



# ACADEMIC ADVISING SYLLABUS

**Mission:** The Natural Sciences Academic Advising Office is dedicated to creating an atmosphere that promotes success. We are committed to quality academic advising in an environment that is welcoming, inclusive and supportive. Our programs and services are designed to help students develop decision making skills that will empower them to take full advantage of their educational experience.

## Goals of NS Academic Advising

- Promote appropriate progress to degree for native and transfer students
- Provide students with advising resources and materials that are accurate, current, and understandable, using delivery formats that respond to student needs
- Provide interactive advising in formats that meet student preferences and needs in timely and effective ways
- Provide advising that is tailored to the distinctive needs of specific student populations, and reflects the unique environment of a research university
- Facilitate student learning and self-advocacy in relation to reaching academic goals and career plans
- Support implementation of faculty approved curriculum changes for courses and academic programs

## Responsibilities

### Your Advisor

- Clarify university and school policies, regulations, programs and procedures.
- Notify students of significant changes to university or school policy.
- Be available to meet with students each semester to discuss class registration and degree progression.
- Assist students facing difficulties that affect his/her education.
- Offer advice for course selection and satisfaction of degree requirements.
- Refer students to appropriate university support services as needed.
- Discuss academic performance and implications of students' performance on undergraduate program and degree completion.
- Maintain confidentiality.

### Advisee

- Explore different majors and career options that accompany them. Reflect on your interests and values to pick a discipline that is a good fit for you.
- Attend Advising appointments as scheduled, at least once per semester. Bring a list of questions or areas of interest to discuss.
- Understand the role institutional policies and procedures, general education requirements, academic programs, and how student services play in your academic experience.
- Accept responsibility for your decisions and actions.
- Follow up on referrals and inform your Advisor of the outcome of referrals.
- Use campus resources, such as advising tools, NS Academic Advising Mentors, NS website, NS Advising website and the University Catalog to gather information and track your academic progress.
- Be thoughtful about your educational plan. Set short and long-term goals for your achievement.
- Check your UCM e-mail account on a regular basis.

## Policies and Procedures of NS Academic Advising

### Your advisor

New students are assigned an Academic Advisor by major. During advising sessions with your advisor you will discuss course options, address academic problems or concerns, make decisions about the upcoming semester, and explore major/minor options.

## **Contacting NS Advising**

Students contacting NS Advising via email or voice-mail should expect a response within 72 hrs during business days (3 working days, Monday through Friday). During peak registration periods, response times will be longer.

### **Scheduling Appointments & Walk-in Hours (No Appointment Needed)**

Appointments are available throughout the semester; requests for appointments are done on-line by visiting the Office Hours webpage and selecting your advisor's name at the bottom of the page.

Walk-in hours are held for a specific amount of time every week; days and times will always be posted on the homepage of the NS Advising website.

### **Cancellation of Appointments**

We recognize situations arise that may create a need to reschedule or cancel your appointment. A two (2) hour prior-notification is requested. Reciprocal courtesy will be extended to students should Advisors need to cancel.

### **No-Show Policy**

This policy is not meant to be punitive, but to be fair and equitable to all students. During peak advising periods, appointment times are premium. If you do not notify the office two (2) hours in advance that you are unable to keep the appointment, your absence will be noted as a "no-show." After two no-shows, you will NOT be able to schedule an appointment for the remainder of the semester. You will be allowed to meet with your academic advisor during walk-in hours.

### **Preparing for Your Advising Appointment**

- Make sure you arrive for your appointment on time.
- Turn off your cell phone or place it on silent. No texting.
- Be prepared to discuss course options, address academic problems or concerns, make decisions about the upcoming semester, and explore major/minor options.
- Bring a printout of your degree audit. Not sure how to do this? You can access your audit via your UCM portal.

### **Communication Protocol**

Communication via a student's UC Merced email account is the official method NS Advising Program will use to communicate with you. Due to privacy regulations, your Advisor will communicate solely through the email account assigned to you (@ucmerced.edu). While some inquiries may be resolved through email correspondence, most situations benefit from scheduling a face to-face appointment or walk-in meeting for further discussion.

When emailing your advisor, it is appropriate to use complete sentences and good grammar. To help the advisors assist you more quickly, please be sure to include the following in your message:

- Your full name
- Your student ID number
- A brief but detailed explanation of your concern or problem

#### **EXAMPLE:**

Dear Advisor,

My Name is \_\_\_\_\_. My student Id number is \_\_\_\_\_. I am trying to register for a Chemistry class, however the system notes that there is a time conflict with my other courses. I checked several times and found that there was no conflict. Please help resolve the conflicts.

Thank You

## Policies and Procedures of NS Academic Advising *(continued)*

### Registration Holds

Depending on your situation, a registration hold may be placed on your account. You will not be able to register for courses in the following semester until this hold is cleared. Please reference the types of advising registration holds listed below:

#### 2nd Semester Freshman Advising Hold

All freshmen with declared majors in the School of Natural Sciences are required to be advised prior to registration in courses for their 2nd term. Students are required to meet with an Academic Advising Mentor to discuss progress in 1st semester courses as well as plan for 2nd semester course registration.

#### Transfer Advising Hold

Placed on new transfer students every semester prior to next registration cycle.

#### Faculty Mentor Meeting Hold

All declared Applied Mathematics, Chemical Sciences and Physics majors are required to meet with their faculty mentor prior to registration for the fall term.

#### Declaration of Emphasis Hold

Many students may have a hold placed on their registration because they have a major in the School of Natural Sciences, but have not declared an emphasis in that major. These students will not be able to register for courses until they have submitted a Major Change form and graduation planner to the School of Natural Sciences (S&E 270). **If you have not declared your emphasis please check your registration to see if you have a hold!**

#### Jump Start Advising Hold

Students entering their fourth semester are required to meet with an academic advisor within their current School in order to facilitate progress in their degree and support their educational goals.

**NOTE:** *Not all registration holds are from our office. Some holds may be the result of past due balances or other administrative reasons. You can always check your registration status on your UC Merced Portal.*

### Enrollment Policies

#### Enrollment in Excess Units

- Approval for enrollment in more than 18 units is conditional and determined by the students' Academic Advisor.
- First time freshmen will not be allowed to register for more than 18 units during their first semester at UC Merced.
- Students must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher to be approved for enrollment in more than 18 units in a single semester.

#### Enrollment Limits

Students on academic probation will not be permitted to register in more than 16 units per semester and may not take courses with a P/NP grading option in courses that are optionally graded.

## Repeating Courses

If you plan to repeat a course that you previously took at UC Merced, university policy requires NS Advising to place an override in the registration system to allow you to register for that course. If this is your first semester at UC Merced and you are concerned that you are not passing a course, NS Advising cannot allow you to repeat the course until you have been given a final grade. Please refer to the campus repeat policy at <http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/policies/course-repetition>.

## Approval for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt of a Course

For courses you have previously taken and would like a repeat hold lifted, please send an email to your advisor with the following information prior to your registration time.

- Name, UCM ID #, Course you want to repeat and term you wish to repeat it

*Alternatively, you can visit your academic advisor during our extended walk-in hours for a quicker response. Walk-in hours are listed on the NS-Advising website.*

## Approval for a 3<sup>rd</sup> or Subsequent Attempt of a Course

If this will be your third (or more) attempt at the particular course, you will need to fill out a Subsequent Course Repeat form on the NS Advising website.

## School of Natural Sciences Academic Policies

All students declared within the school are subject to the following academic policies and requirements:

### Early Progress Policy

Majors in the School of Natural Sciences are competitive and space is limited. Students must make appropriate degree progress to remain in any Natural Sciences major. All students must pass the following courses with a C- or better **prior to the start of their third regular (Fall/Spring) semester.**

- Either MATH 005 or MATH 011 or MATH 021
- Either CHEM 001 or 002

**Failure to do so makes a student ineligible for continued enrollment in a Natural Sciences major and the student will be moved to Undeclared status.**

**EXAMPLE:** If you were placed into MATH 005 and CHEM 001 your first semester and your first semester was Fall 2016, you will have thru summer 2017 to complete both requirements.

### Normal Progress to Degree

Per UC Merced policy, students are required to complete their degree requirements within 9 semesters (not counting summer sessions). Enrollment beyond 9 semesters requires a petition to be reviewed by the School Dean.

### Returning to the School of Natural Sciences after Removal for Academic Reasons

Students who have been removed from a major within Natural Sciences for academic reasons must meet the following requirements in order to petition to be re-admitted to the School of Natural Sciences:

- Cumulative University of California grade point average of at least 2.0
- Current semester grade point average of at least 2.0
- Major grade point average of 2.5
- Completion of all lower division courses required by the intended major with grades of C- or higher.

### Minimum Grade Policy

- Prerequisites to major course requirements must be completed with a C- or better.
- Major course requirements must be completed with a C- or better.
- 2.0 GPA in all major course work must be maintained.
- If minimum grade is not earned, course must be repeated (see Repeating Courses above).



**Location: S&E 270**

**Hours:** Monday through Friday. For a complete list of walk-in hours and appointment availability please visit <http://ns-advising.ucmerced.edu>

**Phone:** (209) 228-2455

**Fax:** (209) 228-4060

**Website:** <http://ns-advising.ucmerced.edu>

**Email:** [nspeermentor@ucmerced.edu](mailto:nspeermentor@ucmerced.edu) or [nsstudentservices@ucmerced.edu](mailto:nsstudentservices@ucmerced.edu)