

Mechanical Engineering Advising Manual

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WHAT IS ACADEMIC ADVISING?

Academic advising is a service through which faculty members help students select, plan, and complete academic programs and explore graduate studies and career options.

The Academic Advising Center and Evaluators in Lassen Hall are also available to help with GE and graduation requirement questions. Ideally students in the Department of Mechanical Engineering will be able to get most of their advising questions answered during their major advising sessions.

An advisor's role is to:

- **Get to know** the student and to stay up-to-date with the student's academic progress.
- **Help** the student find accurate, up-to-date information about the University's academic offerings and requirements.
- **Assist** the student in developing a course of study, including core and major requirements as well as electives, which fits the student's academic background and educational and career goals.
- **Provide** the student with information on campus resources and support areas and offer appropriate referrals to them.
- **Offer** the student advising assistance should academic difficulties arise.
- **Make time available** during office hours or by appointment to meet with advisees.
- **Meet** with each advisee at least once a semester prior to registration for the next term.

Who is my advisor?

The Mechanical Engineering department (ME) assigns each student in the major and pre-major to a faculty for major advising. A list of students and their advisors is posted by the ME office on the 4th floor. Students **are** allowed to change their advisor choosing whomever they please as long as they have the consent of the new advisor. It is advisable, however, to settle on one

advisor for most of a student's career – students are discouraged from changing advisors every semester. If you would like assistance identifying or changing your academic advisor, please contact the ME secretary.

How do I prepare for advising?

Schedule a time each semester to meet with an advisor. It is a good idea to plan these meetings during October and April.

Bring an updated copy of a degree audit or transcript. These can be obtained from kiosks located at many places across campus.

Prior to the meeting, **ask yourself** what your goals are (graduation by a certain time, studying abroad, graduate school, co-op, etc.) and write down any questions you might have.

If you are uncertain about your goals, **ask questions**. Your adviser can tell you what kinds of scholarships, co-op programs, internships, etc. are available, let you know about organizations that exist for your major, and give you insights on different ways to explore your field of study.

Review the schedule of classes before your appointment to give you an idea of what's being offered the next semester. After consulting your program planning guide create a tentative schedule for yourself. Make sure you are aware of **prerequisite** requirements – they are important and **will be** enforced. Complete ME and MET program guides, including course 'roadmaps', are available in the Mechanical Engineering Department office (RVR 4024) and from your advisor.

When preparing your schedule consider your time limitations and **be realistic** in planning; take into account work schedules, athletic practice, campus involvement -- or maybe just the fact that you're not a morning person.

Do not expect an adviser to have all the answers. **Do** expect that your adviser will assist you in finding the resources or contacts needed to answer your questions.

Have fun getting to know your advisor!

Do I have to see an advisor?

Yes. Each and every semester until you graduate you should schedule a meeting with your advisor.

Why?

Because studies have shown students who see their advisors regularly are more successful academically and complete their programs more efficiently. An added benefit is that as you near graduation your advisor might also provide you with career input, resume tips, job leads, and those all important letters of recommendation.

All Mechanical Engineering (ME) and Mechanical Engineering Technology (MET) students, pre-major and major, are required to see an advisor each semester. (October and April are designated as “Advising Months.”) At the end of an advising session the advisor will complete and sign your Advising Form. If the signed Advising Form is not turned in to the Department Secretary, your registration will be blocked. You will know if your registration has been blocked if you see the words “ME Advising Hold” on your invitation to register which is sent out by the registrar’s office. It takes at least a day to “unblock” the registration. If you do not get your advising done during the designated advising month you should still get it done as soon as you can either by meeting with your advisor or by completing the advising process via the Web. If you choose the latter call the department office for the username and password necessary for login at the department’s website, <http://www.ecs.csus.edu/me/>

ME/MET STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REGISTER UNTIL THEY COMPLETE THE ADVISING PROCESS.

Office hours and e-mail addresses of faculty advisors are available in the department office and may also be viewed at the department website.

What goes on in the advising session?

Each semester you should review your progress and your plan with your major advisor. If you have taken courses at other institutions such as community colleges, send your transcripts to the Office of Admissions and Records. You should also send or bring a copy to the ME department.

During the advising session discussion usually includes:

- The courses you are taking.
- Progress in all your courses.
- Course load – too much, too little, what is appropriate.
- Courses you should plan to take the next semester.
- General plan for coursework through graduation.
- Descriptions of course content

Reminder of GE and graduation requirements

Other questions may include topics such as:

- Is this the right major?
- What happens if I fail a course?
- What is academic probation and what should I do to get back on good standing?
- What clubs and professional activities are available?
- How do I prepare for F.E. (E.I.T) Exam?
- Can I take 200-level ME courses?

GENERAL EDUCATION (GE) AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The University has published a brochure, the *Academic Advising FAQ*, which is also available online. This brochure provides answers to general questions you may have regarding GE requirements and academic policies and procedures. If you did not do so during New Student Orientation, get a copy and read it as soon as possible.

The GE program is not particularly complicated and it would be most ideal if students could have most questions regarding GE and graduation requirements answered in the College.

In general the GE program can be viewed as a number of requirements that need to be filled, and there are lots of courses that engineering students enjoy and report complement their major. The college of Engineering and Computer Science has compiled a list of suggested or recommended GE courses for engineering students. Some of the requirements are overlapping and engineering majors have a couple of differences from other students at CSUS. Briefly these differences are:

Areas A3, B1, B3, B4, and E are met by courses required for the major

Area D1a is required, but **only one course** is required in the D1 area

Your advisor will guide you in following the proper GE pattern or refer you to other faculty or university counselors who have received extra training in this area. You can view your record on the CasperWeb system.

There are some additional Graduation Requirements that are not part of the GE program and not part of the major, however they are generally discussed with GE. These requirements are the second semester of English Composition, the foreign language requirement, and the Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE) which must be completed before taking the GE Extensive Writing (Advanced Study) course. Additionally, successful completion of the WPE is a **prerequisite** for **ME 180**.

There are some courses available at local community colleges that can “double count” as second semester of composition and Area C – but be careful about this because not all of them do.

Always ask!

CATALOG RIGHTS

Students are generally guaranteed that they can follow the requirements that are in place when they started college at a CSU or California Community College. Specific catalog rights are based on where you have gone to college, when you enrolled, and if the enrollment has been “continuous”. This is all explained in the catalog, but briefly, continuous enrollment, and catalog rights, begin when a student first enrolls in a CSU or California Community College after highschool graduation and those rights are maintained as long as the student is enrolled in at least one semester or 2 quarters every CALENDAR year.

Since the GE program and additional graduation requirements haven't changed much in the last 10 years this is not really that much of an issue for students at this time, but you want to maintain continuous enrollment and finish your program because if these requirements change GE could be an issue.

A student has 3 options for catalog rights and the major and GE can be completed using another. The options for catalog rights are:

- Catalog in effect when enrollment at CSUS is begun
- Catalog in effect when graduation occurs (this is generally the preferred choice for the Major/Minor requirements on the Graduation Application)
- Catalog in effect when enrollment at another CSU or CCC is begun (as long as continuous enrollment is maintained.)

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION

According to University requirements: “Students must apply for graduation. **Academic degrees are not granted automatically when students complete their degree requirements.**”

About a year before you plan to graduate you need to file a Graduation Application with the University. The class schedule lists the deadline for submitting this application to the University. Pick up the application from the department office. On this form all courses completed for the major are listed with grades. If you have taken courses at another institution you should list the course numbers and names from that institution. Always include the name of the institution where non-CSUS work was taken. The secretaries can provide some instructions to help you fill out the form correctly, but check with your advisor if you have any questions.

After you have completed the form and signed it, your advisor should go over the form with you making sure it is filled out properly. This is a good time for you to check your GE program making sure that you know what you have to complete to fulfill the University requirements. In general you should select the latest catalog for the major/minor year. You should also make sure that your GE catalog year selection matches the GE program you followed.

After your advisor signs the form, you submit it to the ME Department office for the approval of the Chair.

After your Graduation Application is approved the ME Department Chair will return it to you and you will take it to Lassen Hall, pay your filing fee, and submit the form. Be sure to submit it by the required deadline to ensure you will have “graduating senior” status for the next semester, that your name will appear in the graduation program, and that you will officially graduate when you complete your program.

RESOURCES

Samlink

If you do not already have a Samlink account, apply for one now. You may do so at various locations on campus or on-line.

CasperWeb

CasperWeb is an extremely easy to use tool available on the Internet.

1. Go to www.csus.edu,
2. select the CasperWeb link (on the left hand side of the CSUS homepage),
3. log in using your Samlink login name and password

At this point you can view your transcript or record in Degree Audit form. The Degree Audit is useful because it categorizes all your work by requirement category. Work that is transferred from another college is logged in and displayed in the appropriate locations. The Degree Audit also lists what requirements have to be completed.

Articulation

Another useful tool is at www.assist.org. This site has detailed information regarding equivalent courses at other colleges.

Course Placement

Students may come in with Advanced Placement (AP) credit (or think they have AP credit). They are awarded credit for test scores of 3, 4, or 5. (See table for tests/equivalencies you are likely to encounter). These should also appear on the Degree Audit. If a student thinks he/she should have credit but it is not listed he/she can contact the College Board at www.collegeboard.com to have the scores sent.

Students who have International Baccalaureate (IB) credit (or think they have IB credit) should contact www.ibo.org if the units are not posted to their record.

AP EXAM CREDIT

AP EXAM	UNITS	Course Equivalencies
Calculus A/B	3	Math 30
Calculus B/C	3	Math 30 & 31
Economics - Macro	3	Econ 1A
Economics - Micro	3	Econ 1B
English Language	3	Engl 1A
English Literature	3	Engl 1A
US History	3	History 17A & B
US Government	3	GE Area D1 (note: NOT D3)

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

You have 3 GPAs – **Term**, **CSUS**, and **Overall**. All grading policies are completely described in the CSUS catalog.

Progress

You are making good progress if your GPA in all 3 areas is at least 2.0.

Probation

Academic probation occurs if one of the three GPAs is less than 2.0.

If your GPA falls below 2.0 you will be notified in writing by the registrar and you must make an appointment to meet with your advisor or the department chair immediately. You will be advised on how best to improve your GPA. Do not ignore the notice. Remember your advisor is there to help and would like to see you graduate!

Dropping Classes or Withdrawing from a class

Pay attention to your workload early in the semester. If you feel you need to drop a class it **is** possible to do so through the end of the 13th week of class (but it is MUCH easier if you decide to do this sooner rather than later).

You should talk to your instructor to let him/her know you are considering dropping the class. You should talk to your advisor to make sure you understand the requirements for dropping the class and the consequences (if any) it will have on your GPA, and to assess how this will affect your plan of study.

You should also consult your financial aid or scholarship official (if applicable.)

Be sure to understand the meanings of **DROP** and **WITHDRAWAL**:

To **DROP** a class means that the course is deleted from the student's roster, and the drop must take place within the first two weeks of the semester. This can be done via CasperWeb.

To **WITHDRAW** from a class is essentially the same as dropping but it requires more effort on your part and the course may remain on your academic record with a grade of **W**.

Weeks 3-4: no grade is assigned (instructor & Chair's approval)

Weeks 5-6: W grade is assigned (instructor & Chair's approval)

Weeks 7-13: W grades is assigned (instructor, Chair & Dean's approval)

Weeks 14-15, and Finals week: No drops allowed.

The **W** will have no effect on the semester's GPA.

If you quit coming to a class without officially dropping it this is termed an **Unofficial Withdrawal**. If you do this you will be assigned a grade of **UW**. This grade does count in your GPA and it counts as an **F** (0 grade points.)

Incomplete

The symbol "I" (Incomplete Authorized) indicates that a portion of required course work has not been completed and evaluated during the course due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons and that there is still a possibility of earning credit. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any problems and to come to an agreement about how the remaining requirements will be met. Agreement as to the conditions for removal of the Incomplete will be in writing, signed by the instructor, student, and the department chair (or designee) and placed on file with the appropriate academic department until the Incomplete is removed or the time limit passed. A final grade is assigned when the work agreed upon has been completed and evaluated. An "I" (Incomplete Authorized) should not be assigned when it is necessary for the student to attend additional class meetings to complete the course requirements. An Incomplete must be made up within 12 months of the end of the term in which it was assigned. This limitation prevails whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment.

Failure to complete the assigned work will result in an Incomplete being converted to an "F" or "NC" on the academic transcript.

Withdrawing from all classes

CSUS students withdrawing (dropping all classes) for physical, emotional, financial, family health or other non-academic reasons must receive approval from the Academic Advising Office (Lassen Hall 1012) before leaving the University. Students withdrawing for academic reasons must receive approval from the college dean of their major before leaving. Please consult your advisor if you are considering withdrawing for a semester.

Students withdrawing after the fourth week of instruction will receive a grade of "W" in each class.

HONORS

Honors List

Semester honors are awarded and the notation "Dean's Honor List" is posted to the permanent academic record for freshmen earning a 3.0 grade point average and other undergraduates earning a 3.25 grade point average. To be eligible in either category, students must complete a minimum of 12 letter-graded units with no Incomplete grades and no grade lower than "C-."

Graduation with Honors

Honors at Graduation are awarded to CSUS bachelor's degree graduates who complete a minimum of 30 graded units in residence with a qualifying grade point average.

Honors are awarded based on the following grade point average ranges:

Cum Laude: 3.50-3.74

Magna Cum Laude: 3.75-3.89

Summa Cum Laude: 3.90-4.00

SUPPORT CENTERS

Engineering & Computer Science Advising Center

Academic Advising Center

Career Planning

Co-op

CSUS Testing Center

Learning Skills

LINKS TO WEBSITES

College of Engineering & Computer Science <http://www.ecs.csus.edu/>

CASPERWEB <https://casperweb.csus.edu/>

CSUS Catalog <http://aaweb.csus.edu/catalog/current/>

CSUS Testing Center <http://www.csus.edu/testing/>

Faculty Schedules <http://www.ecs.csus.edu/me/Undergraduate/faculty.htm>

Learning Skills <http://www.csus.edu/learningskills/index.htm>

ME Homepage <http://www.ecs.csus.edu/me/>

ME Student Organizations <http://www.ecs.csus.edu/me/studentorgta.htm>

Samlink Account <http://www.csus.edu/salink/>

Transcripts <http://webapps1.csus.edu/admr/content/record/transcript/default.asp>

University Academic Advising FAQ <http://www.csus.edu/acad/faq.htm>

FORMS

Course Planning Guide