go, and then good to graduate*," document the specific information given to the student: "*Just needs TA and CC requirements in fall 2015 to complete GE. Credits, university requirements, and senior residence are all complete. Advised to check in with major adviser re: major requirements, and to apply to graduate before April 29.*"

- Minimize the use of acronyms, abbreviations, and jargon; use only those that are universally understood within the advising community.

- Include only information relevant to a student's academic progress, question, or situation, and avoid including details about medical conditions or personal issues that students report to you. Use caution when documenting anything that may indicate sensitive subject matter

(such as medical or disability information, political or religious affiliation, disclosed or perceived sexual orientation, or any information that could be harmful to a student if released to others).

Example: Instead of "*Prescribed lithium 3 weeks ago; student's bipolar disorder is worse and needs to take a psychiatric withdrawal*," describe the issue only as relevant to the effect on the student's academic progress: "*Student reports that a medical condition is affecting performance and may need to withdraw*."

- You may keep your own private notes about sensitive issues outside the SSC system to reinforce your memory of specific student cases. Keep such notes only as a memory aid, in your sole possession, and only as long as they are useful.

- Document referrals to other offices on campus. If the referral is of a sensitive nature, you may record, "Referred to appropriate resources."

- Be sensitive to presumptions of gender. Refer to the student by the name or pronoun used by the student or by the word "student," rather than "he," "she," etc.

- To promote the most accurate notes possible, complete your notes as soon as possible after meeting with the student. Some advisors include a 5-minute gap between advising appointments to complete notes before the next student arrives.

III. Getting Help

The Divisions of Undergraduate Education and Student Success provide training, compliance verification, and assistance to campus advisors and other staff who have a business need to access and create electronic advising notes in SCC Campus.

IV. Applicability and Authority

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V. References

University of California Office of the Registrar: Privacy of Student Records
http://registrar.ucsc.edu/records/privacy/index.html

NACADA Statement of Core Values
https://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Core-values-of-academic-advising.aspx

Susan Ohrablo, *"No One Ever Told Me": How Advisors Can Maximize Service and Minimize Risk through Effective Documentation*
http://www.academicimpressions.com/news/how-maximize-effective-student-service-and-minimize-risk-through-effective-documentation?qq=%28%Code%%292112

VI. Related Policies/References for More Information

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Electronic Advising Notes Policy

APPENDIX A

Employee Verification of Training:
Electronic Advising Notes Policy and Procedures

I have read and received training on the Electronic Advising Notes Policy and Procedures. I understand and agree to comply with the Electronic Advising Notes Policy and Procedures that are in accordance with Federal law, California law, and other University policies related to privacy and student information.

_____   _____

Employee Signature   Date

_____   _____

Employee Name (printed)   Employee ID Number

Records Retention Information:
         Division of Student Success
         Retention period: 5 years after separation