

**Distance Academic Advising Roles and Skills During Pandemic. A Case Study****Kirti Barad**

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**Abstract:** The World Health Organization has determined that the Covid-19 virus has reached pandemic proportions, meaning that it presents not only a medical risk but also a threat to the social and economic well-being of humanity. As a large crisis-response migration of institutions toward online learning as a platform for education, there was a global halt to all activities, including educational events. This resulted in a global stop to all activities, including educational events. Therefore, educational institutions continued to keep consulting, counseling, or controlling touch with the students even during times when the students may have experienced feelings of bewilderment and isolation. It became immediately apparent that students needed to maintain open lines of communication with their respective counselors, even more so than before. This survey looks at the many academic advising roles and abilities that can be used to encourage students to pursue online learning, strengthen student-teacher relationship, and find solutions to student problems throughout the pandemic era.

Keywords— Corona, COVID-19, advising skills, pandemic, educational activities, virtual learning

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**Introduction**

Academic counseling faces a challenging problem in defining its place within the academic community, which is especially challenging given the widespread idea that higher education has the potential to significantly transform society. Making definite guesses about what lies ahead in the future is, of course, fraught with potential danger. After the pandemic is over, people will likely have short memory, and a lot of things will carry on as they did before.

When instruction moved online, academic consulting moved online as well, moving away from the traditional classroom setting. Academic advising was one of the first programs in higher education to embrace technology as a means of improving its job, despite the fact that going online was a substantial challenge. This was done in spite of the inherent problems associated with going online. Once academic counselors realized that new technology would not be able to completely replace them, they were eager to embrace all of the tools that were available to them. This was especially true when the tools relieved academic counselors of the more administrative responsibilities that were frequently associated with their jobs.

Academic advisors began to understand other ways of interacting with students after they learned how to conduct face-to-face interviews, and as both students and advisers became more adept at those encounters, the use of technology became second nature to many people after they learned how to conduct them.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. Several research papers, principles, prototypes, theories, ethics, and evaluation of benchmarks have been published on quality online course design, teaching, and learning

(Hodges et al., 2020). It has been established that effective online learning is a by-product of careful design and planning of ICT (Hodges et al., 2020; Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020); therefore, effective online learning should be considered (Branch & Dousay, 2015).



2. Among the five common assumptions used in evaluating the assumptions surrounding the digital transformation of higher education institutions, Kopp et al. (2019) identified five assumptions that are considered more obstacles to the digital transformation of higher education institutions than contributions to its realization, and these assumptions are related to the following:

I change; (II) pace; (III) technology; (IV) competences; and (V) financing.

An exploratory mixed approach research strategy is used in this study, which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

### **Methodology**

Quantitative data were used as the foundation for the analysis of the students' experiences, and qualitative information was used to enhance the quantitative data. We were able to obtain objective responses from students by means of this survey, which paves the way for us to acquire a deeper comprehension of how students viewed the academic advising aid that was offered during COVID-19.

In this survey, we posed questions to students on a wide variety of areas, such as computer science, nursing, and accounting, and asked them to share their responses with us. We were able to obtain objective replies from students by means of this survey, which aided us in gaining a deeper understanding of their perspectives regarding the Academic advisory services provided during COVID-19.

### **Fundamental Academic Advising Skills:**

1. The profession of academic advising requires that one possesses fundamental abilities and strategies in order to be successful in it. Student academic advisers put these skills and methods into action to encourage a sense of belonging in their student clients and to guide those clients toward a positive and fruitful overall school experience. In order to provide sound guidance, academic advisers need to have a solid understanding of the following areas of expertise.
2. Relational Skills: The ability to focus on constructing and deepening trustworthy and respectful connections with students during the duration of each student's time as an undergraduate student in the program.
3. Conceptual Skills: Being able to comprehend the environment in which advisers perform their duties. Capability to make effective use of innovation and inspiration in order to adapt to novel situations and problems in a timely manner.

4. **Skills in Time Management:** The capacity to create priorities and translate them into procedures that can be carried out, as well as the ability to schedule their office and working hours so that they can communicate with students.
5. **Organizing Skills:** Capability to understand the work in a way that guarantees the benefit them.
6. **Listening Skills:** Capability to heed carefully to the apprentice's thoughts, suggestions, issues, and proposals. It improves the advisor-student relationship and ensures the advisor's ability to provide needed advice and support.
7. **Technological Skills:** Ability to effectively use advising technology and tools to help the students during their lectures and to complete their tasks.
8. **Problem Solving and Decision-Making Skills:** Ability to identify the problem and solve the problem accordingly.

**Academic Advisory Roles and Responsibilities:**

1. The purpose of academic advising is to improve a student's overall performance at a university by providing academic support and individualized attention to each individual student. A student can benefit from the knowledge, experience, and point of view of an academic advisor because of the assistance they provide. The role of the adviser is to provide assistance to students in determining and working toward their educational and professional objectives. To accomplish this, the advisor must:
2. If it is possible, providing students with the opportunity to create and improve realistic educational career objectives through schedule planning for each semester can be of assistance to them in accomplishing this goal. Every student ought to have an up-to-date academic calendar plan that details all of their classes throughout the entirety of their educational career.
3. Educate and help students choose a curriculum that fits their skills and interests.
4. It is important to keep tabs on how far you've come in your school or professional endeavors. At a minimum of once every semester, the group ought to get together to discuss their grades and several other accomplishment metrics, in addition to the distance they have yet to travel before completing their targeted academic program.
5. Establishing causal out-of-class/office relationships will demonstrate a genuine concern for the student's development as a person.
6. Consult with faculty colleagues regularly to ensure you have the most up-to-date knowledge.
7. Create and sustain an engaging atmosphere that promotes open communication and confidence.
8. Emphasizing the importance of punctuality and discipline in their studies.
9. Providing them with office hours and information about how to contact the advisory.
10. Assisting students in understanding the essence of college study.
11. Helping the student solve their study problems step by step, and hence lessening.
12. Assisting the student in solving their study problems step by step.

- 13. Following up on the academic success of the students.
- 14. Helping the students with technical issues during their study.

**Technology for Remote Advising:**

- 1. Blackboard
- 2. Microsoft Teams
- 3. Google Hangouts
- 4. Free Tech Tools
- 5. Zoom
- 6. WhatsApp
- 7. Email

**Figure of Department Report:**

Department Involved in the study:

S. No	Department	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Nursing	67	34.7
2	Computer Science	88	45.6
3	Accounting	38	19.7

Advisor’s Mode of Communication with Students:

S. No	Mode of Communication	Frequency (N)	Percent age (%)
1	E. Mail	48	24.9
2	WhatsApp	162	83.9
3	Black Board	14	7.3
4	Phone Call	7	3.6

S. No	Particulars	Satisf ied (%)	Somew hat Satisfied (%)	Dissatisf ied (%)
1	Advisor has posted his/her office hours adhere to their online medium	52.3	37.3	10.4
2	Can	54.4	28	17.6

	Express freely the problems with the advisors to seek help in academics			
<b>3</b>	The advisors are good listener and communicates effectively	58.1	10.9	31
<b>4</b>	Advisor is Available Whenever in Need	61.6	25.4	13
<b>5</b>	Advisor assist me with schedule changes in add and drop courses/periods when necessary	53.9	34.2	11.9
<b>6</b>	The advisor always keeps a track of academic progress	46.6	32.6	20.8
	Advisor concentrates in improving the grade	47.2	31.1	21.7
	Advisor Keeps a track on attendance to avoid prohibitions	51.8	32.1	16.1
	Advisor always induces	56	28.5	15.5

Correlations		
		The Mentors are Good Listeners
Students were able to express their Problems	Pearson Correlation	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	193
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

	to follow the institutions policies and procedures			
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**Correlation Test:** Correlation test was conducted to identify whether the mentors are good listeners, for the students to express their issues and problems to them freely.

The statistical analysis shows that the response from students is reliable as there exist a positive correlation with r value (0.757) and it is significant at (0.01) level.

**One Sample t-test:**

The students are asked about the availability of their advisors when there need to clear their issues and problems or towards learning new technological facts in online aspects. The students have responded that their advisors are available all time to help them out in their issues which is availed conducting a one same test for their responses it shows that the *t* value is 29.284 and significant at 0.00 level.

**Conclusion**

The point of having a survey on university going student’s different department's students was to get an analytical view on distance academic advising. In other words, to test the technical tools for distance academic advising was useful, easy to use, and navigate through. This was done by providing a short and simple questionnaire made in google forms, the questionnaire was sent as a survey (<https://forms.gle/8cnGZsK5jGkHzbam7Ws8> ) so it was easier to collect the results and analyzed. The questionnaire was allowed to select the answers base on the topic requirement. Overall, the result from the questionnaire has shown prominent results which were found very useful have been effectively communicated.

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