

# ACADEMIC ADVISING SYLLABUS

## James Madison College Mission

James Madison provides a liberal education in public affairs for undergraduates. This means, among other things, that our primary activity as a faculty and staff is undergraduate teaching. We are dedicated to the highest standards of excellence, both for our students and for ourselves. Our curriculum and individual courses are multi-disciplinary, cultivating in our students skills of rigorous thought, lucid prose writing, and articulate speech. We learn in a residential setting that nurtures a collegium of scholars among students, faculty and staff and draw on the resources of the wider University to enrich our lives.

## James Madison College Academic Advising Mission

To assist James Madison College students attain their personal, educational and career goals through a collaborative and interactive relationship among faculty, advisors and students that fosters student growth and development. James Madison College is committed to providing accurate and timely information regarding university policies and resources that assist students in achieving their goals. Students are required to understand University and College policies, procedures and requirements. This collaborative process necessitates shared responsibility and helps foster student success and development.

## Purpose of Academic Advising

Academic advising is an educational process that, by intention and design, facilitates students' understanding of the meaning and purpose of higher education and fosters their intellectual and personal development toward academic success and lifelong learning. (NACADA, 2004).

At James Madison College, Michigan State University, academic advising offers students the opportunity to form relationships with advisors that foster a collegium of students among scholars and that facilitates academic, personal and professional development. Advisors facilitate students' understanding of MSU and College requirements, regulations and policies. This collaborative process assists students in understanding the academic and non-academic resources offered through the College and University. Both students and advisors have clear and distinct responsibilities in this process.

## Advisor's Role

- Work collaboratively with students to understand university integrative studies and math requirements.
- Work collaboratively with students to understand James Madison College requirements in the area of foreign language, economics and field experience.
- Work with students to understand the four majors offered in James Madison College as well as their unique requirements. This includes selectives, electives, and related areas.
- Work with students to understand additional options such as majors, minors and specializations.
- Work collaboratively with students to understand University and College policies, regulations and procedures.
- Work with students to refine personal, educational and career goals, to include discussions of graduate and law school planning.
- Work with students to understand campus resources.

- Assist students in understanding the connection between integrative studies requirements and major requirements.
- Assist students in understanding mission of James Madison College and the Liberal Learning Goals of MSU.
- Work with students to monitor degree progress.
- Be available to answer questions, discuss concerns and further explore academic and non-academic opportunities. (Major Scholarships)
- Help students in making decisions about their future development

#### Student's Role

- Clearly understand their role in this collaborative process.
- Take responsibility for their education.
- Actively engage with advisors and seek assistance in the decision-making process.
- Make their own decisions based on information gathered from various resources.
- Schedule appointments and foster a solid working relationship with advisors.
- Actively seek guidance beyond simply scheduling classes.
- Set realistic goals and review them with advisors.

#### Engaged Learners

MSU strives for its graduates to be engaged both in the classroom and outside of the classroom. A strong undergraduate education provides breadth and depth. For students, breadth comes from required courses in natural science, social science, writing, arts & humanities and mathematics. Depth comes with a students' selected major. Learning is a life-long endeavor and students must develop a broad set of competencies that allow them to excel in all aspects of life while contributing to the advancement of society. As part of this process MSU has created a set of Liberal Learning Goals that all graduates should develop proficiency in order to be engaged contributors to the advancement of society.

## Michigan State University - Liberal Learning Goals

A liberal arts foundation enhances the potential that MSU graduates will be outstanding leaders and life-long learners. These liberal learning goals are intended to provide a framework for students' active engagement in learning both in and out of the classroom. Students who complete an undergraduate degree program at Michigan State University will demonstrate the knowledge, attitudes and skills associated with the following interconnected goals and outcomes:

### **Analytical Thinking**

The MSU graduate uses ways of knowing from mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and arts to access information and critically analyze complex material in order to evaluate evidence, construct reasoned arguments, and communicate inferences and conclusions

- Acquires, analyzes, and evaluates information from multiple sources
- Synthesizes and applies the information within and across disciplines
- Identifies and applies, as appropriate, quantitative methods for defining and responding to problems
- Identifies the credibility, use and misuse of scientific, humanistic and artistic methods

### **Cultural Understanding**

The MSU graduate comprehends global and cultural diversity within historical, artistic, and societal contexts

- Reflects on experiences with diversity to demonstrate knowledge and sensitivity
- Demonstrates awareness of how diversity emerges within and across cultures

### **Effective Citizenship**

The MSU graduate participates as a member of local, national, and global communities and has the capacity to lead in an increasingly interdependent world

- Understands the structures of local, national, and global governance systems and acts effectively within those structures in both individual and collaborative ways
- Applies knowledge and abilities to solve societal problems in ethical ways

### **Effective Communication**

The MSU graduate uses a variety of media to communicate effectively with diverse audiences

- Identifies how contexts affect communication strategies and practices
- Engages in effective communication practices in a variety of situations and with a variety of media

### **Integrated Reasoning**

The MSU graduate integrates discipline-based knowledge to make informed decisions that reflect humane social, ethical, and aesthetic values

- Critically applies liberal arts knowledge in disciplinary contexts and disciplinary knowledge in liberal arts contexts
- Uses a variety of inquiry strategies incorporating multiple views to make value judgments, solve problems, answer questions, and generate new understandings

## Academic Advising by year:

### First-Year

- To find out who your advisor is please stop by Room 369 south Case, consult the online, James Madison College Advising Page or check the email that was sent to you by the Assistant Dean in August.
- Schedule mandatory meeting with academic advisor during fall semester.
- Complete advising worksheet and bring to meeting with advisor.
- Review your academic goals with advisor.
- Review online MSU Academic Programs (MSU web page, use search engine for Academic Programs).
- Know professors contact information including office hours and email.
- If you are going to miss class or are ill please let the professors know immediately. If there is an extended illness or emergency please contact the James Madison College Director of Academic Affairs and your professors. The earlier we address these problems the better we can provide assistance.
- Know resources available for extra assistance outside of class time for each of your fall semester courses. Ask professors.
- Begin to understand the transition from high school to college is an on-going process that requires active engagement and support. Know where to find support.
- Get to know the Resident Assistant on your floor.
- Begin to understand your unique learning style and time management.
- Learn personal responsibility. You are responsible for your academic success.
- Always attend class – if you miss a class make sure you speak with professor to discuss ways to make up work.
- Become an active learner inside and outside of the classroom (use campus and college resources for academic assistance).
- Attend programs and activities that will help you to expand your knowledge of your own culture as well as others, including Intercultural Aide programs, South Neighborhood Black Caucus, PRISM, MRULE or others.
- Begin to think about other academic interests you may want to explore.
- Stay organized. Develop a personalized plan to stay organized and know important dates.
- Attend Career Services programs –develop resume with assistance from Career Services consultant. Network, Network, Network....
- Attend Study Abroad fairs.
- Attend JMC Meet the Majors meetings in February.
- Understand your personal goals and track your progress toward completing these goals. Discuss these with your advisor.
- Explore co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, including student organizations, ASMSU, intermural sports or groups within the community.
- Remember registration for second-year will be held in April. Plan to meet with your advisor in February, March or April after you have decided on what Madison major you plan to pursue.
- High-achieving and interested students should explore major scholarships (Truman, Rhodes, Marshall etc.) If you do not know what these are look them up at nifs.msu.edu.
- If you plan to add an additional major, minor or specialization not administered by James Madison, contact an advisor from that department. (Search the MSU web page for contact information)

## Second-Year

- Review the goals you set forth in your first year and reevaluate your four-year academic plan.
- Review your academic, personal and career goals in light of your first-year experience.
- Meet with your new advisor. Remember in James Madison you will be reassigned to an advisor in your primary major.
- Discuss your goals and degree-planning.
- What methods course(s) should you take in order to achieve your goals and that match your academic interests.
- Review related area requirements.
- High-achieving and interested students should explore major scholarships (Truman, Rhodes, Marshall etc.) If you do not know what these are look them up at [nifs.msu.edu](http://nifs.msu.edu). Begin Truman application. Usually due in late spring.
- Discuss Field Experience or substitutions such as a Senior Honors Thesis or Study Abroad.
- Attend Field Experience Orientation meeting.
- Continue to work with Career Services consultant and attend programs.
- Begin to assume leadership positions in student organizations.
- Attend UURAF (the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum)

## Third-Year

- Actively engage with advisors and Director of Field Experience to identify interests, begin the application process and clarify the requirements for your internship.
- If you are studying abroad as a substitution for your field experience make sure forms have been submitted.
- If you are substituting a senior honors thesis, begin to discuss plans with your professor and enroll for independent study.
- Continue to attend Career Services events and meet with Field Career Consultant.
- Stay involved in extracurricular or civic engagement programs and/or begin your own initiatives.
- Consider conducting academic research for presentation at UURAF or another conference.
- High-achieving and interested students should begin applications for Rhodes, Marshall, Mitchell and other major awards.
- If you are planning to attend law school or graduate school you should meet with professors to ask if they would be willing to write strong letters of recommendation.
- Prepare for LSAT or GRE if you are planning to attend graduate or law school.
- Meet with your advisor to make sure you are making progress toward completing your degree.

## Fourth-Year

- Meet with advisor to review degree progress.
- Meet with Assistant Dean to check degree requirements.
- Complete graduation application.
- Continue meeting with Field Career Consultant.
- Finish any outstanding assignments for MC 400 and MC 401 (Field Experience).
- Review Degree Navigator for any discrepancies. Remember related areas are not automatically uploaded to Degree Navigator so please contact the Assistant Dean.

## Know how to:

- Use Degree Navigator (degnav.msu.edu)
- Use STUINFO
- Use ANGEL
- Use Desire2Learn (D2L)
- Use the online Academic Programs Catalogue (on the Registrar's Office website)
- Use MSU's online Academic Calendar (on the Registrar's Office website)
- Use transfer.msu.edu
- Use Schedule of Courses, including Schedule Builder and Schedule Generator
- Know how to add/drop courses and deadlines (In Schedule Builder, click on course section number for this information)
- Use the Madison online class waitlist (Madison classes only). Go to JMC home page, click on Current Students and then Class Waitlist. Include all required information.
- Sign-up for My Spartan Career at <http://careernetwork.msu.edu/my-spartan-career>
- Use the "people finder" search box on the MSU homepage to find contact information for staff, faculty, and students.
- For adding majors, minors and specializations not administered by James Madison College, please contact the advisors for that program. Use the search box on the MSU homepage to find contact information for departments and advisors.
- For changing majors: Changing majors out of James Madison requires a visit to the Office of Academic Affairs, Room 369 South Case Hall.

**Review before every advising appointment:**

- Degree Navigator
- Degree Requirements
- Your list of questions

# Steps for First Year Success

## Step 1: Get to Know Your Professors –

Make it a point to introduce yourself to each professor at the beginning of each semester. Stand out from the crowd by telling the professor a little bit about yourself so that they can remember you—why you chose Bentley, why you chose the course, or what you thought about the first reading assignment.

**Go to your professors' office hours.** Each professor should have their office hours listed in the syllabus. Office hours are your opportunity to get to know the professor outside of the classroom, get extra help, or talk about your interest in a particular career field.

**When you go to office hours, it also shows the professor that you are not only interested in their course, but you're putting *effort* into their course.** This may really help you later on if you are having difficulty in the course, or in the future when you need a recommendation letter or reference for a campus leadership opportunity—or even your first job!

## Step 2: Set Goals for Yourself

It is difficult to be successful if you do not know exactly what you are trying to achieve. Take time at the beginning of the semester to set goals for yourself—both short-term and long-term goals.

### **WRITE YOUR GOALS DOWN!**

Be sure to revisit your written goals often throughout your academic career, and rewrite your goals as necessary.

Need help achieving your goals? There are a multitude of campus resources to assist you:

- Your Academic Advisor
- JMC Career Services
- Your Professors
- JMC Internships Office
- Student Activities
- MSU Center for Service Learning and Civic Engagement
- And more! Just ask your adviser.

***Tip: Being a full time student is like having a full time job. The amount of time you spend on your academics—being in class, studying, doing work, etc. should up to about 40 hours per***

### **Step 3: Look at the Big Picture!**

Each syllabus you receive from a professor is a road map to your semester. Inside the syllabus you will find what you are responsible for accomplishing during the semester—which includes homework, quizzes, tests, projects, presentations, and writing assignments and their due dates.

**Enter each due date or deadline from each syllabus in a calendar or planner. That way, you can see your semester at a glance, and look at “the big picture.”** This strategy can help you stay organized for the semester and use “down time” in the semester to prepare for busy times in the semester.

**Then, go through each week and set aside time for studying, working on assignments, going to the library, etc. and enter these times in your calendar.** If you have down time in between classes, set aside that time for studying. For example, if you do not have class until 11:20am on Tuesdays, use the morning to review notes and get ahead on your work for the week. The more productive you are during the weekdays, the more free time you will have on the weekends.

### **Step 4: Get a Game Plan**

One of the biggest differences between high school and college is that in college *you* are responsible for determining how to use your time—when you sleep, when you eat, when you study, etc. Without a game plan for how to use your time, it might be difficult to stay on track with your homework and other commitments.

**After you enter the major deadlines and due dates of the semester in your calendar or planner, enter your daily commitments throughout the semester.** Include when you are in class each day and regularly scheduled meetings. If you have a job, include your work hours. If you are an athlete, include practices and games. Plot these time commitments throughout the entire semester, as best you can.

### **Step 5: Find a Place to Study**

While the semester is still new and fresh, start creating good habits—such as scouting out your own place to study. You can discuss with your roommate(s) when would be a good time to use your room as a place to study. You can also look for a favorite spot on campus outside the residence halls.

The key to picking a study spot for yourself is to consider your study style—do you need a quiet, distraction-free area, such as a private study room in the library? Or do you need people around you, such as the couches and chairs in Smith? What kind of lighting do you need to read comfortably? Try a few places on campus, and see what works best for you—then, go to this spot regularly for studying.

*\* Using the same study spot may help you be more focused and productive while you are studying—see if this works for you!*

#### **Helpful hints for creating the ultimate study space:**

- ◆ Limit distractions by turning off your cell phone
- ◆ Turn off your computer unless you need it to complete the work
- ◆ If you are using your computer, turn off AIM and do not even start checking Facebook, email, or your favorite websites
- ◆ Bring drinks and snacks—you can't concentrate if you're thinking about food!
- ◆ Take breaks! Take a walk, stretch, go outside—do whatever you need to do to keep your mind fresh and alert.
- ◆ Meet up with friends for a meal, to watch TV, or play a video game *after* you have made some progress in your studying and homework—use what you like to do as a motivator for getting your work done!

## **What should you do if ...**

- ◆ **You are having difficulty keeping up?**
- ◆ **You are having difficulty understanding course content?**
- ◆ **You are having difficulty with homework or taking tests?**

**There are many academic support services available to you.**  
*Below are ways you can seek help if you are having academic difficulty.*

### **Best advice:**

*Do not be afraid to reach out for help with your academics, and don't wait until it's too late.*

*For academic support to be successful, you need **resources** and **time** to develop skills in the class.*

### **Meet with your professor.**

*Your professor may be able to provide additional help during office hours and be able to refer you to helpful resources.*

### **Go to the MSU Learning Center for your course.**

*Most MSU courses outside of Madison have Learning Resource Center resources available to help you with homework assignments and quick questions related to the course material. Visit their website: <http://lrc.msu.edu/>*

### **Meet with an Academic Adviser**

*An Academic Adviser can help you develop strategies for time management and study skills and help you identify other key campus resources.*

### **Request a tutor.**

*One-on-one peer tutoring is available to students who are attending class regularly, but need assistance beyond what the Learning Centers can provide. Visit their website for more information: <http://lrc.msu.edu/>*

### **Meet with someone from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities.**

*You may be eligible to receive accommodations if you have a learning disability. For more information, call 517*