

Incorporating "Students First" into Your Advising Style



What is "Students First"?

- A campus-wide initiative intended to impact retention efforts
- The Chancellor's plan for a student-centered campus

Examples

- Considering how tuition and fee increases affect students' ability to attend the University
 - Increasing faculty-student interaction
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- Taking a friendly, personal approach with students, especially when red tape is involved
 - Increasing active learning opportunities

Why is this important NOW?

- With increased enrollment, we don't want to just focus on numbers
- With so many other students on campus, students may feel lost



What impact can RSO advisors make?

- Individual attention for RSO officers/members can make the campus feel "smaller"
- Mentoring relationships with students means a greater connection to the campus for the students
- Providing "active learning" opportunities outside the classroom

**With Students First, a major
role of the advisor is
FACILITATOR**

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- Unlike a manager or supervisor, an advisor who is a **facilitator** promotes **active learning**
 - *What is your definition of active learning?*
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Ways to Promote Active Learning

- Know what is going on in the RSO, and be accessible, but don't get involved to the same extent as students
- Help students think critically and ask important questions. Don't inject your personal opinions unless you are specifically asked. This can be difficult!

Ways to Promote Active Learning

Allow students to have **practical experiences**. Some examples:

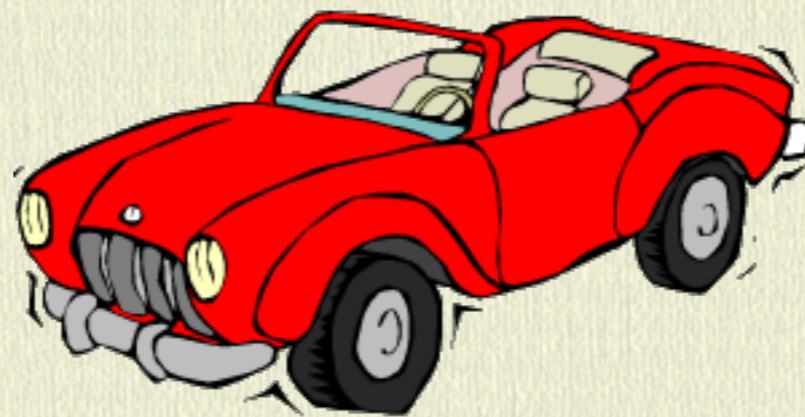
- Goal setting
 - Budgeting
 - Event planning
 - Conflict management
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- Meeting deadlines
 - Following instructions
 - Time management / prioritization
 - Delegation

What exactly does this mean?

An advisor taking the Students First perspective realizes that the purpose of RSOs is to facilitate active learning outside of the classroom. While it may be easier for the advisor to step in and complete tasks and problem-solve for students, this may not aid in the personal growth and development of students.

Students First

Instead of intervening and/or taking on RSO responsibilities yourself, offer **Challenge and Support** to put students in the driver's seat with the knowledge that you are there to offer guidance if necessary!



Consider Student Development Theory

Chickering's Seven Vectors

- 1. Developing competencies
 - 2. Managing emotions
 - 3. Moving through autonomy to interdependence
 - 4. Developing mature interpersonal relationships
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Consider Student Development Theory

Chickering's Seven Vectors

- 5. Establishing identity
 - 6. Developing purpose
 - 7. Developing integrity
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Reflection

Think about your current advising style and your interactions with students.

Do you believe that your current actions fit in with the Students First philosophy? Do your actions promote personal growth according to Chickering's 7 Vectors?

Case Study

- Members of the RSO you advise have come to you with financial problems. They were planning a large event on campus and have already advertised it, but they have found that they left out some key items in their budget and can't cover the costs. They also missed the ASG funding deadline so they don't have any ASG money.
 - How can you help students problem-solve while making this an educational process?
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Case Study #2

- You advise an RSO that has 7 officers. Lately, the president has failed in several of her responsibilities to the group, and the other members are getting upset and have come to you for help.
 - What is your plan of action as an advisor?
 - Is it ok to let students fail?
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Summary

- An RSO advisor adheres to Students First by being a mentor, guide, and facilitator, intervening only when absolutely necessary.
 - Involvement in an RSO is viewed as a learning process for students
 - Advisors should consider Chickering's Seven Vectors when determining how to guide RSOs
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