

Advising GPS: Go, Plan, Succeed!

Eastern Shore Community College, Melfa, Virginia

Contact: Sheryl Williamson, Coordinator of Student Advising, swilliamson@es.vccs.edu

Executive Summary

As part of the college's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and the process of reaffirming its accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) developed this Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The purpose of a QEP is to identify and develop a plan to address an issue that can improve student learning and the environment in which it takes place.

Through a process that involved outreach to various institutional constituencies, the topic of advising was selected in fall 2017. The depth and breadth of ESCC's advising processes have been thoroughly examined by a widely representative team, resulting in the development of *Advising GPS: Go, Plan, Succeed!*

The goals of *Advising GPS* connect to the college's mission and vision to empower learners to enhance their quality of life and for the college to serve as a vital link in the economic and cultural enrichment of our communities.

- Goal 1: To empower students to identify and pursue their academic and professional goals by fortifying the advising model and leveraging technology
- Goal 2: To ensure key areas related to advising and student development are supported by a clear oversight structure and robust mechanisms for continuous improvement

To accomplish this goal, two student learning outcomes (SLOs) were developed:

- SLO 1: Students will develop achievable educational goals.
- SLO 2: Students will identify how ESCC will support them in achieving their educational goals.

This model will support student success, retention, and completion, with implications for overall student learning at the college. *Advising GPS* focuses on the areas that support effective advising:

- (a) streamlined onboarding processes**
- (b) an advising model that reflects the needs of ESCC students**
- (c) oversight to provide support for and continual assessment of advising practices.**

Central to *Advising GPS* is the creation of a First-Term Advisor role—advisors specially trained to help students transition into the college who will direct students toward appropriate guided pathways. These first-term advisors include current counselors in Student Services and a New Student Advisor—a newly created position specifically focused on first-term advising. Following their initial meeting(s) with a First-Term Advisor, students are guided through the transition to faculty advisors, who help them develop academic plans supported by completion-by-design principles, transfer goals, and career opportunities.

This plan dovetails with the ongoing implementation of EAB Navigate, “a comprehensive technology that links community college leaders, advisors, staff and students in a coordinated care network designed to give students clearer pathways and curated guidance from application to graduation” (2018).