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**Experience: Advising Office with Anne Young**

After learning about the nursing advising process and sitting through a few student appointments, I am starting to feel comfortable in the office. Since the deadline for nursing applications was May 15th for the Spring 2011 semester, the office was swamped with work. So, I helped enter nursing applications into the spreadsheet they use in making decisions on the applicants. I entered demographic information and the applicants’ TEAS test scores. The committee will use this spreadsheet in determining who will get in. Anne and I also went through a pile of files to set aside those that were denied for the fall semester and wanted to be reprocessed for the spring.

An issue arose with a student who claimed she did not sign up for a class and it was the week after drop/add and she had her Mom call and complain to the Registrar’s Office and to Anne. Anne had a lengthy conversation with the Mother explaining that it is not her policy to sign students up without their consent. However, after scouring through her emails and looking through the students’ file, all she could find was documentation that she talked to the student on the day that the student was registered for the class. She usually requires written documentation of adding/dropping a course from students, but for some reason could not find it in her file. So, Anne contacted the Registrar to see what could be done and they had her complete an administrative withdrawal to drop the course. This way the student will not have a W on their record. When the Mom called to talk about the student’s situation we had to look in Banner to see if the student signed the third party confidentiality document and sure enough it said her Mom was authorized to discuss her school matters. As administrators, we need to be careful that we are aware of the laws, and in this case, FERPA that protects the students from third parties getting information from school personnel. However, the student can give permission to their parents to access that information. According to “FERPA Access to Records” (2010), “Under the rights allowed by FERPA, a student shall be permitted to inspect, review and request explanation or interpretation of his/her academic records within thirty days of written notification to The Office of the Registrar. If the record requested for review is not maintained by the Office of the Registrar, the student will be advised of the appropriate office to contact. Upon request, a student shall be provided with a copy of their academic record. However, there are circumstances in which the student may only be allowed to view an unofficial copy of their academic record. These circumstances are associated with financial/non-financial obligations to the University and disciplinary actions. With the written consent of the student, a third party may have similar privileges noted above. The Authorization to Release Information to a Third Party Form must be completed, signed by the student, and submitted to the Office of the Registrar in order to give such consent” (para 1-3).

When Anne spoke to the student about the situation, she student said the day they spoke she was stressed out, so she may not have remembered she registered for the course because of that. So, instead of turning it into a blame session, Anne was very positive and turned it into a
learning session. She talked to the student about how she needs to check her class schedule the week of drop/add and make sure everything is okay so then it wouldn’t be such a big deal in the future.

Throughout the day, Anne and I answered emails together and discussed where I can find resources for advisors. We looked at the NACADA website to see all the tools advisors can use from this organization. I am familiar with this group because I took a Career Development class for advisors through Kansas State University and a lot of the materials we used were from NACADA. This website is a great resource for advisors in any area. Anne introduced me to CIP codes, which stands for Classification of Instructional Programs. This is a nation-wide system of numbers that correlates with programs to classify them. The reason we were discussing it is because the Nursing code changed, so Anne needed to be aware of that. Another topic we discussed was how advisors get promoted at FGCU. Anne is classified as an Advisor 1 and hopefully will apply to be promoted to Advisor 2. Advisors are considered “faculty members”, so to be considered for promotion you have to demonstrate three things: teaching, scholarship, and service. So, as an advisor, you have to continuously seek professional development opportunities and keep track of everything you participate in.

I began working on revising Anne’s “Advising Session Referral” sheet where she gives students who come and meet with her contact information for all kinds of resources around campus. If they need to go meet with someone specifically, Anne marks their name off the sheet for the student to call or go visit that staff member. The sheet she has now is very outdated, so I worked on updating it with all the new information and I added email addresses and website addresses to give students more option for contacting certain departments.

**Standards: Standard 3: Managing the Learning Environment**

Standard 3 is reflected in this activity because the advising office is better managed when there is an organized way to give students information. With the Advising Session Referral form, students are able to get the information they need in an efficient manner. Entering nursing applications into the spreadsheet is the way they manage the hundreds of applications that come in every year for nursing school. Seeing these processes and how the office functions was a great experience for me.

**References**