You Need to Know About Advising at UNI - Faculty and professional advisors are available to assist you.

During orientation registration, a faculty or professional advisor will discuss your schedule with you and give a final approval before you register for classes. This person may not be your permanent advisor. A permanent advisor is assigned after orientation. Your assigned advisor and contact information will be listed on your MyUNIverse website. You should meet with your advisor early and often.

Your Advisor’s Role
One of the roles of an advisor is to provide you with current and correct information about the university and/or to make an appropriate referral. You can also expect your discussions to remain confidential.

Your Role
You are responsible for your academic progress at UNI. You must make decisions based on the information, alternatives, limitations and possible consequences you explore with your advisor. Once you are enrolled at UNI, to change your major, go to the departmental office of your new major to complete a new Declaration of Curriculum form. You will be reassigned to a new advisor based on this change. To change advisors within your current major, go to the departmental office of your current major and request a change.

In order to develop and maintain a good advising relationship, you should:

1. Initiate and maintain contact with your advisor.
2. Create and maintain an advising file.
3. Bring your advising file to every advising meeting.
4. Learn basic university, college and departmental requirements.
5. Accept responsibility for meeting these requirements.
6. Review your updated advisement report each semester. Use your MyUNIverse planner to create and maintain a long range Plan of Study. Keep copies of these documents in your advising file to discuss with your advisor.
7. Be assertive in asking questions or discussing concerns. Bring a list of questions or concerns to each meeting.
8. Share information about your academic and career goals.
9. Discuss any problems affecting your academic performance.
10. Keep notes from advising meetings to remind you what was discussed.

7 Habits of Highly Effective Students

by Scott Cawelti, Ph.D.

Highly effective students exist, but not in great numbers. At UNI, every semester I encounter one or two, sometimes three. They’re productive, relaxed and, believe it or not, smiling.

They’re not necessarily brighter than other students, but they’ve learned a few habits that make them far more effective. Seven habits, to be exact, with apologies to Steven Covey, whose Seven Habits of Highly Effective People inspired this.

1. They delight in questions more than answers. What does this instructor or author mean? How does he/she know? What difference does it make? Questions are at least as interesting as answers and better questions invariably lead to better answers, when they lead to answers at all. Good students mean good questioners.

2. They debrief. They ponder whatever they read and hear, making lectures and reading theirs by talking with others, connecting it with their lives. They know that 20 minutes thinking and reviewing when ideas are fresh counts for two hours when they’re stale. They know that regular debriefing eliminates the need for cramming. So they’re never as busy as their less effective peers.

3. They understand synergy. A few minutes talking with friends generates a half-dozen more questions and connections among heretofore disconnected ideas. They have friends who function as resonators and they hang around with them because they come away electrified and ready to find more connections. Nothing happens in a vacuum, as they know well.
4. **They read and write with teaching in mind.** They teach themselves first, then they think about how it could be taught to others. Effective students can talk intelligently about what they’ve read, teaching as they go. If they can’t articulate what they’ve thought and read, they know they haven’t yet figured it out, really.

5. **They know their priorities.** They know that they can’t have or do everything, so they’ve learned to pick and choose what’s important. Sometimes they have to give up something they’d love to do in order to have something they want in five years. That’s called maturity; short-term fun doesn’t always connect with long-term goals.

6. **They reward themselves.** The most effective students know that to finish some project they don’t care for, they have to do it a piece at a time, followed by small rewards. A long-distance phone call serves as a reward, as does a couple of hours with a movie or a book you’ve wanted to read. Then back to the grind. That’s how the world gets work done, as they well know.

7. **They seek awareness.** They have learned that almost everything in life involves illusions: money, fame and status offer pleasures that quickly fade. What matters most is increased awareness, knowing who you are and where you’re going, believing, first and foremost, that you have miles to go before you sleep, as Robert Frost knew.

*Cawelti is a professor emeritus in the Department of English Language and Literature at UNI. This article originally appeared in The Northern Iowan.*

**Advice from Students**

Thanks to the Academic Advising Peer Advisors and students in the Career Decision Making course for the following comments.

1. **Personal Responsibility:** In college you have more freedom to do as you wish. Don’t abuse your new freedom. The choices you make can have a great impact on your future. Be proactive in your education; seek out potential problems before they seek you out.

2. **Class Attendance:** Go to class and be an active participant. There is valuable information given in class that isn’t covered in the textbook. Once you get into the habit of not going to class, it’s too easy to skip, and your grades will drop.

3. **Types of Assignments:** Your professors will not remind you to do your assignments; it is your responsibility. In some courses you may have only one test at the end of the semester. Your grades will suffer if you put off studying for your courses.

4. **Professors’ Expectations:** Get to know your professors. They like and expect you to have questions and be prepared for every class. They are also a great resource for advising about courses, internships and careers.

5. **Importance of Performance:** Take your first year very seriously – a great start makes the following years so much easier. Trying to play catch-up, whether it be the second half of the semester to get your grade up in a course or during your final years of school to raise your grade point, is not an easy thing to do.

6. **Time Management:** Set aside time every day to do homework and stick to a schedule. Don’t cram! Take time out to look at your schedule and give yourself adequate time to prepare for assignments and tests – probably at least five hours a day of reading/studying.

7. **Amount of Study:** You will need to study a lot more to succeed in your courses. Find a place to study where you won’t be interrupted or tempted to do something else.

8. **Importance of Goals:** Establish your education as among your highest priorities. Set goals in all facets of your life, write them down and check them off as you achieve them. Decide what you want in the end and work toward that goal from the beginning. Don’t be afraid to change your goals – take some risks!

9. **Use of Resources:** Don’t be afraid of the library and the computer labs. They are your tools and make life easier. If you’re struggling in a class, get help right away. Ask your professors or one of the advising centers if you are not sure where to get help.

10. **Social Life:** Along with your academic studies, remember to get involved in other activities, such as student organizations, volunteer opportunities, committees and internships. You’ll also meet people through classes and residence hall living.