

Excellence in Academic Advising Comprehensive Report

EAA Liaisons and Steering Committee Members

Kathie Sindt, Director of Academic Technology and Systems, KSAS
Janet Weise, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, WSE

EAA Steering Committee Members

Michael Falk, Vice Dean for Undergraduate Education, WSE
Joel Schildbach, Vice Dean for Undergraduate Education, KSAS
Jessie Martin, Assistant Dean for Academic Advising, KSAS

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Executive Summary

In 2018, with the full support of the Provost and the Deans of the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS) and the Whiting School of Engineering (WSE), Johns Hopkins University (JHU) applied for and was selected to be one of twelve institutions to participate in the Excellence in Academic Advising (EAA) initiative, a partnership between NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising and the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The primary goals for JHU's involvement in EAA were to use this task-force based, evidence-informed process to understand the current state of undergraduate advising at the Homewood Campus, envision the desired future state of advising, and offer recommendations as well as an action-oriented plan for achieving that future state. Guided by advising experts at NACADA, an international association for academic advising, the Steering Committee recruited and appointed faculty, staff, and students to nine different working groups. Each working group focused on one of the Nine Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising (Institutional Commitment; Learning; Advisor Selection and Development; Improvement and the Scholarship of Advising; Collaboration and Communication; Organization; Student Purpose and Pathways; Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity; and Technology-Enabled Advising; see full descriptions in Appendix A). These working groups collected and analyzed evidence about undergraduate advising at the Homewood campus over the course of several months; their efforts culminated in short reports about each condition that included both analyses and specific recommendations for improving advising.

Despite the working groups focusing on different elements of advising, the recommendations they advanced often reflected similar themes. These general themes coalesced around role and purpose, structure and delivery, professional development and training, and technology tools and use. An essential first step of the plan is articulating the mission of academic advising within the undergraduate experience and aligning it with the educational mission of Johns Hopkins University. This articulation includes defining our understanding of what academic advising is, why it is important to Homewood students, and enumerating the learning outcomes for academic advising. A second theme emphasizes the need to review the existing organization and delivery structure of advising and associated processes. A third theme is the need to create robust training and ongoing professional development for professional advisors and faculty, as well as for those who may advise in less well-defined roles. This professional development and training should provide an opportunity to educate faculty and professional advisors about JHU's philosophy of advising, the myriad approaches to advising, the mechanisms to complete transactional advising tasks, and how to promote equity and an inclusive environment. The fourth theme that emerged is advising technology with recommendations to define advising technology, determine what technology is needed to properly support advising at Homewood, and to develop a plan to procure, install, and support technology-enabled advising, including professional training for technology users.

The Steering Committee concurs that these four themes captured the top priorities within the recommendations and were grounded in the quantitative and qualitative evidence gathered during the self-study process. The Steering Committee then shifted its focus to the creation of an action-oriented implementation plan and timeline.

JHU Timeline of the EAA Process as of Fall 2020

PHASE ONE: Self-Study and Assessment

Fall Semester 2018:

- EAA Liaisons attended Kick-Off meeting at October NACADA Annual Conference and began regular meetings with EAA Fellow
- Received approval for collection of the Inventory Data for upload to the EAA website and collection of the data and its definitions began
- Formed EAA Condition Committees comprised of faculty and staff from KSAS, WSE, and key partner offices in Homewood Student Affairs
- Began IRB processes for Student Survey

January 2019:

- Held EAA Launch Event and Conditions Committees began to meet
- Uploaded Inventory Data to EAA Platform

Spring Semester 2019:

- EAA Condition Committees gathered data, ranked Key Performance Indicators, and held meetings
- Began IRB processes for Faculty/Staff Survey
- EAA Liaison, Kathie Sindt, and KSAS faculty member, Richard Brown, attended Community of Practice meeting at the Gardner Gateway Course Conference
- Held training and update meetings for Conditions Committee Chairs
- Launched Student and Faculty/Staff Surveys; EAA Core Team formatted student response data
- EAA Core Team conducted Inventory Data processing
- Launched DUS Survey

Summer 2019:

- EAA Core Team formatted Faculty/Staff Survey responses
- Hosted EAA Retreat and EAA Fellow campus visit
- Condition Committee Chairs finalized their work and began writing reports

Fall 2019:

- Condition Committees chairs submitted final reports with their recommendations for action.
- EAA Liaisons attended Community of Practice meeting at October NACADA Annual Conference
- EAA Steering Committee met to consolidate and identify recommendations for final report

Spring and Summer 2020:

- Timeline interrupted by Covid-19
- Committee on Mission and Learning Outcomes met
- Final Report drafting begun

Fall 2020:

- Comprehensive Report prepared and vetted by Steering Committee
- Submit Comprehensive Report to JHU leadership

PHASE TWO: Next Steps and Implementation

- See Creation of Implementation Plan (p. 13)

Summary of Findings

Recommendations and findings from the nine Conditions Committees overlapped and were distilled into four areas of action:

1. **Mission Statement and Learning Outcomes**
2. **Advising Structure, Roles, Performance, and Equity**
3. **Advisor Training and Professional Development**
4. **Advising Technology**

In the articulation of these findings a number of key concepts arise repeatedly. For clarity we provide some definitions of these here.

Training refers to the formal, linear process introducing advisors to the resources intended for all those engaged in the advising enterprise. These resources may be information sessions or written materials.

Professional Development refers to the ongoing process of advisors continuing to improve their skills and remain current with advances the field. This may happen through participation in intentional learning activities, such as reading and reflection, engagement in coursework, attending conferences, and participating in professional organizations. In addition, professional development includes relationship-based activities, such as creating and consulting with a network of mentors beyond their administrative unit and reflective formative feedback with experienced advisors.

Assessment is the process of measuring the outcomes of the advising process. We anticipate 3 levels of assessment that we will refer to as follows:

- **Assessment of Learning Outcomes** involves measuring through surveys, testing, or focus groups whether students have met the stated learning goals of advising.
- **Assessment of Advisors** refers to the practices used to measure the effectiveness of advisors in order to provide formative feedback.
- **Assessment of our Advising Structure** engages a holistic review of the staffing levels, funding, processes, expectations, and outcomes of our advising system.

Action Area One:

Mission Statement and Learning Outcomes

In order to move forward with a coherent plan for the future of undergraduate academic advising at Johns Hopkins, it is imperative we first build a solid foundation upon which to base our advising structures, roles, and practices. Critical foundational pieces include the development of:

- an institutional mission statement for undergraduate academic advising and
- a set of student learning outcomes guided by that mission

The evidence for the development of these critical guiding documents was revealed through the work of the Institutional Commitment and Learning conditions committees. We are lacking both of these key components which are foundational to an excellent academic advising program.

In making its recommendations, the Institutional Commitment committee reviewed the overall Johns Hopkins University mission statement as well as the mission statements of both the Whiting School of Engineering and the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences. The committee found that mission statements did exist in some advising units and departments [3]. However, these statements seemed to be aligned

only directly to the relevant unit and not tethered to a broader college and institutional mission. An articulated mission statement will support a more consistent academic advising experience for students, no matter where they access it: academic department, advising office, or special program. In the EAA Faculty/Staff survey, 22% of KSAS tenured faculty members with advisees answered, “Very Much Agree” to the statement “I know where to find information on the purposes and practices related to academic advising at Johns Hopkins University.” In contrast, 63% of them said the “Very Much Agree” to the statement “I am aware of the expectations for my meetings with students (either face-to-face or virtual).” This difference between the level of confidence the respondents have in what they are doing as advisors vs. their ability to find the information on the purposes and practices related to advising suggests that there exists a preconceived, yet unarticulated understanding about what advising is. Developing a shared understanding through a mission statement and communicating the purposes and goals for academic advising among those who advise would help to bring consistency to the comprehensive student advising experience.

One of the key purposes of the mission statement is to guide the development of student learning outcomes for academic advising. Key questions to consider include what we want students to know as a result of their academic advising encounters; what we want them to be able to do as a result of their participation in academic advising; and what behaviors do we want them to exhibit based upon their academic advising experiences?

In the EAA Student Survey, when students were asked about what topics they talked about in their meetings with their advisors, the topic with the highest frequency (3.4 out of 4) was “course selection and registration for the next term.” Other topics such as “career options related to my interests” and “ways to get involved on campus related to my academic major” scored a frequency of 2 and 1.8 respectively. Students rated some topics, such as career options, as important to them, but noted that they were infrequently discussed in advising sessions. It is difficult to assess the conclusions from these data without learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should be developed according to the importance students and advisors placed on advising topics to help develop a curriculum for undergraduate academic advising at Hopkins.

It is clear that the construction of learning outcomes as well as a robust plan for consistent assessment of those outcomes is needed. At present, there are no learning outcomes defined for undergraduate academic advising. Assessment of academic advisors and of our advising structure is inconsistent across various delivery units and not grounded in learning outcomes. It is recommended that the principles of academic advising delineated in the Council for Advancement of Standards [21] guide the development of our learning outcomes along with foundational NACADA documents, e.g., NACADA Core Values [158] and Concept Statement on Advising [170]. When drafting the institutional undergraduate academic advising mission statement and learning outcomes, it will be imperative that equity, diversity, and inclusion principles are addressed. Ultimately, these statements should be clearly and broadly communicated to the entire campus community: faculty, students, staff, and parents.

Recommendations:

Develop a mission statement and set of learning outcomes for undergraduate academic advising at Johns Hopkins.

- Establish a plan for assessing our students’ completion of the advising learning outcomes.
- Ensure that equity, diversity, and inclusion principles are addressed.

- Develop a plan to communicate and educate the campus community about our mission and learning outcomes for academic advising. Important stakeholders include students, faculty, and staff, with particular attention given to the Admissions Office and Life Design Lab.

Action Area Two:

Advising Structure, Roles, Performance, and Equity

The evidence and findings within the conditions committee reports lead us to the conclusion that we need to explore changes to academic advising at JHU to improve the consistency of the advising experience for all Johns Hopkins University undergraduate students. The evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, points to an academic advising experience in need of improvement. For example, the Enrolled Student Survey [29], found that students who indicated they sought advice from their academic advisors, 24.4% rated the helpfulness of that advice as “Quite a Bit”; 51.0% rated the helpfulness as “Somewhat”, and another 24.6% rated the helpful as “Not Very.” These percentages were similar when results were disaggregated by school (KSAS or WSE) and by student level, i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior. These results are also supported by the findings in the Senior Survey Snapshot [28] and the 2016 KSAS & WSE Student Survey [30]. As a Steering Committee, we think we must do better.

The inconsistency in academic advising was noted as a concern in multiple condition committee reports including, “Organization,” “Advisor Selection and Development,” “Equity, Diversity and Inclusion,” and “Student Purpose and Pathways.” The findings and recommendations of these committees are also reinforced by the parallel findings in the reports on “Scholarship of Advising” and “Advising as Learning.” Overall, the evidence and recommendations identify issues related to the organization and delivery of academic advising that require collaborative, thoughtful, systematic, and intentional review. Among the issues at hand are those related to: Structure and Delivery, Function of Advising and Role Clarity, Optimal Advising Loads, Advisor Performance, Recognition, and Advancement, and Equity in the Advising Experience (132, 140, 141, 164, 166, 167, 168, 169).

Structure, Delivery, and Internal Communication. KSAS and WSE use different models to deliver academic advising and these variations can result in a confusing advising landscape. Evidence in the Student Purpose and Pathways report indicates that, from a student perspective, there is a lack of uniformity in advising expectations between KSAS and WSE centralized advising offices and the academic departments. Students are able to change majors within and between schools from the time of matriculation or to declare majors/minors in each school; hence, confusion can result from navigating the differing advising approaches between programs. Some academic programs do have explicit expectations about the advising relationship and provide this information on program websites, while other programs do not provide advising information on their websites. While the KSAS and WSE advising offices do currently coordinate some communications sent to students in their respective schools, it is imperative that students are able to turn to their centralized advisors for appropriate guidance in navigating both schools. Building upon these existing communication pathways is important for improving the student experience.

In addition, it was noted that the advising experience could be enhanced by improved communications between the advising and admissions offices. For example, the major assignment for students who are denied admissions to the BME program has changed in the Admissions Office without notification to the advising offices. Another example is the receipt of transcripts from other colleges and universities by the Admissions Office and how this receipt is made known to the advising offices.

Defining an Optimal Advising Structure and Establishing Role Clarity. There is no common understanding about what it means to “do academic advising” at Johns Hopkins. What are the expectations for academic advising and advisors? What are the expectations for students? There is no consistent mission or set of student learning outcomes that guide the design and delivery of academic advising, nor is there a philosophical perspective regarding the relationship of academic advising to the academic mission of Johns Hopkins University (166, 168). While the roles of faculty advisors and primary-role advisors are operational within the existing structure, the varying responsibilities of these advisors are not shared community knowledge. Better articulation of the roles and responsibilities, as aligned with and derived from a shared mission and set of student learning outcomes, would provide clarity for both students and advisors. Establishing these roles and expectations is paramount to achieving the mission and outcomes for advising through assessment and continuous improvement.

As a result of these loosely-defined roles and responsibilities, the distinct contributions of faculty and primary role advisors are not effectively leveraged to create the optimal student advising experience. Faculty and primary-role advisors fill different needs with primary-role advisors perhaps better able to provide a broader context for a student’s studies, advise about various possible academic and career paths, as well as offer more detailed counsel about academic policies and procedures. By contrast, faculty advisors can provide deeper discussions of the discipline, including the benefits and process of research and possibilities for further academic study or related career paths. Under the current system there is a substantial overlap of responsibilities. Redundancy can have some benefits, since students can access either advisor, however, in the absence of adequate role definition between faculty and primary-role advisors, students can also potentially receive uneven or contradictory advice.

Optimal Advising Loads. Students report that they strongly value in-person interactions and advisor availability (174). However, the current system provides highly uneven support for students and, at times, unsuitable student loads for advisors in some programs. Faculty advisors, who must balance their advising duties with their teaching and research commitments, serve anywhere from 1 to more than 25 advisees within their respective departments/programs. For faculty at the upper end of this range this means that student contact with their faculty advisor may be severely restricted. For primary-role advisors, caseloads range from 460-525 (67, *data has not been updated since Spring 2019*), which is 50-75% higher than the average at undergraduate institutions and about five times the national average at private bachelor’s degree granting institutions (11).

Advisor Performance, Recognition, and Advancement. No structures exist for routine assessment of advising at the advisor level. The routine assessment that is done occurs entirely at the department/program level and is limited to student experience surveys (28, 171, 172, 173). This lack of individual faculty or primary-role advisor assessment impedes the establishment of systems of evaluation and recognition linked directly to one’s effectiveness as an advisor. Additionally, advisors report that the university rarely acknowledges the range of responsibilities in their advising roles. This lack of acknowledgement and recognition for the scope of advisors’ work creates the impression that the advising role is devalued and the work underappreciated. Faculty advisors tend to de-emphasize the importance of advising relative to their research and teaching responsibilities. For primary-role advisors, the lack of a career ladder presents a challenge for sustaining professional growth and receiving acknowledgment of progression within one’s roles and responsibilities (175). In order to build a responsive system of review and recognition for academic advisors, an assessment plan is needed.

Equity in the Advising Experience. Johns Hopkins recruits a student body comprised of remarkable economic, ethnic, racial, gender, geographic and international diversity. In aggregate, our under-

represented minority (URM) students are less satisfied and more stressed academically and graduate at a lower rate than their non-URM peers (125, 129, 130, 131). To support diversity, multiple programs have been developed outside of academic advising, but little intentional connection has been forged between these efforts and academic advising (JUMP and HOP-IN). One notable exception is the launch of the Academic Advisor/Success Coach model in 2019 as part of the Bloomberg gift. This effort is envisioned to support 20% of the student body identified as first-generation and/or limited-income with primary-role advisor/coaches each serving 100 students in an intense and proactive mode.

In addition, the current hiring process does not provide adequate mechanisms for the assessment of the skills and experiences of potential advisors, both faculty and staff, relevant to diversity and inclusion. A precondition for this to be implemented is an enumeration of the skills expected for advisors working with students from diverse populations. Since the identities and experiences of advisors are relevant to their effectiveness connecting with students, attention to the diversity of our advising corps has the potential to benefit our advising effort overall. While the gender and racial representation of faculty is routinely analyzed, this is not done for primary-role advisors. Data regarding other dimensions of diversity such as first-generation status, experience as a limited-income student, sexual orientation, non-binary gender identity, and the intersections of these are not collected.

Recommendations:

Complete an analysis of potential changes to our current advising models.

- Define academic advising for Hopkins undergraduate advising.
- Determine appropriate caseloads for advisors and the expectations based on role.
- Develop a communication plan to educate the campus community about the new advising model.
- Create a career ladder for those in professional advising roles.
- Create a governing body for undergraduate academic advising comprised of a small set of decision makers who are supported by a standing advisory committee that includes a variety of stakeholders with specified term lengths and rotating membership.
- Ensure that the aforementioned diversity and inclusion principles are addressed.
- Create a budget and staffing plan for advising model.

Action Area Three:

Advisor Training and Professional Development

There is no required or systematically implemented professional development plan for primary role or faculty advisors at Hopkins. There have been notable attempts, however, from various offices to provide both formalized onboarding as well as ongoing attempts to provide professional development opportunities. Here are some of the positive attempts that have been made to encourage advisor development:

- The Assistant Deans in KSAS and WSE over academic advising and the Director of Pre-Professional Advising created a Homewood-based information sharing and advising training group, called “ADHOP”. The group meets on a semester basis to discuss issues related to undergraduate academic advising at Hopkins (136).
- A handful of primary role advisors began a movement to create university-wide professional development meetings for all those serving in academic advising roles. In the 2 years since its

start, the group has successfully planned and run three university-wide advising retreats, with aims to create a more permanent and sustainable leadership structure.

- The Homewood Student Affairs division organizes monthly “Student Experience Meetings” designed to foster information sharing among student-facing staff (108).
- Some academic departments and majors, like International Studies, have created very thorough faculty advising manuals and have a formal onboarding experience for faculty advisors (93).
- New faculty in the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences receive a brief introduction to academic advising during new faculty orientation.
- There is professional development money set aside for primary role advisors in campus advising offices and they are encouraged to seek these opportunities.
- Both KSAS and WSE have initial onboarding plans for new primary role advisors (97 & 98) and are working to further develop these plans.

One major problem is that there are inconsistent expectations for advisor training and professional development for both primary role and faculty advisors. The results of the EAA DUS survey show that while advising training and development varies from department to department, with only 25% of respondents reporting any training from their department (114). Additionally, in the EAA faculty survey, 56% of faculty report their answer as “Never” to the question “To what degree does Johns Hopkins University provide a professional development plan that is required for faculty advisors? For that same question, 22% report their answer as “Don’t know.”

Current existing training efforts at Hopkins focus on the process of advising and/or how to navigate the technology of advising, rather than the conceptual or relational aspects of academic advising (69, 71, 74, 114). According to the EAA student survey, students reported course selection and academic planning as most talked about topics during advising sessions, but other topics such as career interests, personal goals, social issues, and resources were discussed less frequently, if at all. It is clear from this evidence that more comprehensive training covering all core advising competencies and values as defined by NACADA is needed (170).

One core value for academic advising is understanding and relating to diverse student populations (170, 176). At Hopkins, the expectations and knowledge bases of different faculty and staff advisors is presumed to be uneven. While there are diversity training opportunities already available at Hopkins (127), it is not known to what extent primary role or faculty advisors are aware of these opportunities and the degree to which the existing trainings are applicable to advising. In order for all advisors to serve students effectively, training specific to diversity and equity topics must be included in any training plans.

After the implementation of a comprehensive training program, it will be important to incentivize participation and completion of training with the ultimate goal to be able to observe and reward improvement as an advisor. One approach is to create a formal awards program. Both KSAS and WSE have faculty awards programs highlighting teaching and mentoring (e.g., undergraduate Faculty Advising Award, Faculty Teaching and Mentoring Award, Capers and Marion McDonald Award for Excellence in Mentoring and Advising) (96, 116). While an advising award for faculty is a notable attempt to reward and recognize faculty, it falls short as an incentive because it fails to recognize the multitude of individuals who engaged in training and may have improved their skills as an advisor in the past year. In addition, according to the EAA Faculty/Staff survey, 52% of the KSAS tenured faculty who advise students stated the University does not incorporate advising into the promotion and tenure process.

There is currently no institutional award or recognition of professional growth as an advisor for primary role academic advisors or advising administrators. The bottom line is that the institution can create training programs but if they are not required or if faculty and staff are not rewarded for completing them, they may become underutilized.

Finally, it should be noted that because there are currently no established mission statement and learning outcomes for undergraduate advising at the University level, any training programs that do exist fail to tie into a structured advising program. Although the creation of a comprehensive and systematic professional development plan for academic advisors is crucial for supporting a quality advising experience, it is clear that defining the advising experience at Johns Hopkins through a University mission statement must be a priority in order for this work to continue.

Recommendations:

Create training resources and professional development opportunities for all academic advisors regardless of specific role.

- Create a new advisor training program required for all faculty and staff with advising roles.
- Create online training and reference resources targeted to the specific advisor role.
- Ensure financial commitment is made across all advisor roles for advisors to participate in professional development opportunities, such as conferences and courses.
- Construct a campus-wide Undergraduate Academic Advising Awards program mimicking the NACADA award structure as best fits our defined advisor roles.
- Ensure that all advisors have training that assists in their understanding of the diversity of our campus community and their ability to support such students and address equity issues.
- Create campus incentive programs to recognize completion of training programs and participation in other professional development opportunities appropriate to the advisor roles.
- Ensure all trainings and professional development opportunities are tied to the mission and core competencies for academic advisors.
- Develop a communication plan to educate campus community about these initiatives.
- Create a budget and staffing plan.

Action Area Four: Advising Technology

The use of technology at Johns Hopkins University, as with virtually every university, is ubiquitous and, in fact, essential to support the work of the institution. Not unlike many institutions, Johns Hopkins utilizes several software tools to support various processes and services. Current software tools used to support academic advising include: our Student Information System (SIS, self-managed by institution), SIS Self-Service for Advisors, Degree Audit (by Conclusive Systems), Early Alert (Starfish by Hodson's), Course Scheduling for Students (semester.ly), Blackboard, and an Electronic Document Management System for student advising files for AS and EN Advising Office Staff (OnBase by Hyland). In addition, a variety of online appointment scheduling systems, survey platforms, Google forms, and departmentally-created Excel sheets are used.

While numerous tools are used to support the work of advisors, there is no evidence at Hopkins of an accepted concept or definition of what constitutes "advising technology", nor is there a coordinated, collaborative, or comprehensive technology plan to ensure tools are fully implemented, integrated with

each other, and meet the needs of both our students and advisors. With regard to the latter, although evidence exists that some tools are well-used by students and advisors, there is no documentation that existing software meets the needs of both students and advisors. This lack of understanding regarding how technology is used by advisors as well as students contributes to the inconsistent use of technology by all advisors, incomplete implementation of existing tools, limited integration between tools, and inadequate training of all advisor types in effective use of the tools.

Lack of Systematic Use and Coordination Among Users

The professional advisors in the KSAS and WSE Advising Offices share an electronic student filing system and have access to shared advising notes. However, results from the DUS Survey suggest that few faculty advisors take notes during advising meetings and if they do, they do not appear to be stored in a centralized manner even at the departmental level (114). Expansion of the existing OnBase technology has been posed as one possible solution for offering the same tool for advising notes with appropriate access to all serving in an academic advising role across campus. That said, institutional resources are seemingly insufficient to allow full implementation and use across all advisor types.

The variety of methods through which students are asked to make appointments with their advisors is another example of limited coordination in the implementation of technology. Among the professional advising staff at least three different calendar systems are in use, including: 1) calendar software created by Alex McLin in the KSAS Dean's Office, 2) Starfish's calendar option, and 3) Calendly, a commercial scheduling software product. When faculty advisors were asked about scheduling appointments with their students, methods such as posting sign-ups on office door, using Google forms, email exchange, and setting up online appointment calendars on their own were among those most often mentioned (114). This is just one example where clarity and coordination in this function would streamline and enhance the student experience.

Integrating and Streamlining the Use of Technology

In general, the number of tools as currently configured needed to support advising is problematic and, particularly for faculty members who don't regularly use them, difficult to navigate. For example, primary role advisors in the centralized advising offices have five software tools they need to access to gather complete information regarding a student. In addition, faculty advisors report difficulty using tools such as SIS and degree audit and may fail to use tools available to them such as Starfish (32, 34 and free responses in EAA Faculty/Staff Survey).

Positively, many of our tools talk to each other reasonably well once the integration has been completed by our University Information Services (UIS) team (162). Examples of some successful integrations between software tools are the addition of degree audit to SIS Self-Service for all users, linkages between OnBase and SIS Self-Service, SIS data feeding into Starfish and Blackboard, and semester.ly integration with SIS Self-Service for students. However, these examples also offer a glimpse into a technology network that is the result of retrofitting of previous, and often, individual unit decisions rather than emanating from a coordinated, comprehensive, and collaborative plan based on identified needs and uses

Starfish is one example of a tool adopted but not universally utilized. While evidence suggests Starfish is functioning as an early alert software as indicated by the response rate of faculty who enter mid-term grade performance data throughout the semester (4), deeper questions about this tool's usage raise

concerns about user acceptance of the software. Its use for raising flags by faculty and primary role advisors is minimal (34) and response rates for mid-term grade data require significant reminders to faculty for compliance (Emily Calderone, personal communication). The use of this software is not optimized and it has not become a central component in advisors' daily work; it is a secondary tool.

Training and Development

There is little, if any, uniform training for advisors regarding the effective use of technology tools available to them. Required training that does exist is limited to an online FERPA training module required prior to being given access to the Student Information System (SIS) (161). New directors of undergraduate studies in KSAS are given the opportunity to complete one-on-one training on the use of SIS Self-Service and degree audit, but this is not required (Kathie Sindt, personal knowledge). The EAA Faculty/Staff Survey responses support that there is a dearth of training in the use of technology for advising at Hopkins. In our DUS Survey, some DUS report they do some training and information-sharing with faculty advisors in their programs via email, meetings, and conversations, but responses suggest these advising updates focus primarily on program requirements and procedures related to course registration (114).

This lack of training and development on the use of technology extends to students as well. New students are directed to website videos that review how to select courses and register for them using SIS Self-Service (document 142). In addition, during the KSAS "Junior Clearance" process, the KSAS Advising Office sends current juniors a one sheet document covering a couple tips for using degree audit as an attachment in a blast email with multiple attachments (document 163). Our Registrar's Office has two webpages targeted to students with some directions regarding course registration (documents 159, 160). These examples point to a system of student technology that lacks purposefulness and intentionality.

Recommendations:

Conduct an advising technology needs assessment and acquire the resources to meet those needs.

- Define advising technology.
- Create an advising technology delivery plan and ensure the tools support the mission and learning outcomes of academic advising.
- Establish training programs/resources for advising technology.
- Establish an assessment plan of the training options and effectiveness of advising technology.
- Create a budget and staffing plan to support advising technology.

CREATION OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

While the EAA Conditions Committees identified many similar recommendations across the conditions, their work was not designed to provide specific details to implement changes. Therefore, additional work is required to finalize plans for implementing change in advising. One significant difference between the assessment phase and this implementation plan is the inclusion of the Peabody Conservatory. This allows our plan to be inclusive of all degree-seeking Hopkins undergraduate students.

Step One: Create a committee to develop a mission and set learning outcomes for undergraduate academic advising at Johns Hopkins.

This committee began work in Spring 2020 and will be comprised of faculty and staff advisors from the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Whiting School of Engineering, and Peabody Conservatory. The committee objective will be to take initial drafts of these statements which were written in an earlier phase of the EAA project, prepare a final draft, and present their work to the EAA Steering Committee for approval. The EAA Steering Committee believes this work should be completed first in order to drive the work of other implementation workgroups.

Step Two: Create a committee to provide formalized revisions to the existing advising structure, definitions of advisor roles and expectations, and expected costs and timeline for implementing the proposed changes.

This committee will begin work in Spring 2021 after the committee on mission and learning outcomes presents its work to the EAA Steering Committee. It will be comprised of the Vice Deans of Undergraduate Education, the Assistant Deans for Advising, and small selection of faculty and primary-role advisors. Its work is expected to be completed by the beginning of the fall semester 2021.

Step Three: Create two additional committees to examine advisor training and advising technology.

While current activities surrounding these topics are always ongoing and will continue in the short-term, these committees will be asked to recommend specific actions and changes to ongoing practices, timelines for implementation, and to estimate the resources, both in terms of personnel and finances, needed for implementation. Such implementation would begin after both Step Two and Step Three to ensure the mission, learning outcomes, and delivery structure are in place to participate in the trainings and make use of the technologies.

Appendices:

- 1) Appendix A: Conditions Definitions
- 2) Appendix B: EAA Condition Committee Membership
- 3) Appendix C: References

APPENDIX A: Conditions Definitions

The nine Conditions of Excellence in Academic Advising provide a set of aspirational standards designed to facilitate your institution's evaluation and improvement of academic advising so vital to student retention, completion, and success. Institutions can use these principles to determine their strengths, identify challenges, and generate ideas for improvement at both the unit and institutional levels.

● Institutional Commitment

Institutions recognize that academic advising is a shared responsibility integral to the students' educational experience and the institution's teaching and learning mission. This commitment begins with an institutional academic advising mission statement that is informed by the values and beliefs of the institution. Both widely understood and articulated in institutional documents, this statement informs practice as well as the administration, organization, delivery, and assessment of academic advising.

● Learning

Institutions ensure that academic advisors are knowledgeable about the institution's expected learning outcomes, curriculum, pedagogy, and the student learning process. Excellent advising programs also establish curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning and developmental outcomes for academic advising throughout a student's educational experience. Academic advising outcomes are aligned with the institution's curriculum, academic advising mission, and goals. These outcomes are systematically assessed and refinements are made based upon documented assessment results.

● Advisor Selection and Development

Institutions employ effective selection practices, professional development, and appropriate recognition and rewards for all advisors and advising administrators. Institutions and/or units establish clear expectations and requirements for advisors as well as systems for formative and summative feedback to advisors. Establishing position/role requirements for primary role advisors and processes for selecting, hiring, salary scales, and retaining quality academic advisors provide consistency for students and supports program sustainability. Ongoing professional development programs ensure that those in the academic advising community are current in advising skills and knowledge and that advising practice reflects the core values and competencies for excellent academic advising.

● Improvement and the Scholarship of Advising

Institutions committed to systematic assessment and evaluation recognize the complexity of the educational process and its theoretical underpinnings. They operate under the principles of ongoing, evidence-based plans for assessment of both advisors and advising programs. Members of the academic advising community are both critical consumers of, and contributors to, the scholarly literature, including the effects that advising can have on students and the role of advising in higher education.

- Collaboration and Communication

Effective academic advising requires coordination and collaborative partnerships among all units across campus. These partnerships foster ongoing communication and promote resource sharing. A collaboratively developed strategic communication plan, inclusive of all institutional stakeholders, involves frequent and intentional exchanges of information and ideas, is routinely reviewed and updated, and advances a shared aspirational vision for academic advising across all units.

- Organization

Excellent advising programs are intentionally organized across the institution to meet the institutional academic mission, goals, and intended outcomes. The organization of academic advising must have structured leadership, appropriate resources, and a systematic approach to continuous assessment and improvement. The organizational structure supports the roles of all academic advisors, regardless of title.

- Student Purpose and Pathways

Effective academic advising directs students to explore and define their own purpose, goals, and curricular pathways to achieve learning and developmental outcomes. Curricular plans must be coherent, enrich students' programs of study, and support their educational goals, career and life aspirations. Partners and key stakeholders collaboratively and closely examine all student transitions and develop policies and practices to overcome barriers and optimize learning and success.

- Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

Excellent academic advising demonstrates a commitment to the values and culture of inclusivity and social justice. It encourages individual and institutional conversations that promote understanding, respect, and honor diverse perspectives, ideas, and identities. Academic advising policies and practices reflect a commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity.

- Technology Enabled Advising

Excellent academic advising incorporates appropriate technology to complement, support, and enhance advising practice. This requires institutions to include academic advisors in the selection, delivery, and assessment of advising technologies. Institutions must provide on-going training in the use and potential applicability of dynamic tools as a means to strengthen advising practice and culture.

APPENDIX B: EAA Committee Membership

Institutional Commitment		
Sydney Van Morgan	International Studies	sydney@jhu.edu
Jessie Martin	KSAS Advising	jessie@jhu.edu
Janet Weise	WSE Advising	jweise@jhu.edu
Pier Larson	History	larson@jhu.edu
Susanna Thon	Electrical and Computer Engineering	susanna.thon@jhu.edu
Nana Bruce-Amanquah	Student	nbrucea2@jhu.edu

Learning		
Wiona Porath	KSAS Advising	wporath1@jhu.edu
Ruth Aranow	KSAS Advising	raranow@jhu.edu
Linda Moulton	WSE Advising	lmoulton@jhu.edu
Orla Wilson	Materials Science	owilson@jhu.edu
Ariane Kelly	PILOT	ariane.kelly@jhu.edu
Suhnne Ahn	Music	sahn1@peabody.jhu.edu
Bex Dansereau	Student	rdanser1@jhu.edu

Advisor Selection and Development		
Jessie Martin	KSAS Advising	jessie@jhu.edu
Patrick Trujillo	KSAS Advising	trujillo@jhu.edu
Denise Shipley	WSE Advising	dls@jhu.edu
John Kunz	KSAS HR	jjkunz@jhu.edu
Ellen Syndman	Pre-Professional Advising	esnydma1@jhu.edu
Bill Smedick	CLE	smedick@jhu.edu
Kate Bruffet	International Studies	kbruffett@jhu.edu

Improvement and the Scholarship of Advising		
Katie Henry	Public Health Studies	kheberl2@jhu.edu
Denise Shipley	WSE Advising	dls@jhu.edu
Ami Cox	KSAS Advising	ami@jhu.edu
Chris Steinman	HSA IR	chris.steinman@jhu.edu
Winston Timp	BME	wtimp@jhu.edu
Steve Morgan	Sociology	stephen.morgan@jhu.edu

Collaboration and Communication		
Cathy Jancuk	BME	cjancuk@jhu.edu
Janet Weise	WSE Advising	jweise@jhu.edu
Erin McCoy	KSAS Advising	emccoy10@jhu.edu
Meredith Ward	Film and Media Studies	mward1@jhu.edu
Irene Ferguson	CSS	ifergus4@jhu.edu
Amanda Bauer	Registrar's Office	abauer@jhu.edu
Maya Alexis	Student	malexis2@jhu.edu

Organization		
Joel Schildbach	Vice Dean for Undergraduate Education	joel@jhu.edu
Lise Dahuron	CBE	dahuron@jhu.edu
Kathy Loehmer	GRLI	Kathy.GRLI@jhu.edu
Rita Banz	KSAS Advising	rhaag1@jhu.edu
Lori Citti	Study Abroad	lcitti1@jhu.edu
Hope Fisher	Learning Den	hope.stein@jhu.edu

Student Purpose and Pathway		
Linda Moulton	WSE Advising	lmoulton@jhu.edu
Donniell Fishkind	APPM	def@jhu.edu
Christopher Falzone	Chemistry	falzone@jhu.edu
Karen Desser	KSAS Advising	kdesser@jhu.edu
Justin Lorts	Career Center	justin.lorts@jhu.edu
Kelli Johnson	Pre-Professional Advising	kelli.johnson@jhu.edu

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion		
Demere Woolway	Student Affairs	dwoolwa1@jhu.edu
Jeff Gray	CBE	jgray@jhu.edu
Eric Simmons	WSE Advising	esimmon7@jhu.edu
Joe Colon	OMA	colon@jhu.edu
Adriene Breckenridge	KSAS Advising	breckag@jhu.edu
Terri Massie-Burrell	SDS	tmassie1@jhu.edu
Shaina Morris	Student	smorri73@jhu.edu

Technology Enabled Advising		
Kathie Sindt	KSAS Advising	ksindt@jhu.edu
Irene Zvagelsky	UIS	irenez@jhu.edu
Bruce Hamilton	Economics	bruce.hamilton@jhu.edu
Amy Brusini	CER	abusini@jhu.edu
Jenny Sax	Study Abroad	jsax5@jhu.edu
Kay Smith	Registrar's Office	ksmit174@jhu.edu

APPENDIX C: References

Sources of evidence for this study are listed throughout by reference number. All sources are located in the Excellence in Academic Advising platform and are available by request.