

# **SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES AT UAB**

## ***Frequently Asked Questions for Advisors***

### **What can an advisor do for me?**

Your advisor can provide help and feedback in many areas of your education:

- Your progress in courses,
- University and School rules and requirements that you need to know
- Your progress towards your degree,
- Your choice of major,
- Any necessary changes in your current course enrollment,
- Plans for courses in the next semester or semesters,
- Academic interests which are emerging or waning,
- Your study skills (for all courses or a specific course),
- Extracurricular activities which might enhance your education,
- Refer you to other campus resources for additional information if needed,
- Provide transient forms for approved study elsewhere,
- And much more!

### **When should I meet with my advisor?**

The frequency with which you meet with your advisor is up to you, unless you are in a program that requires regular faculty advising. Most students find it helpful to see their advisor each semester before registering for classes.

If you are conditionally admitted, or on probation, you are required to meet with your academic advisor each semester before you can register.

### **How do I get to see my advisor?**

The best way to meet with your advisor is to make an appointment. Come by or call the office of Arts and Humanities (205-934-2290) and request that the receptionist book an appointment for you. Janice Ford-Freeman works with freshmen and sophomores, Louise Cecil sees juniors and seniors.

Depending on how busy we are, you may have to wait from a day to two weeks. Registration time is especially busy. Be sure to plan ahead.

## **What is the difference between faculty and professional advisors?**

Some departments, particularly Music, Art, and Theatre, require students to work with faculty advisors. Faculty advisors primarily guide you in your major. They are also good sources for information on advanced education and careers in your chosen field.

Professional advisors help students with all aspects of their education, as well as their major.

You may wish to maintain a relationship with both a faculty and a professional advisor.

## **Does my advisor pick my classes for me?**

Not at all! The title is advisor, not dictator. Your advisor can go over your check-sheet with you and suggest courses that will help you progress towards your goals. Your advisor can inform you about new courses which are not in the schedule and availability of seats. She can also help you balance your semester so that you are taking a mixture of kinds of course, i.e., writing and reading, math, hands-on learning.

Advisors also suggest courses that are prerequisites to others you might need. The final selection and registration is entirely up to you. It will help you and your advisor if you come to your meeting with a good idea of what classes you plan to take, and when you want to schedule them.

Course listings may be found on-line through ACCESS (link)  
<http://students.uab.edu/academics/show.asp?durki=4982>

## **What classes are “easy?”**

This is a frequently asked question that we don't answer directly. You are attending a major research university. There are no “easy” classes.

All of us tend to consider a course easy if we find the subject interesting and we are good at the work it requires. This is why a class one student considers “easy,” is perceived as difficult by another. Likewise, advisors do not recommend “easy” professors.

## **What Math do I need to take?**

All majors in the School of Arts and Humanities require only that you meet the core curriculum math requirements. Two math courses meet the minimum requirements in the core.

- Math 105, pre-calculus Algebra, is the prerequisite for all upper math courses. It is for anyone who might want to take further math, or might change majors in the future to one requiring more math, or is planning to go into one of the health professions (nursing, medicine, etc.)
- Math 110, finite math, is not a prerequisite for further math courses. It is oriented towards the needs of Liberal Arts students, and examines how math is used in the “real” world. It is for people who want to take only the minimum math, and for those who have a lot of difficulties with math.

## **Do I have to take a placement test?**

You may need to take a placement test for English or Math or both. You need to take the English test if you have not placed directly in English 101 based on your ACT or SAT scores previously, or taken and passed a college level English Composition course before. Check with your advisor.

You may choose to take the Math test if you have not scored high enough on your ACT or SAT tests to place into MA 110 or 105 and you believe you do not need to take a development course (MA 098). Contact the UAB 1-STEP office to arrange tests (link) <http://students.uab.edu/services/show.asp?durki=4512>

## **How do I know how my transfer work counts?**

If you have transferred to UAB from an Alabama Community College or another University in the state system, you can see how your courses transfer here (link) <http://students.uab.edu/to-do-list/show.asp?durki=45419>

If you come to us from a private university or college, or from another state, your transfer credits may have to be articulated (determined how they count at UAB). <http://students.uab.edu/to-do-list/show.asp?durki=45420>

Meet with your advisor to find out whether your classes have been, or need to be articulated. You will probably have to supply official descriptions of certain courses. These can be found in your old catalogs, or colleges will often send you descriptions of old courses at your request. College Source (link) <http://www.collegesource.org/> is a good resource for recent information.

Articulation can sometimes be a slow process, so be patient. The cardinal rule is: don't take any class that sounds like one you've already had, until the articulation process is complete.

### **How do I know if a certain class works on my core? Major?**

The quickest answer to that question can be found in the UAB catalog. 2004-2006 catalog (link) <http://www.app.uab.edu/catalog.html> You should be familiar with the catalog that was in effect when you entered UAB. Read it on-line, to understand the various rules and regulations. All courses that are required for your major, or will work on your core, are listed and described in the catalog. If you still have a question contact your advisor.

We also keep check-sheets for all majors in Arts and Humanities in the office. You may ask the receptionist for a blank one, or meet with your advisor to get a check-sheet filled in with your credits. Check sheets are also available to download here: (link to check sheets)

### **What counts as an elective?**

An elective is any course you pass which you do not need for your core, your major, or your minor. It can be from any school or department, as long as you are eligible to take it.

### **What do "Academic Warning" and "Academic Probation" mean?**

It means that your GPA has fallen below 2.0, and that you need to pull up your grades or you might be suspended at some point in the future. Academic warnings are only issued at the end of a freshman's first semester. All other students whose GPA is less than 2.0 receive an academic warning. See your advisor, or the UAB Catalog (link) <http://main.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=1934> for more information.

Students who have received a warning or probation must meet with their advisors to prepare an academic plan to improve their GPAs before being allowed to register.

### **What does GPA mean?**

It refers to grade point average, which is the accumulated semester-hour credits you have earned; factored by the grades you have received. You may figure out your own GPA here (link)

<http://students.uab.edu/academics/show.asp?durki=38256>

### **I'm having trouble in my class. What should I do?**

Talk to your instructor! Ask what is expected of you, what you need to do to improve. Be open to her suggestions. Don't be defensive. Be honest with yourself – are you skipping classes? Are your study skills weak? Is your attitude negative? If there seems to be no way to turn yourself around, you can withdraw from the class before mid-semester (see the schedule). You will still have to pay for tuition for that class.

### **I have a conflict with my professor. What should I do?**

Do just what every other adult needs to do, talk to the person with whom you are having a conflict. Be open and non-defensive. Ask what the problem is and what you can do to alleviate it.

If the professor is un-responsive or un-fair, your next step is to talk to the chair of her/his department. Before you pursue a meeting with the chair, however, you need to be very clear about what your complaint is and be prepared to cite specific examples.

### **How do I withdraw from a class?**

You may drop a class you have registered for during open registration without penalty. During the drop and add period in the first week of classes you may drop a course with a small financial fee. Check the current class schedule for the dates of the drop/add period. ([link](#))

You may withdraw before mid-term (again, check the schedule) with a W on your transcript and no academic penalty, but you must pay full tuition for the course.

### **Is there an academic appeal process if I have to drop out due to illness or military service?**

Yes. Your advisor can help you determine the nature of your appeal and provide you with the appropriate forms. Appeals with advisor support are more often granted than those without.

### **I have a disability. How can I get extra help?**

The office of Disability Support Services can help students with all kinds of disabilities, minor and severe. They offer counseling, extra help in classes, and communicate with instructors about what accommodations you might need in class.

(link) <http://students.uab.edu/services/show.asp?durki=40136>

### **How do I change my major?**

The change-of-major form is available from all advisor offices. Fill it out after you have carefully considered your options. Be clear and use proper terms for schools and majors. It is always a good idea to talk to your current advisor and one in the school you are planning to change to, before making major changes.

### **Am I required to have a minor?**

In the School of Arts and Humanities, only Communication Studies majors are required to have a minor. You may choose, however, to have a minor with any major. Minor requirements are listed in the catalog. (link)

<http://students.uab.edu/services/show.asp?durki=1934>

### **May I major in one school and minor in another?**

Yes. Check the catalog for the requirements in your chosen minor, or talk to an advisor in the school of either your major or your minor.

### **I'm not a music major; can I still sing in a choir or play in the band?**

Yes. Get in touch with the music Department to find out how. (link)

<http://www.music.uab.edu/site2/ensembles.html>

### **When will I graduate? How much longer have I got?**

The answer to this question requires an appointment with your advisor. If you see your advisor regularly and you have kept up with the required courses for your major, you should have a pretty good idea of where you stand. You are ready to graduate when you have completed the core curriculum, all the course for your chosen major and minor (if applicable), and have earned at least 120 semester hours, including electives.

**I think I'm close to graduating. What do I do now?**

At least one term before you plan to graduate you should make an appointment with Louise Cecil (934-2290) to go over your transcript and prepare an application for degree. Plan early, she gets very busy at the end of the semester.