



October 22, 2019

**RE: NOMINATION OF THE COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY ADVISING CENTER FOR THE
MOMENTUM YEAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ADVISING AND STUDENT SUCCESS**

Dear Selection Committee:

I am delighted to nominate the Columbus State University (CSU) Advising Center, CSU Advise, for the Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. CSU Advise is a centralized innovative academic advising center which is a resource that provides general advising to all students, as well as information regarding student services and other campus activities. Additionally, the Center collaborates with all academic departments to provide specialized advising to students transitioning into their major course of study or exploring academic or professional options.

Utilizing high-impact practices and data, CSU Advise has positively promoted student success by helping increase persistence rates for students enrolled in more than 15 hours per semester. CSU Advise has been thoughtful in its approach to monitoring student success by evaluating students' mindsets and developing advising and support strategies that assists students in areas where challenges may exist. In addition to addressing academic barriers to success, CSU Advise places an emphasis on supporting students beyond their academic needs. These additional factors include: 1) finances, 2) mental and physical health, 3) childcare, and extracurricular student involvement. Additionally, CSU's consolidated advising model supports comprehensive and collaborative professional development activities for advising staff which result in enhanced services for students. CSU Advise facilitates advising workshops for professional and faculty advisors each semester and conducts annual surveys to evaluate their success.

In addition to working collaboratively with the University's Faculty Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, CSU Advise partners with Division of Student Services to engage students immediately after their acceptance to CSU and through to the completion of their degrees. This engagement includes pre-enrollment advising, career exploration and mapping, and leadership activities that promote a sense of belonging and a commitment to inclusion. As you review the portfolio, I thank you for considering the accomplishments of CSU Advise, which epitomize the characteristics valued by the University System of Georgia and situate the department well to receive the Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

Sincerely,

Deborah E. Bordelon, Ph.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President



Columbus State University's 2019-2020 Application

Regents Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success

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CSU Narrative Articulating Goals

CSU is pleased to nominate CSU ADVISE for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success because it has employed superior and innovative advising and student success strategies to achieve its goals. In addition, all of what it does so well can be replicated on other campuses, and thus can serve as a model for other institutions. In fact, CSU ADVISE's strategies have been so successful, the Executive Director now oversees all advisor training on campus; plus, it is a one-stop-shop for everything related to freshman and sophomore advising.

"Though she be but little, she is fierce" (Shakespeare, *Midsummer Night's Dream*) could well describe CSU. We are a relatively small USG institution, but what we do, we do with great purpose, focus, and passion. We are dedicated to the three major elements of Momentum Year—**purposeful choice, clear path for completion, and growth mindset**—to provide freshmen and sophomores with what they need "to find their path, get on that path, and build velocity in the direction of their goals" (CCG website).

CSU Student Body Profile

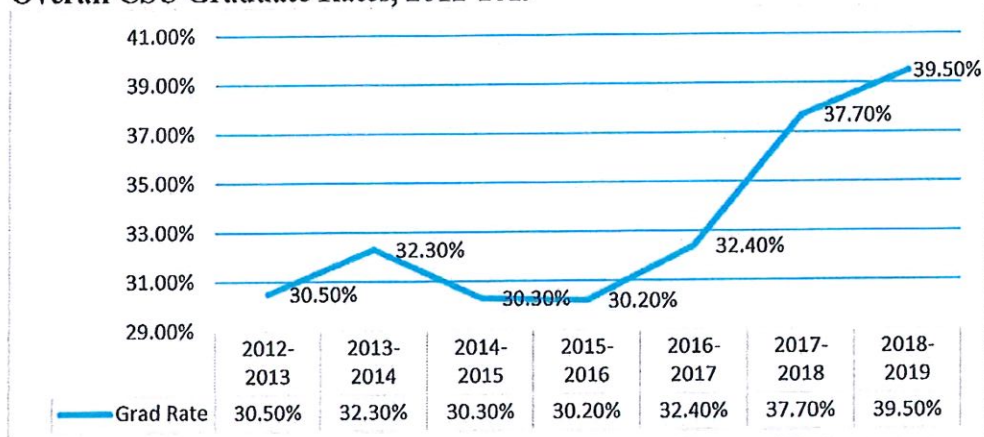
The University System of Georgia (USG) designates CSU as one of the three "access" institutions within the state because no state colleges in the USG are located within the geographic service area. The service area of Columbus State University is defined as these Georgia counties: Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion, Meriwether, Muscogee, Stewart, Talbot, Taylor, and Troup. In Fall 2019, 43.2% of the new student population was drawn from these counties.

Columbus State University utilizes moderately selective admissions standards and processes for most applicants (high school grade point average of 2.5 and SAT minimum scores of 440 Critical Reading and 410 Math or ACT English 17/Math 17). Modified standards are utilized for applicants within the local service area in accordance with the University System of Georgia-mandated local access mission (high school grade point average of 2.0 and SAT minimum scores of 330 Critical Reading and 310 Math or ACT English 12/Math 14). While the University takes pride in its role as an access institution, this role presents challenges in retention and student success. Overall, retention and graduation rates have increased in the last seven years.

The overall CSU retention rates, 2012-2019, for first-time, full-time freshmen have increased from 66.2% to 71.5%, yielding an impressive increase of 5.3% over seven years. However, it is the increase in the graduation rate that is truly impressive. In the same time period, it has risen from 30.5% to 39.5%, an increase of 9%. We believe the overall increases in retention and graduation rates are due to the advising and retention efforts begun by the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and continued by CSU ADVISE.

There are three CSU ADVISE centers on campus; one on main campus (for the College of Letters and Sciences and for the Turner College of Business) and two locations on the RiverPark campus (one for the College of Education and Health Professions and the other for the College of the Arts). CSU ADVISE has carefully aligned its goals to help students

Overall CSU Graduate Rates, 2012-2019



succeed. Their goals involve all undergraduate students regardless of academic preparedness (remedial to honors) or classification (freshman to senior), but the main focus is on first- and second-year students, which CSU ADVISE exclusively advises and whose populations are most likely to be “at risk.”

Overview of Goals for Achieving Momentum Year Outcomes

1. Onboard new advisors; train and evaluate all professional advisors
2. Engage students in programs of study (major program maps and/or focus area maps) that provide clear paths to graduation
3. Motivate students to earn degrees on time by encouraging them to enroll in 15 credit hours each term
4. Create clear pathways to success by minimizing non-academic reasons for being “at risk” (financial, mental health, career uncertainty, child care, tutoring, etc.)
5. Foster purposeful choice by developing a productive Academic Mindset

Strategies and activities for each of these goals are detailed in the next section.

Goals, High-Impact Strategies and Activities

Goal #1: Onboard new advisors; train and evaluate all professional advisors

In June 2018, CSU launched an initiative to centralize advising for first- and second-year students through a single unit. ACE took a leadership role in facilitating the consolidation which included advising center staff from education, nursing, and business. The newly formed unit, CSU ADVISE, is led by Lisa Shaw, the former director of the ACE.

The consolidation of these individual centers provided CSU with an opportunity to articulate and implement a standard of care for all students. All advisors receive regular training and professional development opportunities and operate under a consistent set of expectations for serving students. On main campus, CSU ADVISE is currently housed in a

temporary location in Woodall Hall with a planned move in the upcoming year to newly renovated space in the Schwob Memorial Library. CSU ADVISE will then be adjacent to the new space for Academic Center for Tutoring, which will provide students with convenient access to both services.

CSU ADVISE provides onboarding and ongoing training for professional advising (first two years of advising), partners with CSU's Faculty Center for faculty training (usually the last two years of advising), and evaluates the effectiveness of its freshman and sophomore advising system with a campus-wide survey. The primary focus of the survey are students in the first two years of college, though the survey is used by others on campus to evaluate upper-division advisors.

High-Impact Strategies

- CSU ADVISE trains all campus advisors to be thorough in communicating information concerning students' major/academic focus area maps and knowledge of important advising issues.
- CSU ADVISE assesses freshman and sophomore advisors (and upper division advisors of education and nursing) with an Advising Assessment Survey, distributed every semester.

Summary of Activities

- CSU ADVISE offers workshops every semester for all professional advisors and for faculty advisors.
- During each orientation, students and parents are given a dedicated email address to contact an advisor and ask questions. This email goes to an advisor who responds within 24 hours. There were 149 emails from August 2018-2019 sent to advisors in CSU ADVISE.
- In Spring 2019, CSU ADVISE placed this link in electronic acceptance letters, so students could contact their advisor prior to orientation.
- Below is the Fall 2019 schedule for advisors contacting students concerning important advising issues. Students receive these six emails at regular intervals. In Spring and Fall 2019, texts were also sent out through EAB.
 1. **Second day of the semester:** send email on important dates through the semester; information on W/P and W/F; information on dropping and adding classes during this week only for 100% refund and where they can find the chart for refunds; information on our social media outlets and encouraging them to "like" us; information on resources such as tutorial services and links to making an appointment; location of their advisor and how to contact prior to adding and dropping; and a welcome from their advisor.
 2. **Mid-September:** send email out on when advising starts, how to make an appointment and where the advisor is located; deadline for last day to drop.
 3. **Early October:** send reminder email to make an advising appointment for Spring; links to the Spring course schedule.
 4. **Third week of October:** send targeted email to students who have not made an appointment with their advisor; information on when walk-in appointments start

and to expect some wait time; information on how to check their advising record for holds and how to resolve these.

5. **During registration week:** send email to come in and see advisor, check their holds and what day they can register.

6. **2nd week of November:** after registration, those not registered are contacted and encouraged to come in to see their advisor.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of its advising system, CSU ADVISE has been surveying freshmen and sophomores every semester about its advising practices since Fall 2011; in 2012, the College of Education and Health Professions (COEHP) began surveying freshmen through seniors using the same instrument. With the exception of COEHP, the survey is used to evaluate the professional advisors of first- and second-year students, not faculty who advise juniors and seniors. The evaluation of faculty advising practices falls primarily under the purview of academic departments. The ten-question survey targets knowledge of student responsibility, asks about students' majors and academic status, asks who their advisor is, and profiles their demographics (Honors student, BOOST participant, military, enrolled in online class, enrolled in First Year Experience course, etc.).
- Many years ago, University Information and Technology Services (UITs) developed a Banner process to allow for automated assignment of academic advisors. The use of this feature was optional for departments. With the consolidation of academic advising and the focus on smooth transitions for students, CSU ADVISE realized that the process needed to be used by all academic departments. The Vice Provost collaborated with UITs to work with individual departments who were not using the process. To prevent disrupting juniors and seniors who were already assigned, CSU Advise was able to retain the current assignments if the department decided to do so and apply the new automated advising rules to new students, transfer students, and students changing their majors. This process was intentionally completed a single department at a time to ensure that the needs of the students and the departments were met. All departments now use the feature to assign upper-division students to academic advisors in their junior and senior years.

Measures of Progress and Success

- 100% of all freshmen and sophomores are now advised in CSU ADVISE centers.
- "My advisor was able to accurately answer all of my questions or referred me to the appropriate person who could" is the first question of the survey and yielded these responses in Spring 2019 (833 freshmen and sophomore participants):
 - 98.92% agreed
 - .96% no opinion
 - .12% disagreed
- The last question of the survey is open-ended, so students can comment directly on the performance of their particular advisor by name. Most of the commentary is extremely positive. Rare negative commentary is discussed with the advisor to help them improve.

Goal #2: Engage students in programs of study (major program maps and/or focus area maps) that provide clear paths to graduation

Since 2014, CSU has published in its catalogs academic program maps for every major and every undergraduate degree it offers.

In addition, two years ago, CSU expanded its Academic Focus Areas (AFAs) from five to eight so that “students groping with uncertainty can pursue coursework from the start that contributes to college completion” (Momentum Year website). AFA Maps list courses that are broadly applicable across a wide range of majors within the area, thereby helping students avoid enrollment in unnecessary credits as they narrow their program choice. In 2018, CSU gave a statewide webinar on developing Academic Focus Areas.

For students who are undecided about their major, CSU offers eight AFAs that allow students to explore majors within an area of interest. For coding purposes, AFAs are an attribute and students are assigned to the BA in Liberal Arts Humanities concentration to facilitate financial aid awards. The student attribute code, next to the AFA, allows CSU ADVISE to track AFA students.

▪ Health Professions	code FAHP
▪ Business	code FABU
▪ Education (excludes Secondary Education)	code FAED
▪ Computer Science, Math, & Science	code FACS
▪ Social Science	code FASS
▪ Humanities	code FAHU
▪ Fine & Performing Arts	code FAPA
▪ Exploratory	code FAEX

These AFAs are published on the CSU ADVISE website and in the catalog. Each map has been carefully constructed to include 9 credits in the Focus Area of interest and to specify the math course recommended for that AFA. Since students must select a major by 30 hours, Academic Focus Area Maps only apply to freshmen, whether native or transfer. Students selecting AFAs, including Exploratory, are advised by a dedicated student retention specialist.

Since the eight Academic Focus Area Maps are too long to be included (8 pages), please follow this link to view the maps:

https://academics.columbusstate.edu/docs/program-maps/AcademicFocusArea_CATALOG_201808.pdf

When advising students who know what they want to major in, advisors follow the major academic program map (called a “4-year course schedule”) in the catalog. A few majors have multiple academic program maps, depending on the math starting point. The important takeaway for students is to focus on the path to graduation that is clearly laid out for them to follow.

High-Impact Strategies

- Advise all freshmen and sophomores on campus at one of the three CSU ADVISE sites
- Coordinate campus resources to assist students in deciding on majors
- Create a coding system for those freshmen using Academic Focus Area Maps so we can track their migration from AFA to majors (see codes above)
- Temporarily assign AFA students to BA Liberal Arts Humanities so they are eligible for financial aid

Summary of Activities

- Advise all students, regardless of major, as well as those students still deciding on majors.
 - Create a special campus resource sequence for students who selected an AFA rather than a major.
- AFA students are required to engage in specific activities to help them choose a major. CSU ADVISE, the Center for Career Development, and the Counseling Center, have carefully scaffolded their support services to provide students the information they need to succeed.
- Exploratory students are referred to the Center for Career Development to receive career advising and to complete the PAN Skills Assessment. This assessment is designed to identify strengths and interests, explore career fields based on their strengths and interests, and develop professional skills.
- Students may also be referred to the Counseling Center for career counseling to assist with selecting a major. The Counseling Center administers the Strong Interest Inventory, the results of which will help guide conversations with experienced counselors to discuss potential majors and career paths.
- Referrals are recorded in EAB and are monitored to see which students complete the recommended interventions and activities.

Measures of Progress and Success

- In 2019, created coding for all Academic Focus Area Maps in order to identify students in Focus Areas and to track their success rates and movements to other majors.
- CSU's retention rate of FT/FT freshmen has increased from 67.1% in 2013 to 71.5% in 2019.
- CSU's graduation rate has increased significantly from 30.5% in 2013 to 39.5% in 2019.

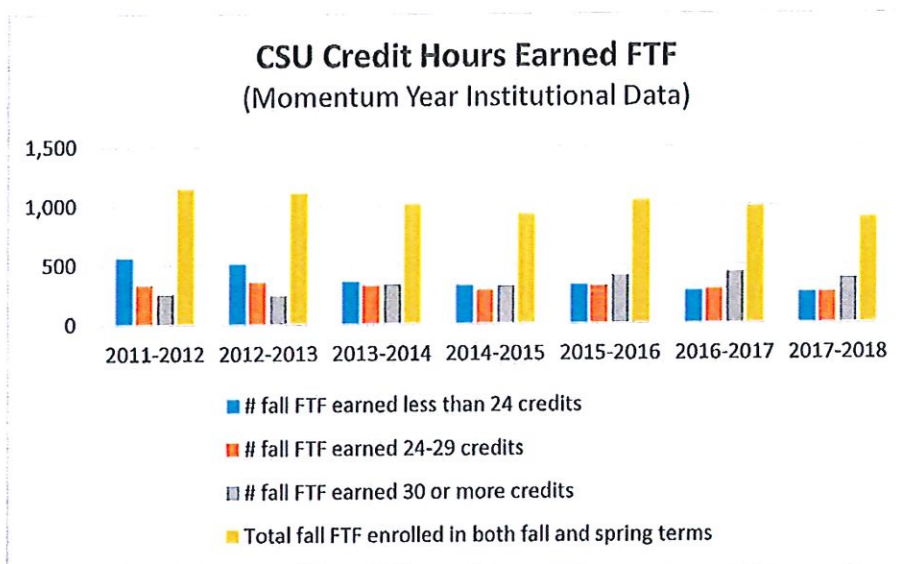
Goal #3: Motivate students to earn degrees on time by encouraging them to enroll in 15 credit hours per term

In 2013, a review of institutional data indicated that many students were not enrolled in a minimum of 15 credit hours each term. In Fall 2013, 3,680 undergraduate students were taking less than 15 credit hours per term. This group had an average overall GPA of 2.81. During the same term, 1,015 were enrolled in 15 or more credit hours. The average overall GPA of that group was 3.12. A campus-wide initiative was implemented in Summer 2014 to provide new students beginning in Fall 2014 with 15-hour schedules for their first term of study. Advisors developed these schedules in advance with input from students' Advising Surveys indicating their preferred schedule of classes.

Since Fall 2014, CSU ADVISE has provided information on the 15-to-Finish campaign to incoming students through its orientation presentations and to professional/faculty advisors through its advising training sessions every term. CSU ADVISE recognizes that a 15-hr schedule may not work for non-traditional students and encourages those students to create a "fuller schedule" that meets their unique needs.

The following chart illustrates that, from 2011-2018, CSU full-time freshmen (FTF) have

increased credit-hours earned. Note the decrease in enrollment of 24 hours or less (blue) and the increase in enrollment of 30 hours or more (grey) even as the overall number of students has declined.



High-Impact Strategies

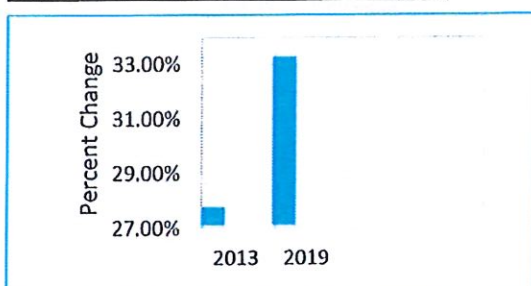
- Use the Advising Survey to preregister entering freshmen (15-to-Finish).
- Change institutional culture to emphasize taking full-time course loads of 15 hours or more: freshman orientation video, advisor training, use of major and Academic Focus Area maps, financial incentive after 15 hours, default 15-hr schedule (15-to-Finish).

Summary of Activities

- Continue using the Advising Survey with entering freshmen. The University is proactively sending this survey to all new students before orientation and CSU ADVISE creating their course schedules prior to their scheduled orientation sessions. This ensures students are taking 15 credit hours, that the courses they take are related to their major, and that they have a balanced schedule that fosters success.
- Pre-register all first-year students for their first semester based on the appropriate program map for their selected AFA or major. When students have credit for prior learning (dual enrollment, AP, IB, CLEP, transfer courses, etc.), academic advisors will register students for an alternative schedule that is consistent with the AFA or major program map.
- Require students meet with an academic advisor prior to registration for the second term. In this meeting, the student and advisor discuss the student's progress and the student is provided with a list of appropriate courses that coincide with the program map for the second term for the desired major or AFA. Advisors also discuss goals and help students identify the path to complete those goals during the first meeting.
- Use the 15-to-Finish video at freshman orientations. We have also added this video to a Pre-Orientation "course" in D2L, so students can complete modules before they arrive for Orientation.
- Emphasize 15-to-Finish philosophy to faculty and professional advisors through training each semester.

- Encourage students to take 15+ semester hours due to financial incentive (all credits over 15 hours are “free”).
- Use College Scheduler (since Spring 2018) and DegreeWorks to help students find workable schedules in a less stressful and time-consuming manner.

Measures of Progress and Success



- In Fall 2013, 1,951 students (27.8%) were enrolled in 15 hours or more.
- Increased number of students enrolled in 15 hours or more—increase of 5.6% from Fall 2013 (27.8%) to Fall 2019 (33.4%)
- By 2020, we hope to have 35% of our students enrolled in 15 hours or more per semester.

Goal #4: Create clear pathways to success by minimizing non-academic reasons for being “at risk”

With the help of the predictive analytics capability of the Education Advisory Board’s (EAB) Student Success Collaborative (SSC), CSU ADVISE serves the whole student by not only focusing on academic progress, but also by addressing students’ social, emotional, physical, and financial needs. CSU ADVISE facilitates student success through programs such as the Early Alert System, BOOST (a Quality Care for Children program), a grant for SIP (Strengthening Institutions Program), and Embark in Education (for homeless and foster students). In addition, CSU ADVISE has defined our “at risk” population and created a tracking system for identifying and serving these students. Positive results with “at risk” students have increased successful completion of credits, retention rates, and graduation rates.

High-Impact Strategies

- Create special programs—such as the Early Alert System, BOOST, SIP, and Embark—to address the needs of “at risk” students
- Use predictive analytics (EAB) and establish criteria for identifying students who are “at risk” and may need special interventions
- Ensure that students receive timely, targeted advising and intervention to keep them on track to graduate

Summary of Activities

Early Alert System

- Faculty submit names of academically “at risk” students using the Early Alert System (EAS) in EAB. EAS is designed to assist undergraduate students who demonstrate difficulty in their classes by making them aware of support services available and by encouraging them to use them.
- Because EAB is user friendly, faculty have found it easier to submit Early Alert documentation and CSU ADVISE has found it easier to contact advisors and monitor messages through this platform.

- Alerts are issued for a variety of reasons. Some are originated by faculty for “excessive absences” or “poor academic performance.” Others can be issued by any EAB user—for example, for “food or housing insecurity,” “disruptive behavior,” or for positive things like a referral to the Honors College or National Scholarship advisors.
- Many faculty-generated alerts are assigned to the student’s academic advisor for follow up.

Identifying and Tracking with EAB

• In 2017-2018, we developed a process to track which students were actually participating in the referrals recommended by advisors in CSU ADVISE, faculty advisors, or other professional advisors. Previously, CSU ADVISE referred students to campus resources like the Academic Center for Tutoring (ACT), the Center for Career Development, Office of Accommodation and Accessibility, and the Counseling Center to improve student success rates, but was unable to track which students actually followed through in utilizing these services. Using EAB's alert feature, advisors are now able to document these referrals. When issued, the student receives a notification with information on the recommended service. Whereas ACT has been tracking appointments in EAB for years, the Center for Career Development and the Counseling Center have only started doing so in Spring 2018. It is now possible to identify which students received assistance. In the case of referrals to the Counseling Center, aggregate numbers are used to protect privacy.

EAB Referral Rates

Referral Service	Fall 18 Referred	Fall 18 Received Care	Spring 19 Referred	Spring 19 Received Care
Accommodations & Access	4	0	13	0
Career Center	1	0	8	2
Tutoring	52	23	43	11
Counseling	17	0	34	0
Boost	1	1	0	0
SIP GRANT – Referred to Counseling Center for Strong Inventory Test	23	2	28	5
SIP GRANT – Referred to Counseling for Psych Evaluation *Began Spring 19	N/A	N/A	3	1

- CSU uses Banner to identify all students who have not taken ENGL 1101 or ENGL 1102. The report has been refined to identify students who are not enrolled in the gateway mathematics courses and who did not bring in prior learning credit to satisfy Area A gateway requirements. Students not enrolled in ENGL 1101 had pending transfer credit (AP, DE, etc.). Students identified as not enrolled in MATH or ENGL 1102 were required to complete the courses in the spring semester.
- Beginning Spring 2019, CSU ADVISE was able, through EAB, to email students with low mid-term grades, let them know where to find their mid-term grades, and remind them of the many free resources available to them.

BOOST

Here is a YouTube testimonial of a student named Sasha, one of the recipients of the CSU BOOST scholarship.



CSU was the first USG school to offer BOOST, a Quality Care for Children program that provides childcare scholarships for full-time student-parents with children age 4 and under. These scholarships are for PELL-eligible juniors and seniors who are enrolled full time, have maintained Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), have a GPA of 2.0 or higher upon applying for the program and maintain a 2.0GPA once receiving funds.

Quality Care for Children is gathering data to demonstrate the positive impact of available childcare on college graduation rates to build a case for state investment. Over the years, CSU has been awarded a number of slots (scholarships): 5 slots in Fall 2016; 10 in Spring 2017; 35 in Fall 2017; 62 in Spring 2018; 32 in Fall 2018 (decrease due to realignment of funding across all institutions); 24 in Spring 2019; and 9 in Fall 2019.

Embark in Education (Homelessness and Foster Care)

- In 2015, the USG encouraged each institution to select a person to become a point of contact for students who are homeless or in foster care. It was a natural fit for CSU ADVISE to house these services due to the holistic approach to advising and retention efforts provided to students. CSU partners with the Fanning Institute from the University of Georgia for training and support. CSU's Embark on Education program aids homeless and foster care students with emergency housing, book and tuition aid, referrals to our campus food pantry, and clothing and haircuts for internships and employment opportunities. Off campus students are supported with referrals to community agencies for assistance with rent and utilities as needed.
 - CSU ADVISE collaborates with the Multi Agency Alliance for Children (MAAC) to host on campus monthly meetings for high school students in foster care and those who are participating in the Independent Living Program, ILP. Students and leaders meet on the last Saturday morning of the month and are provided a welcome to the University, college tours, and hear from CSU students who were previously homeless and/or in foster care. The ILP assists students with college accessibility and costs, medical care, and personal growth and development.
 - This is the website of the partnership with the foster kids. <http://www.maac4kids.org/>
- ### SIP (Strengthening Institutions Program)

In Spring 2018, Lisa Shaw from ACE and Dr. Melody Shumaker from Learning Support received a Department of Education grant for \$3,000,000. The SIP grant allows CSU ADVISE to work with students who are on probation (GPA at or below a 2.0), students who are returning from exclusion (below a 2.0 for several semesters), students who are not meeting SAP, and transfer students whose GPA's are below 2.0. Identified students meet with an Academic Success Advisor and an Academic Success Coach from CSU ADVISE. The purpose of this program is to help students create an Academic Success Plan and arm themselves with strategies to help them meet their academic goals. Here are some of the activities:

- *Academic Success Advising*

An Academic Success Advisor will meet the student one-on-one to complete an assessment. The assessment is an informal meeting that allows the academic success advisor to get to know the students and that student's specific struggles so that the advisor can help develop personalized strategies to achieve academic success. The advisor meets again at mid-term to check with the student about grades. The advisor reviews the GPA calculation, and explains what services are available so the student can have a successful academic career.

• ***Attention to Transfer Students and Low GPAs***

CSU has a high transfer population, in part because of its location near Fort Benning. The transfer GPA is not considered for students with less than 30 transferable hours if they otherwise meet freshman admissions requirements such as HSGPA and standardized test scores. There is a minimum transfer GPA for students with 30 or more transferable hours. At times, transfer students have GPAs below 2.0 and are not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for financial aid, resulting in difficulty with degree completion.

• ***Free Financial Literacy Workshop***

The Center for Career Development reviews invaluable information with students, such as budgeting/smart money management, establishing credit, and other financial resources.

• ***Free Strong Interest Inventory Assessment***

The Counseling Center partners with the SIP grant to give the Strong Interest Inventory Assessment which provides robust insight into interests to help students consider potential careers, their educational paths, and the world of work. The test usually costs \$35 but is free to qualifying students due to this grant.

• ***Free Calendar and Grade Tracking Apps***

Some of the apps that we refer to our students include Quizlet, Quora, My Study Life, PomoDone App and MyHomework.

• ***Academic Success Coaching***

Academic Success Coaches (Peer Mentors) are successful CSU students who have been trained on a variety of learning techniques, are very knowledgeable, and enjoy working with other students and helping them with such areas as Time Management, Syllabus Review, Test-Taking/Study Strategies, Note Taking Techniques, etc. Their experience, resources, and knowledge help weaker academic students navigate through college and work towards their academic goals.

Measures of Progress and Success

• **Increased number of EAB referrals**

48 referrals 2013-2014 (information from 2014-2017 deleted to save space)

51 referrals 2017-2018

295 referrals 2018-2019 (166 referrals, Fall 2018; 129 referrals Spring 2019)

• **BOOST participants vary depending on number of slots provided:**

5 student-parents Fall 2016 (information from 2016-2018 deleted to save space)

62 students Spring 2018

32 student-parents Fall 2018

24 student-parents Spring 2019

9 student-parents Fall 2019

• **The Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) grant began Spring 2018 semester.**

Spring 2018—294 students served

Summer 2018—34 students served
 Fall 2018—208 students served
 Spring 2019—195 students served
 Summer 2019—72 students served

Our data analyst conducted a Mann-Whitney statistical test and concluded that probation students who received service from SIP had a higher end of semester GPA than those who did not. In fact, **there is an approximately 76.6% variance in the end of semester GPA between students who received or did not receive SIP academic success advising.**

- Number of Embark students served since 2017:

Spring 2017—12
 Fall 2017—7
 Spring 2018—7
 Fall 2018—7
 Spring 2019—7

Goal #5: Foster purposeful choice by developing a productive Academic Mindset

Academic Mindsets refer to the motivational components that influence a student's desire and will to engage in learning. Inability to thrive in college may be due more to deep-seated beliefs or self-image than to academic preparedness or ability. These mindsets affect motivation, strategies, and perseverance of students:

1. I belong in this learning community (inclusion).
2. I can change my abilities through effort (growth).
3. I can succeed (self-reflection).
4. This work has value and purpose for me (purpose).

The system, in conjunction with institutional research, distributes the Academic Mindset Survey, which measures mindset and other constructs for the population. The theory is that making students aware of the high correlation between mindset and outcome will result in increased awareness and self-improvement. Starting in 2017, the survey has been distributed every fall.

Starting in 2017-2018, the First Year Experience (FYE) program and CSU ADVISE were awarded a three-million dollar Strengthening Institutions Programs (SIP) grant from USDOE, which supports a cohort of academic coaches and peer mentors, a Learning Support Resource Center, and consulting from nationally recognized experts. These services align with instilling Growth Mindsets in students.

High-Impact Strategies

- Gather information on student mindsets
- Create activities for students and faculty to engage in discussion of mindset values

Summary of Activities

- Distribute Academic Mindset Survey, every fall since 2017, to all incoming first-year students. The return rate for the survey in Fall 2017 was low, so the information it provided for planning purposes was less than ideal.

- Increased participation in Fall 2018 and 2019 were accomplished by publicizing the survey during orientation and encouraging participation during first-year courses.
- Offer Mindset training and discussion every year, which includes book circles on related topics and workshops (such as that led by academic futurist Ken Steele in April 2018).
- Scale up the discussion about Mindsets among faculty by offering workshops during Fall 2019 Planning Week, encouraging discussion of the topic during its new faculty orientation series, offering more book circles on the topic, and making stronger connections among the different workshops and discussion groups it sponsors.
- In 2018-2019 the FYE adopted *The Working Poor* as its text for the Common Read because it fostered academic mindset. This year's Common Read, *Irresistible: The Rise of Addictive Technology and the Business of Keeping Us Hooked*, also promotes mindset topics.

Measures of Progress and Success

- The challenge will be in tracking and assessing the effectiveness of the various activities (including those mentioned above and others) related to the Mindset discussion. CSU's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Faculty Center, among others, are developing strategies for meaningful assessment of activities related to these efforts.

Reflections—What We've Done, What We Plan on Doing

Particularly Successful Strategies

- **Increasing the number of credit hours earned by FTF.** Success here is due to preregistering students and showing the 15-to-Finish video to students and families at orientation. There was an increase of 5.6% since Fall 2013 in the number of students enrolled in 15 or more hours.
- **Increasing the retention rate and graduation rate.** We have focused efforts here to offer the numbers and kinds of core classes needed as well as rewarded juniors and seniors with extra special attention (such as increased number of internships and workshops on soft-skills development).
- **Transforming the catalog to include program maps for all undergraduate degrees and for eight AFAs.** We are confident that these maps will positively affect RPG in the future and contribute greatly to the culture of "15-to-Finish." The 2019-2020 catalog represents the sixth year these maps are included. In addition, five Academic Focus Area Maps were revised and three were newly developed for entering freshmen (2018-2019 catalog) still deciding on a major.
- **Using various methods, including EAB and SIP grant funds, to keep students on track and identify students "at risk."** These methods include reminding faculty to use the Early Alert System in the EAB Student Success Collaborative, working with outside organizations (Quality Care for Children) to provide childcare for student-parents, and using intentional and proactive advising to refer students to appropriate and effective campus resources.
- **Training and evaluating all freshman/sophomore professional advisors as well as assisting with the training of faculty advisors.**
- **Tracking whether students are using referral services as directed.** 2017-2018 was

the first year we were able to track such referrals and we will work to refine such tracking.

- **Validating high correspondence between program maps and rotation schedules**, thereby cross checking the accuracy of the maps to real time course offerings. CSU has pressure tested eight programs in 2017-2018 (98% accuracy) and eight different programs in 2018-2019 (92% accuracy).
- **Coding various Academic Focus Areas** so we can better track behavior of students still deciding on majors.
- **Simplifying course enrollment through College Scheduler**, which creates multiple schedules for students once they specify what courses they need and when they can take them. As a result, we expect to see an increase in the number of hours in which students enroll.
- **Creating a culture of enhancing growth mindset** by surveying students, providing opportunities for discussion for various campus stakeholders, and making students awareness of survey results.

New Goals for next year

- **Adopt Courseleaf** and use it as a new template for catalog entries and program maps, connecting two currently disparate systems into one.
- **Develop ADA compliant program maps** using Courseleaf.
- **Refine our coding system for undecided majors** so we can better track student progress using Academic Focus Area Maps (change of majors, retention rates, pass rates, etc.).
- **Include more SIP Grant activities** into advising such as the Learning Support Resource Center, academic coaches, and Math Anxiety support.
- **Encourage students to follow through with referrals.** What is shocking is the low follow-through with certain types of referrals. Now that we can track referrals, we know to encourage students to follow through.

CSU ADVISE is dedicated to the three major elements of Momentum Year—purposeful choice, clear path for completion, and growth mindset—to provide freshmen and sophomores with what they need to be successful.

Appendix I—Letters of Support

Letter from student

Letter from student

Letter from Dr. Gina Sheeks, Vice President for Student Affairs

Letter from Dr. Mariko Izumi, QEP Director

October 19, 2019

Board of Regents Momentum Awards Committee
270 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30334

Attention Awards Committee
Subject: BOR Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising & Student Success

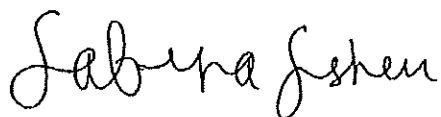
To whom it may concern,

It is my greatest pleasure to recommend the Columbus State University (CSU) ADVISE Office for the Board of Regents Momentum Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. This is my second semester as a dual enrollment student and I have had the pleasure of receiving aid and guidance from the CSU ADVISE staff since before my time at Columbus State University officially began.

The CSU ADVISE staff has positively impacted my experience at Columbus State. The advising staff are a group of passion driven individuals who love their job with advising and guiding individuals with any and every question that arises. Nevertheless, they put in overtime and effort to make sure their students succeed with high expectations. I admire how the advisors are able to tackle any question and are willing to work together to come up with solutions. For example, before my time at CSU started, I reached out to the Dual Enrollment Advisors and discussed potentially transferring from my high school for three years to a brand new high school for my senior year in order to have the opportunity to start college a year early. The response time was amazing, and the advisors were very eager and happy to help me with this enormous decision that would impact my future educational situation. The following week, a meeting was scheduled where the advisors explained everything that dual enrollment has to offer. The CSU ADVISE staff that I met that day, played an important role in my final decision to dual enroll. I knew from that day forward, the CSU ADVISE staff would support me with my higher education decision and guide me through the new process. The CSU ADVISE Staff also helped me during a critical time during my second semester when I could not obtain a required key code for class. When I walked in unannounced, several advisors came to my help and begun to brainstorm ideas on how to solve this problem timely and efficiently. One advisor emailed the bookstore, another gave me suggestions on emailing the company, and another gave me suggestions on how to approach my professor. By the following school day, I had my key code, and I can guarantee that if the advisors had not helped me, I would have not had the material and would have failed my first quiz of the semester. These examples are just one of many; time and time again, the Columbus State University ADVISE staff demonstrated their leadership skills, passion for helping students and their remarkable ability to manage conflict.

I can whole heartedly support the Columbus State University Advisory Staff for this award. I strongly believe that the advisors contribute immensely to Columbus State University's academics and community. I have no doubt that this will continue as the CSU ADVISE Staff continues to grow with passion and impact a greater amount of students with the year to come.

Sincerely,
Sabrina Fisher



3071 Williams Rd #329
Columbus, GA, 31909
706-617-5545

October 16, 2019

Board of Regents Momentum Awards Committee
Attn: Awards Committee
270 Washington Street SW
Atlanta, GA, 30334

Subject: BOR Momentum Awards for Excellence in Advising and Student Success

To Whom it May Concern:

The present is to recommend CSU Advise for the Awards for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. CSU Advise has played a crucial part during my college career. As a high school student, college was a big step for me that included many obstacles. Most of these were new, and I was not sure how could I overcome them to have a successful year. Thanks to my advisors at CSU Advise, I managed to overcome these obstacles.

CSU Advise had helped me in several ways. First, they talked with me about which classes I should take. When I first came in, I did not know which classes would benefit me for my future career or what classes would be the best for me to take at this point. CSU Advise went over all the core classes they offered for dual-enrollment students and which ones they recommended I started with. I ended up taking great introductory classes that made my transition to college that smoother. Second, they listen to me. It is important for me to able to communicate with my advisors, whether in high school or college. At CSU Advise, my advisors listen to my goals and classes I would like to take, and they take that into consideration when registering me for classes. In fact, they went above and beyond my recommending I join the Honors College because they thought I would benefit more from the smaller class sizes and more challenging coursework. This has allowed me to get to my goal more efficiently and quicker. Lastly, they make it easy for students to get help. CSU Advise has a great system in place to help students. Students can make appointments online the online assistance service or by emailing their advisors. They can also walk-in into the advising center and talk with their advisors briefly. Moreover, they respond to email quickly.

These are the ways CSU Advise has helped me throughout my college career and why I strongly recommend them for the Board of Regents Awards for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. They go above and beyond to help their students and listen to all of their concerns and doubts. Additionally, they make sure they are in the right classes. They help all of us achieve our goals.

Sincerely,



Diana Tejera Berrios
CSU Student



October 14, 2019

Award Committee

Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success
University System of Georgia

Award Committee Members:

It is indeed my honor and pleasure to offer this letter of support for CSU ADVISE at Columbus State University as a candidate for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. CSU ADVISE has served as the institutional leader of student retention and student success efforts at Columbus State University since 2011, and is most deserving of this recognition.

Since its inception, CSU ADVISE has provided student-centered advising and retention services for Columbus State University students. Retention rates have experienced an increase of 5.3% (2013-2019), and graduation rates have increased by 9.0% (2013-2019). CSU ADVISE advises freshmen and sophomore students, employing twenty-two professional advisors in four academic colleges and on two campuses. Although students at the junior and senior levels are advised by faculty members within their respective colleges, CSU ADVISE assists in promoting consistency and standardization through advisor training opportunities via a partnership with Columbus State University's Faculty Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. To ensure quality measures and process improvement, CSU ADVISE surveys all freshmen and sophomores who have engaged in the department's services. This assessment process has been in place since 2011. One question on the survey that has consistently maintained a 98% satisfaction rating is, "My advisor was able to accurately answer all of my questions or referred me to the appropriate person who could."

Recognizing the importance of strong and collaborative campus partnerships in support of student success, CSU ADVISE has partnered with the Division of Student Affairs in all initiatives related to new student orientation (ROAR), and, since 2017, a new student leadership and retention initiative (PROWL) for first-year students. In each instance, CSU ADVISE's level of participation goes far beyond that at the surface level. These professionals ensure that all students receive strategies toward a clear pathway in the first year, development of a growth mindset, and a clear understanding of the importance of assessing individual interests and aspirations. The CSU ADVISE team is fully engaged, providing support for the diverse populations at CSU.

Furthermore, CSU ADVISE serves as a source of student support information for parents, faculty, academic and enrollment professionals. CSU ADVISE works closely with academic planning for the First Year Experience Program, and partners with the Office of Recruitment and



COLUMBUS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

the Office of Admissions to provide prospective students and their families with information about advising services and Columbus State University.

Equally important to CSU ADVISE's commitment to serving freshmen and sophomore students is its reach to multiple student populations at Columbus State University. Examples of outreach support services include: CSU ADVISE is in its fourth year of providing child care subsidies to juniors and seniors who are also parents of young children; CSU ADVISE houses the Adult Resource Center as a support service for nontraditional students, and CSU ADVISE serves as the co-coordinator on the Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP), a program made possible through a five-year, \$3,000,000 grant from the Department of Education, assisting students on academic probation, those returning from academic exclusion, and transfer students with low grade point averages.

Additionally, CSU ADVISE is in its fourth year of a seven-year GEAR UP grant with a focus on students from 7th grade to first year of college. CSU ADVISE also serves as the institutional point of contact for students who are homeless or in foster care. They partner with a community entity, Independent Living Program, to provide classroom space in order for 40-50 students in foster care to meet monthly on the Columbus State University campus.

CSU ADVISE serves as the focal point for student success on the Columbus State University campus. Their accomplishments and dedication to institutional advising and student engagement is exceptional. I am pleased to offer my highest recommendation for CSU ADVISE as a candidate for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success.

Gina Sheeks, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs
Columbus State University



Dear Members of Regents' Award Committee:

I'm delighted to write this letter in support of Columbus State University's CSU Advise for the Regents' Momentum Year Award for Excellence in Advising and Student Success. As a faculty member, I have witnessed the impact of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) over the years before it became CSU Advise; as the Director of QEP, I have directly worked with ACE staff on many institutional committees, including the developing the Student Transition Improvement Plan at the USG Advising Academy since 2018. In my observation, CSU Advise is one of the most student-centered offices on our campus and I believe they contribute to the mission of the Momentum Year in many significant ways.

Last year, ACE was renamed as CSU Advise to extend its scope of advising to all campus areas. This change in title aptly reflects the outstanding work they do. One of the characteristics that makes CSU Advise outstanding is their active collaboration with diverse units to bring advising to bear on all stages of our students' advancement. First and foremost, they have earned the trust from faculty. To effectively help students make purposeful choices, the advisors need to have a great deal of knowledge about all disciplines and majors and CSU Advise works very closely with faculty. Several of their staff members are very active in QEP workshops as well as in programs on teaching and learning to stay current with pedagogical research. They are versed in Transparent Assignment Design (TILT), understand the intricacies of the LEAP Initiative, and have experience with assessment according to VALUE rubrics. Because they are often at the table with faculty, they can help students make connection between academic learning and career pathways through advising.

Furthermore, CSU Advise touches multiple points of each student's journey, even before they arrive at CSU. CSU Advise works very actively with Early College and GEAR UP to help students prepare for college life. Advising is integrated into the orientations, and it is the go-to office to solve challenges students are facing – such as food insecurity, homelessness, single motherhood, academic exclusion. CSU Advise works not only with units inside the university but also with external organizations and agencies, to reduce the aforementioned obstacles and keep the pathways to education open for students. I personally know a number of students who either lost their home or were about to lose it before Lisa Shaw, the Director of the CSU Advise, stepped in and saved them from getting drawn into downward spiral. She is truly the first name that springs to people's mind when it comes to helping students overcome adversity and help students maintain their momentum to continue their education. CSU Advise's vision is much larger and far more encompassing than that of traditional advising. They play a significant role in keeping the pathways to education open for students, whom they guide with expertise to ensure that all campus resources – academic or otherwise – are available to them. As a highly motivated collective, CSU Advise is a true servant leader on our campus.

Sincerely yours,

Mariko Izumi, Ph.D.
Professor of Communication
Director of Quality Enhancement Plan
Columbus State University

TEL: (706) 507-8525

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University System of Georgia