



SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Executive Summary of Fostering Student Success through Proactive Advising

Southwestern University's Quality Enhancement plan (QEP), Fostering Student Success through Proactive Advising, has three components; the addition of dedicated first-year professional advisors; professional development for faculty and staff advisors, and implementation of a new integrated case management software. The purpose of this QEP is to foster student success by shifting student advising at Southwestern to a proactive advising model.



The focus of this advising model is to address students' professional, and personal needs and interests in more depth. A strong student-advisor relationship can empower the student to embrace their agency to explore and engage with academic and co-curricular experiences they may be reluctant to navigate without such a support system on campus. A student who effectively uses the agency afforded them to build a meaningful Southwestern Experience will be a successful student.

Six professional advisors have joined Southwestern. These professional advisors are trained to work with first-year students regardless of major, but have a specialized focus in a specific academic area. Furthermore, these professional advisors are experts in best practices in advising, university policies, degree requirements, course planning, support services, and student development. During the development of the QEP, the integrated case management software Nuro was selected to be implemented with the goal of providing campus community members a more holistic view of each student's Southwestern experience along with the opportunity to foster increased communication regarding student success. To maintain the QEP, professional development opportunities specific to proactive advising skill-building will occur on a regular basis for both professional advisors and faculty/staff advisors. For example, in spring 2023 there was a workshop on proactive advising practices related to high impact experiences and a take home project related to common student concerns that arise in advising. Southwestern's development office has secured \$2,000,000 to support the QEP through 2028. Continued financial support will be provided through the institution's annual operating budget.

Fitting into the culture of care at Southwestern, this QEP will cultivate a proactive advising model in which advisors use early intervention strategies and students learn to advocate for themselves and engage with necessary support, allowing greater student success.

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