

***STUDENT ADVISEMENT  
HANDBOOK***

**August 2016**

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## From the Vice President for Academic Affairs

What does it take to succeed in college? Among the most important things you can do are go to class, study, be serious about your goals, stay informed about your degree requirements, and seek assistance when you have questions. Faculty and staff are committed to helping you complete your program, and they serve as advisors throughout your time at SUNY Cobleskill. Your advisor will help you set educational and career goals, make decisions about course selection to help you complete your degree in a timely manner, and choose experiences to make the most of your college experience.

The academic advising process involves a partnership between your advisor and you! Advising requires that you actively seek the assistance of your advisor, reflect on your educational and career goals, spend time learning the requirements of your program of study, and construct a schedule each semester that will move you toward degree completion. Your advisor can be consulted throughout the year as well as at course registration time to assist you in achieving your educational goals.

This packet of information is designed to help you navigate the academic advising process. Included in the packet are suggestions on how to create your schedule each semester as well as to understand what you must do in order to graduate. Take time to familiarize yourself with this information and make regular appointments with your advisor for assistance. Here are a few pointers to help you along the way:

- Get to know your advisor. Find his/her office and make note of posted office hours.
- Learn the degree and graduation requirements for your program, which are listed in the online college catalog.
- Locate the offices of your department chairperson and school dean. Faculty, deans, chairpersons, staff, and secretaries are all here to help you!
- To graduate in a timely manner, successfully complete at least 15 to 18 credit hours each semester.
- Be enrolled in at least 12 credits each semester to retain full-time student status. If you fall below 12 credits, you are considered part-time and will be subject to removal from residence halls and may experience changes in eligibility for financial aid and health insurance.

Please read this packet, know your program requirements, attend all your classes, study on a daily basis, take your obligations seriously – and save some time for making friends and having fun! When you need help, go to one of your instructors, your advisor, your department chair, or your dean.

Good luck in your college career. I look forward to shaking your hand as you cross the stage at graduation!



Dr. Susan Zimmermann  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



## First Year Philosophy Statement

The first year of college is a vital time in the lives of students and their families, as it provides the foundation for academic success and lifelong learning. At SUNY Cobleskill, the responsibility for student learning and development is shared by all members of the campus community, and this relationship begins with the student's first interaction.

SUNY Cobleskill fosters a sense of community, campus spirit, and support for its first-year students by promoting connections with faculty, administrators, support staff, and peers. Guided by the principle of 'real life, real learning,' first-year students will be provided exceptional opportunities for growth and development, resulting in meaningful connections with the college community, achievement of their academic goals, and a clearer vision of their lifetime direction. To best serve the unique needs of first year students, SUNY Cobleskill commits to the following:

- facilitating new student transition to college life
- providing high-quality instruction
- establishing positive mentoring and advising relationships, both formal and informal
- empowering students to develop responsibility and independence
- supporting a vibrant college culture where students experience and express diverse world-views
- offering a comprehensive range of activities and opportunities to enhance learning and personal growth
- evaluating the results of our efforts addressing first-year student needs

Implementation of the first-year experience will be strategically coordinated, integrating a student-centered orientation and shall apply the principles of caring, cohesiveness and connectedness. First year programs and opportunities will reinforce the principles of the Cobleskill Creed by purposefully guiding students to:

- pursue and support academic integrity and excellence
- practice and promote personal integrity
- embrace and respect diversity and equality
- respect themselves and others
- take responsibility for their actions
- respect and take pride in the campus environment; and
- demonstrate genuine concern and compassion towards others

## Communicating On Campus

In order to be well informed, members of the college community need to know how to communicate effectively with each other. A variety of communication options exist and the following outline summarizes the methods of communication used at SUNY Cobleskill. Your advisor and professors should inform you about their own preferred means of communication. For example, some advisors prefer email so that there is an electronic record, while others are willing to have students contact them on their cell phones.

### A. Email: *Electronic mail is the official means of communication at SUNY Cobleskill.*

1. It is extremely important for you to activate and regularly check email for campus information. An email account is assigned to all students with initial logon information.
2. Check your campus email account on a regular basis. While you may prefer your own email service keep in mind that official campus communications will be sent to the Cobleskill.edu address.
3. The global address list on Microsoft Outlook provides email addresses for all members of the college community. In addition, it lists the phone numbers, titles and office locations of all employees.
4. To access email from off campus, you can access email from the home page on the college website: go to “Current Students” and then to “email.”

### B. SharePoint

**Student SharePoint:** This webpage contains information about on-campus events, class cancellations, notes from student organizations, official college announcements, and links to other important sites.

- a. To access the page: SUNY Cobleskill homepage: [www.cobleskill.edu](http://www.cobleskill.edu) >> **Current Students** >> **Student SharePoint** or enter the following web address from any browser and sign in through Office 365 (be sure to save this as a favorite and check it regularly):  
<https://livecobleskill.sharepoint.com/students/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- b. To post on Student SharePoint click on: Add a new event/announcement

### C. Telephone (*and fax*)

You can access available Academic Advisor telephone information through SUNY Cobleskill’s global address list on Microsoft Outlook. From Student SharePoint click on Office365 webmail under “Links”.

### D. Intra-campus mail and off campus USPS

Mail moves between faculty, students and staff on campus through intra-campus paper mail envelopes available through school offices and the mail service office on campus. These yellow-colored envelopes are available in a variety of sizes. Listing the

recipient's name and their campus address is needed for the intra-campus mail system. Mail is picked up and delivered from designated mailrooms at least once a day.

Mail received through the United States Postal Service (USPS) is delivered to the student mailroom when the intra-campus mail is dropped off.

## **E. Banner Web/DegreeWorks**

The Banner student information system (Banner Web/DegreeWorks) is the software that SUNY Cobleskill uses to collect future/current/past student information. Instructions on how to access this information are found by visiting the college website (homepage), then clicking on "BannerWeb" and entering the secure area:

[https://wlprod.cobleskill.edu:11101/pls/prod/twbkwbis.P\\_WWWLogin](https://wlprod.cobleskill.edu:11101/pls/prod/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin)

To log into Banner Web, please enter your User Identification Number (ID) and your Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Banner Web can also be used as an effective communication tool. Your advisor can send a mass email to all advisees.

## **F. MOODLE**

*MOODLE is a web-based course management system (CMS) that allows instructors to build a place on the web for their courses. It also allows access to course materials anytime and wherever Internet access is available. MOODLE is generally not used by advisors for communicating with their advisees. Your professors will often use MOODLE to communicate with students. These communications will go to a separate MOODLE mail box. You can have your MOODLE email forwarded to your Cobleskill email.*

To access MOODLE, go to the following link:

<http://www.cobleskill.edu/students/>

For instructions on how to use MOODLE go to the following link:

<http://www.cobleskill.edu/online/>

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING AT SUNY COBLESKILL**

Academic advisement is an essential and critical part of SUNY Cobleskill's commitment to the education of each student. Although a good advising program calls for a well-organized record keeping system, academic advising goes beyond the clerical functions of scheduling classes and filling out forms. Advising is not just a paper process. It is a student-centered process which:

1. assists students in exploring and clarifying their educational and career goals and;
2. assists students in developing educational plans to achieve these goals.

The purpose of this handbook is to help identify and clarify the responsibilities of students and advisors in the advising process, as well as to provide some suggestions to students to help develop a close working relationship with their advisor. An advising program can be only as good as each student and advisor is willing to make it.

Your academic advisor is a faculty member from your chosen field or area of chosen field or area of concentration. The advisor is the coordinator of your educational experience and can provide invaluable assistance in helping you attain your goals. **Students have the ultimate responsibility for their educational progress and success. It is the students' responsibility to know the requirements for graduation in their major and the timeframe required for completion of all requirements.**

## GOALS OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

### *Student Advisement Learning Outcomes* \*

**After experiencing academic advising, a student will:**

- Know his/her faculty advisor's name
- Know the contact information for his/her faculty advisor
- Design a career plan that supports his/her life goals
- Understand and be able to access college services, such as CASE & Student Success
- Develop an educational plan that will support his/her career goals
- Appreciate the foundational skills that are built through general education courses
- Develop and implement his/her academic plan for SUNY Cobleskill
- Become familiar with the international opportunities available to them through study abroad and other international experiences
- Manage his/her progress toward degree completion by utilizing Banner Web/DegreeWorks degree evaluation
- Utilize resources within the Student Success Center as they plan the transition from college to career/continuing education
- Complete the appropriate degrees for career and life goals

**Students will value and appreciate the relevance of academic planning throughout their education by:**

- Acknowledging that advisement is a partnership between their advisor and themselves
- Responding to faculty and advisor emails and phone calls in a timely manner
- Understanding the importance of keeping appointments and using the campus email as the primary email address
- Understanding how to access their academic information on Banner Web/DegreeWorks
- Regularly reviewing their academic plan and making adjustments as necessary

- Understanding that he/she bears the final responsibility for the successful completion of a degree
- Recognizing the value of cultural differences
- Understanding FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and its effects
- Recognizing and valuing the importance of and engagement in life-long learning

**Students will utilize student support services by:**

- Learning about the Center for Academic Support and Excellence and other tutoring resources
- Learning about the Student Success Center and how they can assist with their plans

**Students will prepare a preliminary class schedule in consultation with advisors as necessary by:**

- Reviewing program requirements from the catalog year of matriculation and making an appointment with the faculty advisor either before or during the course selection process
- Using and understanding the online college catalog
- Interpreting their BannerWeb/DegreeWorks degree evaluation

**Students will register for classes at their earliest designated course selection period on Banner Web by:**

- Knowing the important dates in the academic calendar
- Being realistic about scheduling and expecting that adjustments may need to be made

## **WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD EXPECT OF ADVISORS IN THE ADVISING PROCESS**

**Faculty Advisors:**

- Engage students in the academic advising process.
- Be available and accessible to students.
- Establish and maintain contact with advisees.
- Assist students in developing and updating their career, educational and academic (GPS) plans.
- Guide students with curriculum planning.
- Assist students in understanding the SUNY Cobleskill environment.
- Monitor student progress and intercede when necessary.
- Refer students to appropriate resources.
- Promote student growth and development.
- Maintain and expand their knowledge and skill base related to academic advising.

**Master Faculty Advisors:**

- Assist faculty colleagues to become more effective advisors.
- Act as liaison between faculty and administrative offices regarding advisement issues.
- Participate in professional development to become advisement specialists.
- Provide professional development to their colleagues.
- Serve as standing members of the Academic Advisement Council, Advisement Team and the FYE Steering Committee.
- Facilitate advisement services during select times to best meet student needs.
- Assist students who want to change majors within or between Schools.
- Take a lead role in Accepted Student Day and Student Orientation Academic Advising.



- Communicate changes related to academic advisement to appropriate stakeholders.

**Foundations for College Success (FFCS) Instructors:**

- Introduce the advisement system and explain the connection between college success and academic advisement to freshmen.
- Emphasize the importance of communication between students and their faculty advisors.
- Facilitate the development of the students' GPS Plan including their Career Plan, Educational Plan and their SUNY Cobleskill Academic Plan.
- Direct students to appropriate advisement resources.
- Teach students common higher education language with an emphasis on advisement terminology at SUNY Cobleskill.
- Instruct students to utilize campus information technologies associated with communication and advisement such as SharePoint, Angel/Moodle, Banner Web/DegreeWorks and FOCUS.
- Communicate the importance of the student's role in advisement.

## HOW YOU AND YOUR ADVISOR SHOULD WORK TOGETHER

When you were admitted to SUNY Cobleskill, you were assigned to an academic advisor for educational guidance and advising. The following suggestions are offered to you to help enhance your experiences with your advisor:

1. You should..... Contact and keep in touch with your advisor.  
Your advisor should..... Post office hours.
2. You should..... Make and keep appointments or call if it is necessary to change or cancel an appointment.  
Your advisor should..... Keep appointments or call if it is necessary to change or cancel an appointment.
3. You should..... Come with specific questions in mind. When scheduling courses, you should have the catalog.  
Your advisor should..... Provide accurate and specific information.
4. You should..... Come with necessary materials (pencils, schedule of courses, college catalog, etc.)  
Your advisor should..... Have appropriate resource materials available.
5. You should..... Ask about other sources of information when appropriate.  
Your advisor should..... Suggest other sources of information.
6. You should..... Be open and honest concerning course work study habits, academic progress, etc.  
Your advisor should..... Listen to you and suggest ways to help you succeed.
7. You should..... Build a schedule free of conflicts in time.  
Your advisor should..... Check your schedule for appropriate selection of courses.
8. You should..... Make decisions concerning careers, choice of majors, and selection of courses.  
Your advisor should..... Suggest options concerning careers, choice of majors, and selection of courses.

## SUGGESTIONS ON COURSE SELECTION AND SCHEDULING

You will develop your spring semester schedule in consultation with your academic advisor in November and your fall semester schedule in April. Notification will be posted to student SharePoint for advanced scheduling from the Registrar's Office in late October and late March. The following are a few hints that will help you in making advanced scheduling a smooth, effective process.

1. Contact your advisor early (**at least two to three weeks prior to advanced scheduling**) to make arrangement for a meeting to discuss your proposed schedule. Be sure to schedule enough time to be able to discuss all your questions/problems. Be sure to allow enough lead time before advanced scheduling in case a second meeting is necessary.
2. Carefully read all information posted on student SharePoint that you will receive from the Registrar's Office.
3. Review the course requirements for your major in the online college catalog.
4. Read the course descriptions in the online college catalog at the Registrar's website and develop a list of courses that you want to take. Be sure to check if there are any prerequisites and to make a list of alternative courses for electives. If you have questions, make a list so that you can ask your advisor during the scheduled meeting.
5. Using the master schedule found in Banner Web (a listing of times and sections of all courses), **develop a proposed schedule. Be sure to record the name, section, CRN number (course registration number) and days/times.** You will need this information to avoid scheduling conflicts and you will need the 5 digit course registration number (CRN number) to register in Banner Web.
6. Review your schedule carefully to insure that you have not scheduled any conflicts. You may want to develop at least one alternative schedule in addition to your first preference. Be sure that sections for your alternative courses fit into your proposed schedule. If you choose to, you can use a Course Selection Form (grid view of weekly schedule) found at the Registrar's Office or in your School Office.
7. Be sure that you register for all required sections of a course. For example, many lab courses include the course, the lab, and the testing section separately.
8. Meet with your advisor to discuss your proposed schedule. Your advisor will provide the required "Alt PIN" necessary for you to register, along with the designated start time for your registration period.
9. Obtain your advisor's signature on the Course Selection Form (available at the Registrar's Office) if you are planning to register for more than 19 credits.
10. Register online using Banner Web/DegreeWorks found on the SUNY Cobleskill homepage.

## **SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE ADD/DROP PROCESS AND WITHDRAWAL PROCESS**

ADD/DROP occurs during the first week of each semester. During this time students can add and drop courses if seats are available and/or they have the signature of the professor. After the first week, if a student withdraws from a course it will be reflected on their transcript and may impact financial aid status and eligibility for housing in the residence halls.

WITHDRAWAL refers to official course withdrawal. A student may withdraw from a course(s) during the first ten weeks of a semester (pro-rated for modular courses) and will receive a grade of "W." After the tenth week, students may not withdraw from courses unless the instructor, the student's advisor, and the dean in the degree program in which the student is enrolled recommend such action to the Provost/VP for Academic Affairs. The recommendations must be in writing with supportive statements as to the extenuating circumstances which warrant the withdrawal. If permitted to withdraw, a grade of "W" will be assigned. (See Section 4.11). Students may not initiate a withdrawal from FFCS or developmental courses. Developmental courses are those with a course number below 100, for example 099.

**If a student withdraws from a course a grade of "W" will appear on their transcript. In addition, withdrawing from or failing courses can be an obstacle to the timely completion of the degree.**

1. You can add or drop a course during the add/drop period, generally the first week of classes. The first step is to discuss the changes with your advisor. You can add/drop online as long as there are seats available in the class and you are not registered for more than 19 credits.
2. Closed courses will require the instructor's signature on an add/drop form which must be returned to the Registrar's Office for processing. If a course is "closed", meaning at capacity, the professor may add students to the class at his or her discretion but is not obligated to do so. Please note, registration for some courses may be by signature of the professor ONLY.
3. If adding a course will bring you over 19 credits you will need your advisor's signature on an Add/Drop Form. You need to deliver the signed Add/Drop Form to the Registrar's Office in person.
4. If all sections of the course you want are filled and no instructor is able to sign you into the course (there just isn't any room), you need to meet with your advisor and discuss alternatives.
5. Know your program requirements as stated in the College Catalog of record, from the semester you enter your degree program. **If you change your degree program you need to refer to the College Catalog for the semester you entered the new program.**
6. You cannot add a course or change sections after the Add/Drop period. However, you can withdraw from a course up until the 10<sup>th</sup> week. This is known as the free withdrawal period. The instructor's and advisor's signature are BOTH required on the course withdrawal form. You will receive a grade of W that will appear on your official transcript.

7. If there are extenuating circumstances, a professor may grant you permission to add a course after the Add/Drop period. The Registrar's Office will charge you a late registration fee per lab, lecture and/or testing section course. Please refer to the College Catalog for fee schedule.

<http://www.cobleskill.edu/academics/registrar/College%20Catalog%202015-2016%20for%20Web.pdf>

8. You should carry between 15-18 credits a semester if you plan to obtain your degree in a timely manner. **A minimum of 12 credits** are required to maintain full time student status and financial aid eligibility. Be Careful! If you drop below 12 credits in any one semester, you will be considered part-time and will be subject to removal from the residence hall. Dropping below 12 credits may also affect your financial aid. Therefore, it is very important to take the time to get all the information you need before dropping courses. Please note that it is always wise to add a course before you drop a course because you may not have access to the course you want to add.
9. You must have approved extenuating circumstances in order to withdraw from a course after the specified free withdrawal period. Failing a course is NOT an extenuating circumstance. Personal medical problems are the most prevalent circumstance.

## **IMPORTANT PROGRAM INFORMATION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – WHERE TO LOOK**

1. The online College Catalog is your most important academic resource. When you access your degree programs in the College Catalog it must match the dates you entered that degree program. If you enter a new degree program or major, including transitioning from an associate to a bachelor degree program, **you must refer to the college catalog that matches the date that you changed your degree program.** The catalog contains all vital program information and graduation requirements. It also includes all academic policies and course descriptions.
2. All academic forms such as Add/Drop Form, Course Withdrawal, Course Selection Forms and Change of Status are available at the Registrar's Office.
3. You must satisfy the SUNY Trustee's requirements or "General Education requirements" (or "Gen Ed's") as specified by the catalog year that you entered your degree program. ("Gen Ed's are different from General Electives.) Different programs have different General Education requirements.

<http://www.cobleskill.edu/academics/registrar/catalog.asp>

4. The Banner Web/DegreeWorks degree evaluation for your program area is the most accurate analysis of your academic progress available and you should “run” a degree evaluation each semester to monitor progress towards your degree.
5. The Graduation Application process needs to be completed the semester PRIOR to your expected graduation date. You cannot submit this form until after you have registered for classes for your final semester. Click onto the word document below to submit your application for graduation:

<http://www.cobleskill.edu/academics/registrar/pdfs/graduation-app.pdf>

## Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism, or any type of cheating, will not be condoned. Both involve presenting others’ work as your own, whether it be through copying a test, bringing in notes for an exam, or handing in papers either written by others or copied from sources, written or spoken, which are not acknowledged in the text. This topic is referenced in section 5.5 of Academic Policies within the College Catalog under Academic Integrity.

[http://www.cobleskill.edu/academics/academic\\_policies.pdf](http://www.cobleskill.edu/academics/academic_policies.pdf)

### Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s ideas or words and passing them off as one’s own. The word comes from the Latin *plagiarius*, meaning kidnapping. In an academic context, plagiarism is intellectual thievery. It is unethical and intolerable. This means that even if only three or four words in succession are taken from another text, they must be placed within quotation marks and properly documented. It also means that if the source is paraphrased, i.e. the ideas are rewritten; the original source must be given credit. Using another student’s paper is plagiarism. Allowing another student to hand in a paper you wrote is condoning plagiarism and will be dealt with in the same manner as plagiarism and cheating.

### Penalties and Process

1. All faculty will report all instances of plagiarism and other forms of cheating, along with any evidence, to the Dean in their respective school. This evidence will be placed in the student’s file.
2. The faculty member has the option of imposing a number of penalties, including failing the student for the course and/or recommending the student be dismissed from the college. The faculty member may also require that the student see the Dean.
3. Should the Dean discover that a student has cheated and/or plagiarized more than once, he/she will send the student’s name to the appropriate School Dean and to the Academic Review Board with the recommendation that the student be dismissed from the college.

## On Campus Health Resources

It is important to seek help BEFORE you start struggling academically. If you are experiencing any of the following, please contact the Wellness Center. Confidential, individual counseling sessions are available.

- Change in eating habits; major weight loss/gain
- Change in appearance; poor hygiene
- Difficulty relating to others, including Irritability, anger and aggressive behaviors
- Disturbing content in written work or message
- Health complaints
- Self-injury
- Change in quality of work
- Low energy
- Sleep disturbance; sleeping in class
- Mood swings, low mood or crying
- Isolation; social withdrawal

## RESOURCES AND REFERRALS OFFICE LOCATIONS ON CAMPUS

SERVICE	CONTACT	PHONE	LOCATION
Academic Advising (including questions regarding course registration)	Office of your Academic Advisor	See Advisor	See Advisor
Advisee Assignments	School Office Ag School Office LAS	5324 5427	Visit respective School Office secretary
Advisement Forms	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Add/Drop (to change academic schedule)	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Adult Student Services Commuters (off-campus students)	Student Life Center	5300	Bouck Hall
Career Information	Student Success Center	5624	Library 109
Transfer Assistance	Student Success Center	5624	Library 109
College Admission and Re-Admission	Admissions Office	5525	Knapp Lobby
Counseling (Personal Issues/Concerns)	Wellness Center (Beard Health Center)	5225	Beard Health Center
Equal Opportunity Program (EOP)	EOP Office	5836	Library
Financial Aid Information	Office of Financial Aid	5623	Knapp 118
Health related services (functions similar to Dr.'s office)	Wellness Center (Beard Health Center)	5225	Beard Health Center
Accessibility Services	Center for Academic Support and Excellence	5220	Library
Official Leave/Withdrawal from College	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Permanent Academic Records	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Employment Assistance	Student Success Center	5624	Library 109
Change of Major	Academic Advisor	See Advisor	See Advisor
Tutoring services, study skills, MERITS program, Writing Center	Center for Academic Support and Excellence	5220	Library



## RESOURCES AND REFERRALS (continued)

SERVICE	CONTACT	PHONE	LOCATION
Substance Abuse	Alcohol Counselor	5225	Beard Health Center
Test Anxiety	Center for Academic Support and Excellence	5220	Library
Transcripts	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Transfer Information/Counseling/Literature	Transfer Assistance	5624	Library 109
Transfer-in Credit Evaluation	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101
Tutoring	Center for Academic Support and Excellence	5220	Library
Withdrawal from Course/College	Registrar's Office	5522	Knapp 101