

CONNECTED18

University of South Carolina

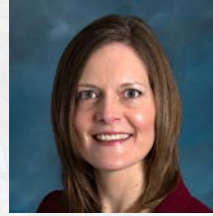
Case Study





**Claire
Robinson**

Assistant Dean,
Undergraduate
Advisement



**Stacey
Bradley**

Senior Associate VP,
Student Affairs and
Academic Support

University of South Carolina
A large, public university in Columbia, SC





UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

- ▶ A public university in Columbia, South Carolina
- ▶ 26,632 undergraduate students
- ▶ 74% six-year graduation rate, 88.7% retention rate

▶ Background and Challenges

- Impressive growth in recent years in both enrollment and incoming student SAT scores. As the size and quality of the student body grow, retention and graduation rates are improving.
- Advising structure was fragmented, advisement was non-standardized, and training and resources were limited—as a result, student experiences were highly variable based on college, department, and individual advisor.
- Joined SSC with the goal of coordinating advising and student services and improving support, but leadership quickly realized they needed to transform advising practices and approach.

▶ Solution



Established
**advising
taskforce** and
implemented
recommendations



**Standardized
and centralized**
key advising
practices across
campus



Connected advising
office and student
services as a
**Coordinated Care
Network**



Examining Key Trends

+5%

Increase in freshman retention rate since 2004

+70%

Increase in total enrollment since 2000

+32%

Improvement in average SAT score since 1985

+13%

Increase in 4-year graduation rate since 2002

We've Gotten Better (and Larger), So Now What?

Shifting Focus to Improving the Quality of Advising

The Advising Coordinating Taskforce (ACT)

Created by the Provost in December 2014, with three goals:

Evaluate USC's
current
practices



Evaluate
national best
practices



Make recommendations
for a new approach to
advising



Task Force Member Representatives

- Faculty
- Staff
- Students



Best Practices and Resources

- EAB best practice study: "Next-Generation Advising"
- SSC Dedicated Consultant
- NACADA resources



Survey Information

- Advisors
- Students



Historical Academic Data

- Institution Reports: Major Switching Patterns



Six Recommendations From ACT

A New Approach to Advising Supported by New EAB Technology

Sample Advising Task Force Recommendations	How EAB Technology Supports Action
✓ Create Advising Center and hire First-Year Advisors to improve consistency for all students	▶ All advisors can now access a comprehensive workflow and communications platform and view student risk data
✓ Establish new expectations and processes for advising first-year, transfer, and continuing students	▶ Advisors communicate with students, run proactive campaigns, and leverage the Coordinated Care Network through cases and alerts
✓ Standardize advisor training and certification curriculum, incorporating EAB best practices	▶ New staff learn technology during onboarding ; prior experience using EAB is weighed in hiring
✓ Offer faculty-led programs to help students explore majors and careers	▶ Simplified advising technology ecosystem supports desired changes and growth in faculty advising
✓ Develop culture of student responsibility for academic planning	▶ No-show tracking, appointment nudges, and self-service scheduling foster student accountability and ownership

A New Academic Advising Structure

Employing a 'Shared-Split' Model

11 Colleges and Schools

Advisors include both faculty and professional staff

Advising takes place in the colleges, University Advising Center, and support offices



School of
Business



College of
Arts &
Sciences



College of
Nursing



College of
Engineering



College of
Hospitality



School of
Music



College of
Pharmacy



College of
Information
Studies



School of
Public
Health



College of
Social
Work



College of
Education

Creation of University Advising Center

One Office Responsible for a Variety of Programs



University Advising Center

Four-Year Student Support

Major change advising

Target pop.
4,000 students

Major exploration

Academic coaching

Skill building
Leveraging EAB

First-Year Student Support

Transfer advising

Target pop.
2,100 students

Admissions and orientation

First-year advising

Target pop.
5,500 students

Orientation, college/school support, outreach

Academic Advisor Support

Advisor training & outreach

Training, certification, outreach
Annual advisor conference

Online resources & technology

EAB, USC website, academic resource library
Referral management



APPLIED BROADLY

Standard Best Practices

Based on EAB research and national benchmarking

- Training
- Onboarding
- Technology
- Advisor-student ratios
- Outreach and intervention, etc.



BRIDGES THE GAP

Management Plan

Based on both EAB best practices and specific school needs

- Memorandum of Collaboration
- Position descriptions
- Performance reviews
- Tiered career ladders
- Funding
- Assessment



APPLIED IN-DEPTH

College-Specific Practices

Based on each school's specific needs, area of study, and staff

- Day-to-day operations
- Application of University policies
- Determining degree applicability
- Nuances of curriculum, etc.

First-Year Advisor Role

Position Description Includes Breakdown of Time Spent

Student Monitoring and Technology (10%)

- Frequently contact advisees
- Monitor, identify, and support struggling students
- Use technology like EAB in daily work

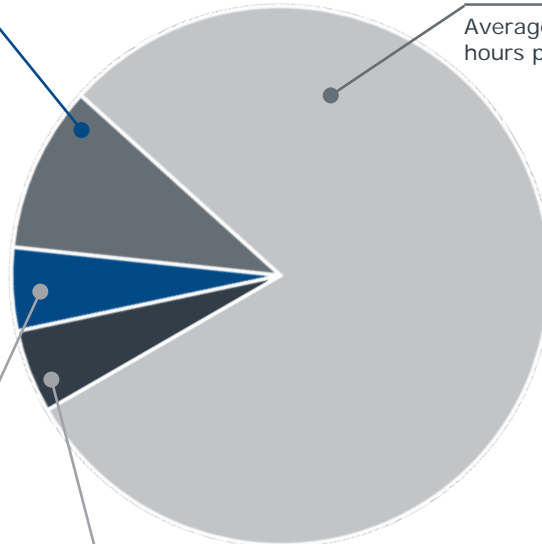
Training and Development (5%)

- University Advising Center training and certification completion

Academic Advising (80%)

Average 30 hours per week or 450 hours per semester

Assigned College Operations (5%)



30+ Number of first-year advisors



Full descriptions available upon request

Advisor Training and Certification Program



Core Advisor Competencies

All advisors must complete online and in-person training modules and meet specific criteria for the **seven core competencies below** to obtain certification. There are four ascending levels of certification reflecting the advisor's growing knowledge and skill level.



Core Competencies

1. USC Advising Practices
2. University Policies and Procedures
3. Academic Programs and Requirements
4. Advising Technology
5. Campus Resources
6. Undergraduate Students and Special Populations
7. Advising Profession and Practice



Skill Levels

- [Advising Foundations](#)
Required for access to advising technologies
- [Level I](#)
- [Level II](#)
- *Coming soon:* Level III
Must advise at least 600 students
- *Coming soon:* Level IV

Advisor Performance Review Excerpt



Responsibility	Success Criteria
Orientation Advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advise students on course selection• Provide info on degree requirements, academic policies and procedures• Review standardized test scores, transcripts, and other transfer work
First-Year Advising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet with all advisees at least once per semester• Advise students on course selection• Perform degree audits and assist with academic difficulty• Encourage participation in extracurricular activities• Serve as point of contact to assist students in resolving issues with other University departments
Monitoring & Academic Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain systematic and frequent contact with advisees• Monitor student records between advisement sessions and identify students with academic difficulties• Write thorough student notes after every session• Refer students to academic success resources through EAB• Track grades and degree progression for struggling students using EAB• Identify and intervene with at-risk advisees

Strategically Managing Early Alerts

Powerful Support Service Resources Extend the Reach of Advising

1

Advisors **create alerts** for students at risk of stalling or dropping out



Alerts focus on issues requiring intervention so students don't slip through the cracks

2

Multiple offices seamlessly handle referrals and student interventions



Offices in the Coordinated Care Network include Career Center, Student Success, & Financial Aid

3

Leadership **holds staff accountable** to manage and close cases



Leaders utilize EAB reports to ensure all offices review and manage cases expediently

4000+

Staff-generated referral alerts created since launch

<1%

Percentage of alert cases open at the end of Spring 18

Top three referrals:

1. Course Grade Performance
2. Major Change/Exploratory Advising
3. Undecided About Major

Using Data to Transform Support



Leveraging the Coordinated Care Network Beyond Advising



First-Year Retention Survey

Fall 2017 first-year retention survey posited:
"My costs will be covered next semester"

Students who disagreed were analyzed for unmet need and payment plan data



31 freshmen awarded a \$1,500 renewable grant



25 of them enrolled in Fall 2018, with average of 3.3 GPA and 16 credit hours



\$269,000 net tuition revenue



Spring Progress Reports

In Spring 2018, School of Business faculty members issued 1,841 progress reports



As a result, 209 students visited the Student Success Center for a consultation



Students attending a consultation earned a .25 letter grade higher than their peers



14% higher pass rate for students attending a consultation

Making an **Impact**



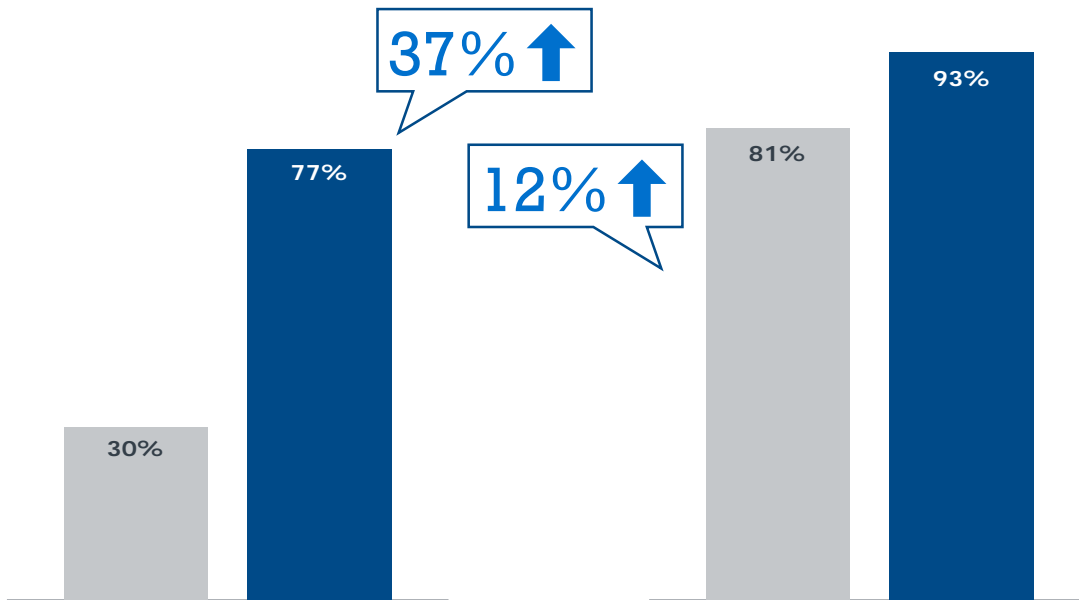
Student Survey on Academic Advising

Comparing Feedback, 2014 to 2017

2017

Percentage of undergraduates assigned advisors

I know who my advisor is and/or how to get advised in my school

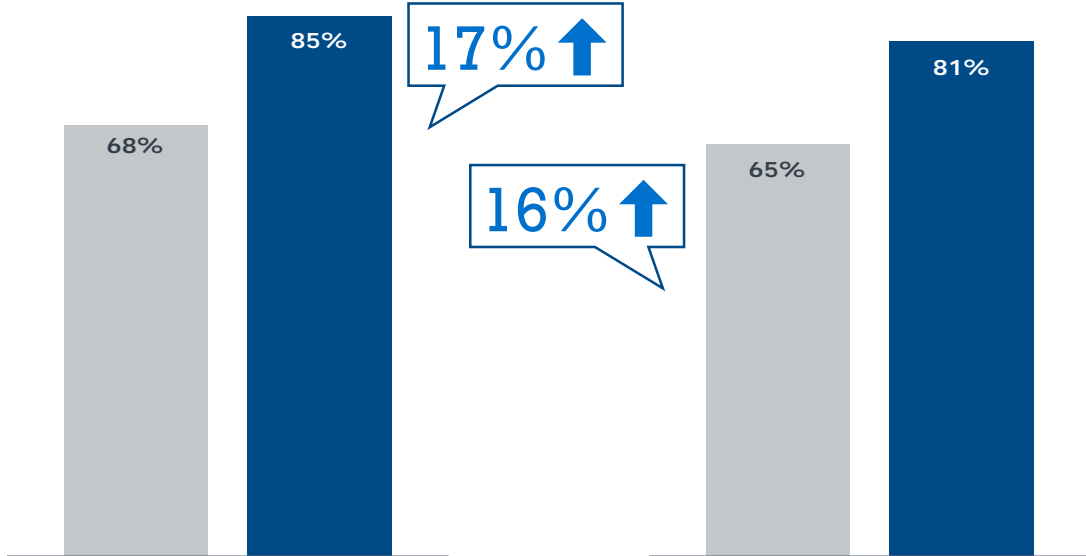


Requirements and Accuracy

2017

As a result of academic advising,
I understand the requirements
of my major

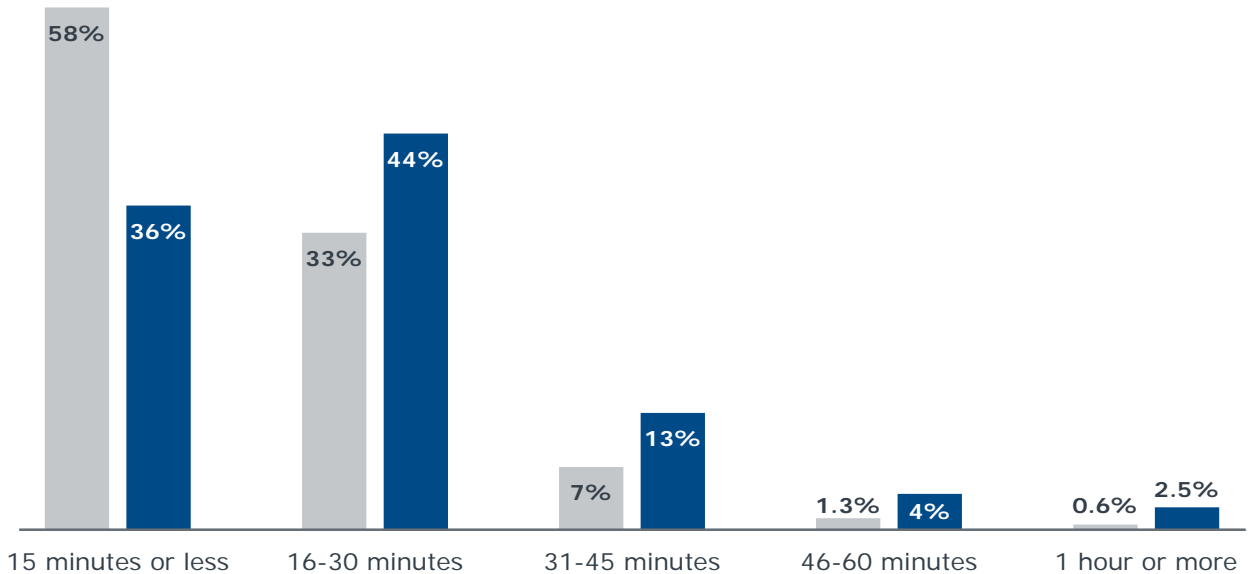
My advisor provides accurate
information about courses, programs,
and major requirements



Advising Appointment Length

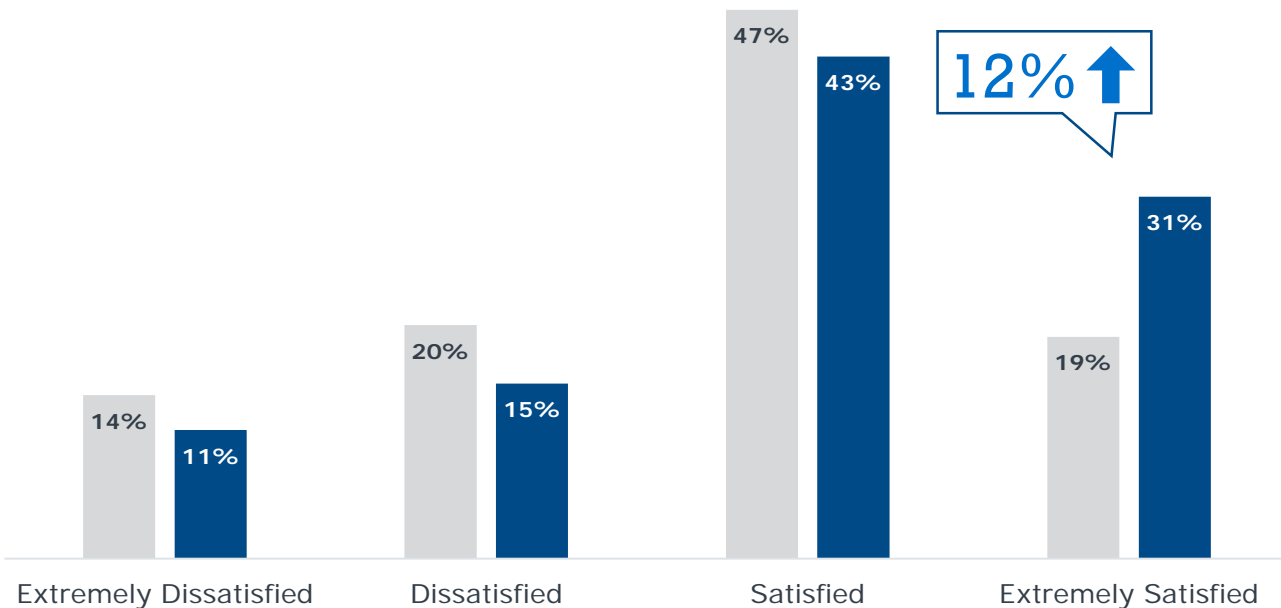
2017

Approximately how much time do you spend with your advisor?



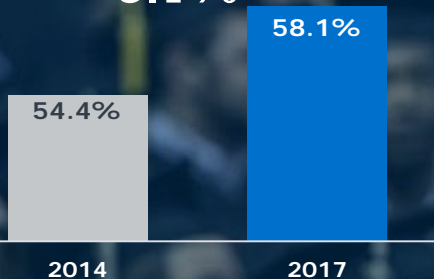
2017

Overall, how satisfied are you with academic advising at USC?



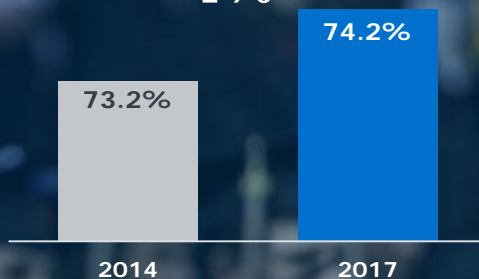
Four-Year Graduation Rate

+3.7%



Six-Year Graduation Rate

+1%





Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis

202-747-1000 | eab.com