University College is a non-degree granting administrative unit of Undergraduate Studies. It was so named in 1998 as part of a restructuring of undergraduate academic advising across campus. In part, the restructuring sought to:

“...redefine the role and responsibilities of advisors in the Center and in the colleges, and to ensure that students develop a cohesive curriculum that integrates major and general education requirements.” (see attachment 1)

In the years since, University College has provided technological support, training, and ongoing professional development opportunities for advisors campus-wide, and coordinated university advising programs that impact students across all colleges (Mandatory Advising Programs, PreProfessional Advising, Transfer Advising, and support for students experiencing academic difficulty). University College provides advising for undeclared or exploratory students, while declared majors work with faculty and advisors in their respective degree-granting colleges.

As indicated in Policy 6-001-III-A-1-b:

ii. For historical and other reasons, in some instances, as authorized by the cognizant vice president, the name "college" is used to refer to a unit of the University which is not an academic college and does not have the full authority of an academic college. These currently include the "Honors College" (an interdisciplinary teaching program further described below), and the "University College" (with student advising and related responsibilities described in Policy 6-101).

We find increasingly, however, that the name “University College” lacks the transparency needed to fully serve our target populations and campus partners. Simply put, prospective and current students seeking advising services often don’t equate University College with general and exploratory advising. Accordingly, we are seeking to change our name to “Academic Advising Center”. Our core functions, administrative structure, funding, and reporting lines will not change. The Academic Advising Center and its functional areas will continue to serve the constituencies we have always served. The Academic
Advising Center will operate as an administrative subunit of Undergraduate Studies, and will not exist as a course-offering unit or appoint any faculty, per Policy 6-101 (3-A-1-e-ii).

If this change is approved, we would seek to also modify the names of three of our functional areas. Two of University College’s functional areas are currently called “centers” (Transfer Center and Major Exploration Center). To avoid having a situation where a center exists within a center, we would like to designate these as programs. The final requested revision is to change “Scholastic Standards” to “Academic Standards”. We have found that many of our students experiencing academic difficulty are confused by the current terminology, and that it hampers their ability to access the resources they need to get back on track. Collectively, these changes are designed to increase the consistency and clarity of our unit. The new nomenclature is presented below.

Academic Advising Center (currently University College)
Transfer Program (currently Transfer Center)
Major Exploration Program (currently Major Exploration Center)
Academic Standards (currently Scholastic Standards)
  Mandatory Advising Programs
  Peer Advising Program
  PreProfessional Advising
  Advising Technologies
  Curriculum and Assessment
  Advisor Development and Collaboration

If this proposal is approved, references to “University College” in the Regulations Library will need to be changed to “Academic Advising Center”, and “Scholastic Standing” changed to “Academic Standing”. The needed changes are listed in Attachment 2.

In order to make the transition as smooth as possible, we are proposing to start by introducing the new terminology immediately. We want to make sure that those who need us will be able to find us during and after the transition. We have developed interim language of “Academic Advising Center (formerly known as University College)” to be used in print and e-communications directed towards current students and university community to familiarize them with the new names. Any print or e-materials directed towards students entering Summer 2017 and thereafter will use new nomenclature.

Attachment 1. Proposal for Restructuring Academic Advising for Undergraduates at the University, John Francis and Herta Teitelbaum, 1996.

Attachment 2. List of requested edits to the Regulations Library.
PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURING ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR UNDERGRADUATES AT THE UNIVERSITY

John Francis and Herta Teitelbaum
July 1996

I. ADVISING STRUCTURE, PROCESS, AND CONTENT

1. Redefinition of Advising Responsibilities Between the Center for Academic Advising and the Colleges/Departments

Two of the most serious problems identified by the Administrative Review on Academic Advising are:

1. the fragmentation of responsibilities for academic advising, and
2. the resulting fragmentation in students' curriculum planning.

We propose the following structure to redefine the role and responsibilities of advisors in the Center and in the colleges, and to ensure that students develop a cohesive curriculum that integrates major and general education requirements.

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<th>Recommendation #1</th>
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1. The **Center for Academic Advising** will have two major functions:

   a. It will be a "portal of entry" for all freshmen and undecided transfer students and provide advising to these students (i.e., assist premajors and help undecided students focus on an academic direction).

   b. It will also be responsible for advising "diverted" students (i.e., students who are denied admission to their preferred major).

2. The **academic colleges/departments** will provide comprehensive academic advising for their majors (major, college, and University-wide requirements).
The implementation of a degree audit system through *Peoplesoft* will give advisors in the Center and in the colleges the necessary tool to provide *comprehensive* advising to students.

2. **Coordination of Academic Advising at the College Level**

Some degree of centralization in colleges with component departments will be necessary to assist with the proposed restructuring and with the coordination of common aspects of academic advising. Several colleges already have central advising offices (e.g., Business and Education), and some of the smaller colleges have designated a staff member responsible for all advising matters in the college (e.g., Nursing). However, in the Colleges of Humanities, Science, Social and Behavioral Science, Engineering, and Health, departments are autonomous in their advising functions with little coordination at the college level.

<table>
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<th>Recommendation #2</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Each college should designate an individual to coordinate advising functions at the college level and to represent the college on campuswide advising matters (e.g., training, computer-assisted advising).</td>
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<td>2. The ultimate goal would be to establish advising centers in each college which is the practice at most institutions our size.</td>
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3. **Advising of Entering Students**

Since attrition is highest for first-year students, most institutions have "front-loaded" their advising efforts during students' first year to increase retention and improve student satisfaction with their college experience.

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<th>Recommendation #3</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. The <strong>Center for Academic Advising</strong> will develop more &quot;intrusive&quot; advising programs for freshmen and for undecided transfer students to reduce attrition, including mandatory academic advising at orientation, required individual advising for students on probation, and comprehensive advising for undecided lower-division students.</td>
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<td>2. Advisors in the <strong>colleges/departments</strong> will provide comprehensive advising for new transfer students who are decided on a major. These students should also be required to attend an orientation; they need to know which transfer courses will count toward the major and what coursework needs to be completed in order to meet all major and university graduation requirements.</td>
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4. Monitoring Students' Academic Progress and Admission to the Major

**Freshmen**

Since the majority of freshmen are either undecided or tentative about a major, at many institutions freshmen do not declare a major until the end of their first year. This gives students time to confirm their initial major choice, or change their intention as they explore various academic disciplines. Undecided students will have some time to sample various introductory courses and receive counseling to assist them in deciding on a major. This approach should also help to reduce the number of students who change their major during the first year.

This strategy has several institutional advantages. Colleges and departments can be assured that students receive appropriate advising before they are admitted to the major; they also will have an accurate count of majors and will be able to track students' academic progress in the major. In addition, the Center for Academic Advising can identify students who remain in premajor status beyond the freshman year and monitor these students' progress.

**Recommendation #4**

1. Admit all freshmen in undecided or premajor status.

2. Students can be admitted to their major at the end of their freshman year. (Note: Some departments may prefer to admit students at an earlier date.)

3. Students must see their major advisor prior to admission to the department or college.

4. Departments should control major designation on MARS (Master Academic Records System) to ensure that they have an accurate count of their majors.

**Transfer Students in Premajor Status**

The majority of students who enter the University as freshmen are admitted to a major by the end of their sophomore year. However, there are large numbers of transfer students in junior and senior status (about 1,000 each quarter) who are still in premajor status.
**Recommendation #5**

Academic departments with special admission requirements should:

1. Make admission decisions as early as possible to ensure that students can complete their degree in a timely manner,

2. Admit academically promising transfer students who have not met all departmental requirements on a conditional basis, and

3. Refer students who are unlikely candidates for admission, to the Center for Academic Advising for counseling on alternative major options.

**II. INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION, AND TECHNOLOGY**

The Administrative Review report also noted serious inadequacies in the following areas:

1. Availability of accurate and current student record and academic program information for students and advisors

2. Technological support for academic advising (e.g., degree audit systems)

3. Systematic dissemination of notices of changes in programs, requirements, and policies affecting students and advisors

4. Maintaining a record of advice given to students from the time they enter the University until they graduate

**Recommendation #6**

Establish a new position of **Student Information and Technology Support Coordinator** in the Center for Academic Advising to coordinate

1. Communication of information needed by advisors and students campuswide, and

2. Projects to increase the use of information technology in the advising process.

See Appendix A for a detailed description of responsibilities.
III. IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC ADVISING ON CAMPUS

The Administrative Review Committee also observed that there is great unevenness and inconsistency in "who" does advising on campus and that little or no training for advisors is available. In response to this critique, we propose a two-pronged effort to raise the quality of academic advising on campus.

Recommendation #7

Establish a Campuswide Advising Committee to monitor the quality of advising at the University. The committee should consist of representatives from each college offering undergraduate degrees (perhaps the Associate Dean responsible for Student Affairs), the Information/Technology Coordinator, student representatives, the chair of the Campus Advisors Group (CAG), and the Director of the Center for Academic Advising.

The Committee should report to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and submit annually a report on the status of academic advising on campus.

Responsibilities of this committee are outlined in Appendix B.

Recommendation #8

The Center for Academic Advising, in collaboration with the Campus Advisors' Group (CAG), should initiate the following training and staff development activities:

1. Develop a comprehensive training program for all new advisors on campus and schedule training sessions each quarter or semester.

2. Prepare an advising manual for distribution to all campus advisors.

3. Offer staff development activities throughout the year to improve advising skills and to increase advisors' knowledge of the University's programs and services for students.

4. Set up regular meetings for advisors from all colleges to exchange information; update advisors on changes in programs, requirements, and policies; and discuss common advising issues and concerns.

It is important that each college identify a representative to attend those meetings and to assume responsibility for sharing the information with others in the college.
CONCLUSION

Successful restructuring of academic advising also will depend on changes in the following areas:

Completion of Automated Degree Audit

Accurate and up-to-date student record information in an easily understandable format is absolutely essential to academic advising. Any serious attempt to improve academic advising across the campus requires that completion of an electronic degree audit system receive the highest priority.

Revision of the Liberal Education Program

Efforts are underway to change the Liberal Education Program. This provides an opportunity to develop a common set of general education requirements which can be understood easily by students and advisors and which are consistent across colleges and departments.

Such a revision will enable departmental and college advisors to assist students in

1. Developing a coherent curriculum that integrates major and general education courses, and

2. Monitoring students' progress toward graduation.

Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, efforts to change academic advising on campus will be successful only if they are strongly encouraged and supported by the President, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and by the College Deans.
APPENDIX A

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COORDINATOR FOR
STUDENT INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

1. Academic Information

Coordinate the development of standardized academic program information that is consistent, accurate, and inclusive of requirements of the University and of particular majors. An example of a typical major sheet developed by BYU is attached.

2. Central Clearinghouse Function

Collect information on changes in academic programs, requirements, and policies; provide a mechanism for providing feedback from other campus offices to the department where the change originated; and disseminate this information to colleges and departments.

3. Liaison with the Office Developing the Computerized Degree Audit System

The automated degree audit system will be one of the most important advising tools for students and advisors. Since the system will be developed in the near future (the University recently signed a contract with PeopleSoft), it is important to ensure that it meets the needs of students and advisors. To this end, we propose that the Information/Technology Coordinator establish a small group of advisors representing other colleges to work closely with the office in charge of developing and implementing the degree audit system.

4. Technology in Academic Advising

Greater use of technology (e.g., completion of DARS, placement of academic program information on World Wide Web, development of student tracking programs based on DARS) is essential for improving the efficiency in academic advising both for students and advisors. Dr. Gordon’s report includes a bibliography of computer-assisted advising practices used at other institutions which should be examined for possible application at the University of Utah.

5. Development of a Student Interview Record System

A campuswide student contact record system needs to be developed which would follow students from the time they enter the University until they graduate, and which would contain a record of information and advice given by all campus offices. This would reinforce accuracy of information given to students and enhance the memories of the students and the institution.
APPENDIX B

CAMPUSWIDE ADVISING COMMITTEE

1. Develop a mission statement for academic advising for the University and coordinate the development of mission statements on academic advising for each college

2. Establish general advising policies to monitor the consistency in advising practices and to ensure that students in every major receive the highest quality of advising

3. Oversee the quality and consistency of university-wide advising materials

4. Identify advising issues and propose solutions

5. Raise general awareness of the role of advising in undergraduate education

6. Propose activities for professional development (enhancement of advising skills and knowledge about the University’s programs, requirements, and student support services)

7. Encourage and monitor cooperation and collaboration among advising offices

8. Monitor the effectiveness of advising to create an environment of “seamless” advising as students move from undecided status to a major or from one major to another

9. Evaluate the “contents” of advising to ensure that students receive guidance in the development of a cohesive curriculum that integrates general education courses, major courses, and co-curricular activities

10. Develop assessment instruments to monitor the performance of academic advising on a periodic basis
Attachment 2. Requested Edits to the University of Utah Regulations Library.

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