Experience: Advising Office with Anne Young

Working with Anne in the advising office has been such a great experience for me. I got to work with students and see how the School of Nursing functions. Anne’s job has a lot of variety and I really like that. This past week we worked on course projections for Spring 2011, which is another facet to nursing advising. We were projecting the number of seats we need in the nursing prerequisite courses such as Research Methods and Anatomy & Physiology 1 and 2. The College of Health Professions executive secretary sent us the proposed number of seats and classes for each course and it is our job to make recommendations/changes or approve it. Because we are trying to make the most educated guess as to how many seats to have for each class, we brought up the course schedule for Spring 2010 and Fall 2010. We needed the Spring 2010 numbers to see what was done in the year previous, and we needed to see how Fall 2010 classes were filling up to get an idea as to how many people who took A&P 1 in the fall will be taking A&P 2 in the spring. In the past, we have increased the number of seats by 10% each year and we figured we would do the same this year, but the numbers we got were stagnant. So, after consulting our course schedules and working out the math, we decided we needed one more Research Methods class and one more A&P 2 class than what was given to us. So, we sent our recommendations back and hopefully we will be approved to have those classes added or at least ghost the sections. I learned that a “ghosted section” is a section of a course that is hidden from the students that if the other sections have filled up in a particular course and it is getting close to the semester starting, we can make that ghosted section visible for students to register for. It allows for a little more control in the opening of sections.

I was surprised when I got a meeting request to meet with Anne, Beta, and Marianne (the Director of Nursing) about the website recommendations I had made. I really didn’t think there would be actual “talk” or changes made for a long while. However, I have learned over these past few weeks that the people in this office are movers and shakers and I am glad to be a part of that. So, we met about the website changes and pin pointed what we could do as a group to get the information to the students. So, we decided to come up with some website verbage on the home page to explain to students the process of applying to the university, THEN you apply to the School of Nursing after a few things are done (TEAS test, 2 science courses, etc.). I was so excited we were doing something right away because I know it will relieve some of the phone calls and emails the front desk receives. There were other issues we couldn’t resolve right away that involved some higher ups and other offices, but I was happy with this decision. So, I drafted the website verbage I thought should be included and sent it to Beta to review and make changes and put up on the site. In this meeting, we also discussed how we could inform students about our application process as soon as possible. Marianne had the idea of conducting information sessions where Anne would go through a Power Point explaining to prospective students and applicants what the process is. I also had the idea that we could put these Power Points on the website with voice overs so prospective students that couldn’t make it could still see it. They really liked this idea and I believe will be implementing it soon.
Anne had talked about how nice it would be if they had an online nursing application since it is so time consuming to filter through all the paper applications and enter the information in excel. So, I suggested we look at other limited access programs to see what they do and we decided to look at the music program at FGCU and saw they had an online application. So, Anne contacted some people to see what we could do to get a similar program for the nursing application. This would be extremely beneficial to this office as they are already swamped with applications, phone calls, emails and walk-ins. Any little bit of technology use can help.

Another huge task I was involved in was to get the nursing application spreadsheet ready for the nursing committee. Because last year the committee basically looked at TEAS scores, we decided to give them the most information we could on all of the best qualified students. So, we took the top 50 students with the highest gpa, top 50 TEAS scores, and top 50 science course scores and put them all in one group. Then, we sorted them to see how many were in more than one “Top Group”. So, some had 3, 2, or 1 depending on how many lists they were the “top” in. There were about 30 that were the top 50 in all three groups, so we put them at the top of our final list, with the “2’s” listed next just in case the committee wanted to look at them. We felt this way the committee was looking at a list of well-rounded applicants rather than just relying on test scores. This was especially important to us because many times minorities don’t score as well on tests as their white counterparts. According to Marshall & Oliva (2010), “Data show that low-income and minority students experience greater difficulty in passing the state tests and are more likely to live in school districts with fewer resources (Haycock, 2001)” (p.39). When I asked Anne, my mentor, about a social justice issue prominent in her position, she mentioned this issue right away. In Marshall & Oliva (2010), they found, “When respondents were asked directly about their state’s attempts to address social justice concerns, elimination of the student achievement gap was the most frequently mentioned way to address social justice.” This was why I presented this as the social justice issue to my group. We are hoping with the committee not relying so much on the TEAS test scores, these applicants will have a better chance of consideration. Application spreadsheet – made our recommendations to committee

While these were the last days spent in the advising office, I will still be sitting on a CAPP (Curriculum Advising and Program Planning) meeting as well as the nursing application committee.

**Standards:** Standard 1: Vision & Standard 3: Managing the Learning Environment & Standard 6: Diversity

Standard 1 is reflected in these activities because I had the vision of a new and improved website for the School of Nursing.

Standard 3 is reflected in these activities because we were managing the learning environment when looking at course projections. Course projections are important because students need to have an appropriate number of spots in their program to complete it in time and the college has limited resources, faculty time, and classroom space.

Standard 6 is reflected in these activities because one of the issues that arose during the nursing application process was the need for diversity in the new class. So, we tried to present the
committee with the most well-rounded group of students, hopefully with more diversity, and they can choose from there. But, we did explore diversity issues in regards to this process.

References