

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE  
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

**University Policy, Student Advising and Holistic Student  
Support Services Policy**

**Legislative History:**

On May 6, 2024, the Academic Senate approved University Policy Student Advising and Holistic Student Support Services Policy presented by Senator Sullivan-Green for the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee.

**ACTION BY UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:**

**Signed and approved by President Cynthia  
Teniente-Matson, President, San José State  
University, on May 24, 2024.**

**University Policy**

**Student Advising and Holistic Student Support Services Policy**

- Whereas,** Advising of students is critical to their academic and personal success at SJSU; and
- Whereas,** Academic advising affects a student's selection of a degree program, retention in their chosen program, and progress towards a timely graduation; and
- Whereas,** Supporting the student beyond their academics more holistically is also crucial to their educational journey and success in their chosen program; and
- Whereas,** One of the most important relationships between students and advisors, whether faculty or staff, is that which develops during the cooperative planning of their educational journey, and this relationship can have far reaching consequences in student success beyond academics; and
- Whereas,** Over 30 years has passed since the approval of S89-10: Undergraduate Academic Advisement; Advising. Many of the challenges related to faculty and staff advising noted then were also identified by the NACADA reports shared

with the greater campus community in August 2019<sup>1</sup> and February 2024<sup>2</sup>. These include lack of an advising curriculum, disparate participation in advisor training for all advisors, inaccessibility of advisors, inconsistency in the quality of advising, and a lack of a cohesive advising strategy; and

**Whereas,** The 2019 report lists the following recommendations:

- Establish campus-wide leadership and strategic planning efforts to enhance academic advising.
- Consider an exclusively professional advisor model to more effectively meet the needs of students.
- Create SJSU advising definition, vision, mission, goals and learning outcomes that apply across the university.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities of academic advisors.
- Provide a framework to evaluate and assess academic advising success.
- Create a comprehensive, ongoing, advisor training and professional development program for all faculty and professional academic advisors.
- Expand the role and responsibilities of the Academic Advising and Retention Services Office to support the leadership and campus framework of academic advising.
- Reaffirm the Advising Council to support the advancement of established university-wide strategic goals and learning outcomes related to academic advising and student success.
- Develop an advising communication plan for the institution appropriate for all constituencies.
- Revise and implement a comprehensive orientation program that gives equal prominence to students' academic journey.
- Develop and implement a technology plan for academic advising.

**Whereas,** The 2023 report states that: "The highest priorities for improvement of academic advising at SJSU are related to the 1) Organization and 2) Collaboration and Communication conditions.

- There needs to be transparency and sharing of the overall strategic plan and direction for academic advising.
- To foster effective communication, it's essential to consistently share thoughts and needs. Clear and frequent communication, both in writing and verbally, is key to ensuring that your intentions and desires are well-understood by others.
- It is absolutely essential to create ways for faculty and staff to collaborate and communicate to improve your academic advising programs and systems. It is impossible for excellent advising to occur in a siloed

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<sup>1</sup> NACADA Consultants SJSU Report Final 2019

<sup>2</sup> NACADA Consultants SJSU Report Final 2024

system.”

Additional, more detailed suggestions are included throughout the body of the report; and,

**Whereas,** SJSU’s vision states that students need to “*proactively engage[ing] with academic advisors on their journey;*”<sup>3</sup> and

**Whereas:** A comprehensive advising plan requires crucial engagement of both staff and faculty advisors; and

**Whereas:** University Policy S15-8: Retention, Tenure and Promotion for Regular Faculty Employees: Criteria and Standards specifically states that the Service Category must include “*...advising, mentoring, and participating in activities to enhance student success that are not subsumed in teaching or the primary academic assignment*”, and

**Whereas:** Some lecturer faculty may assume advising responsibilities as part of their work assignment, which counts as service to the university in periodic evaluations and range elevation; therefore, be it

**Resolved:** That the administration of San José State University prioritize making demonstrable changes to the advising structure based on the recommendations from the 2019 and 2024 NACADA reports and from current publications; and therefore, be it

**Resolved,** That University Policy 89-10 be rescinded and replaced with the following.

**Background/Rationale:** The campus has had two visits from NACADA, one in 2019 and one in 2023, that evaluated the advising structure on campus. These visits resulted in two detailed reports that discussed advising from the perspectives of the students, faculty, staff, and administration. Each report also provided specific recommendations to improve advising across the campus. The SJSU Academic Senate responded in 2021 to the first NACADA report and passed AS 1818: Undergraduate Advising, along with SS-S21-7: Advocating for a Collaborative Advising Structure. Then President Papazian sent S21-4 back to Instruction and Student Affairs without signing it, for further consultation with a more robust inclusion of students and staff advisors. Instructional and Student Affairs, recognizing the importance of the policy for the campus, has returned to the policy, making significant improvements to its content based on additional consultation and feedback across campus, as well as the 2024

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<sup>3</sup> [SJSU Academic Advising Vision, Mission, and Values 2019](#)

NACADA report. Most notable, the policy was restructured to include both undergraduate and graduate advising across campus.

# University Policy

## Student Advising and Holistic Student Support Services

### I. Tenets of Advising

San Jose State University shall be a student-ready<sup>4</sup> campus and provide excellent advising and holistic support for students throughout their educational journey.

SJSU shall have a comprehensive advising structure that is consistent and equitable for all students. A clear definition of advising and holistic student support services, as well as mission, vision, and values statements will be developed and be readily available to everyone within the SJSU community.

All forms of advising and holistic student support services shall occur in a supportive manner which is sensitive to the needs of a diverse student population.

All students should be active agents in constructing and achieving their academic, career, and personal goals.

“Academic advising should be *systemic* (throughout the university), *systematic* (all parts function methodically and seamlessly to promote the whole) and *purposeful* (missional and intentional) to meet institutional strategic goals.”

Advising at SJSU encompasses a wide range of services to support students. Such services include: Academic Advising, Career Advising, and Holistic Student Support Services.

The coordination, delivery, and assessment of advising shall be a shared responsibility of the SJSU advising community and university administration, which includes faculty, staff, and appropriate administrators at the university, college, and department levels.

Positive, collaborative relationships must be maintained among all members of the advising community. Communication is a critical component of such relationships. Such communications should ensure all members of the advising community are aware of the complete advising structure, goals, objectives, training and professional development opportunities, and opportunities for engagement.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.csustudentsuccess.net/2023/04/21/creating-a-student-ready-institution-for-first-generation-college-students/> and <https://www.aacu.org/publication/becoming-a-student-ready-college-a-new-culture-of-leadership-for-student-success>

University resources, including both financial resources and appropriate staffing hours, that support advising goals and objectives should be a priority and appropriate to the work required.

All advisors within the SJSU advising community shall act as a source of referral to other forms of advising and holistic student support services as needed.

SJSU will require comprehensive on-boarding/training appropriate to each advisor's or staff's role that focuses on the quality of advising and leads to positive outcomes for students' educational journeys for all incoming advisors and support staff. Comparable continuous professional development programs will also be required for those within the comprehensive advising structure. Such programs, while focusing on the responsibilities of the person's role, will also ensure that they are up-to-date on current advising standards, have training and development opportunities to engage with those outside the SJSU community, have awareness of the roles of others in the SJSU advising community, and the referral system as well as promoting a collaborative mindset.

SJSU will develop an assessment program that evaluates the quality, effectiveness, and availability of advising and support services to all student populations at various stages of their academic career. Student satisfaction will be a significant component of this assessment program.

Online and special session programs may have their own advising structures and access to support services that are unique to their program. Students should consult with their programs to determine which advising and services apply based on their program and standing.

## II. Support Services for All Students

**Career Advising.** Career advising is defined as professional guidance for students to prepare for career success through personal and professional explorations and skill development. It further includes connections to employers and professional networks that align with the career objectives of the student.

Career advising should be supported at the university level and conducted by professional career center counselors, advisors, and faculty. Career advising should be connected to college and department-level activities with support from the career center, as faculty play a critical role in career mentoring and exploration, and as recognized student organizations sponsor activities that lead to interactions with industry partners.

**Holistic Student Support Services.** Holistic student support services provide for the student beyond their academics, including health and wellness, basic needs, financial support services, and programs that support various social and

cultural identity groups. Holistic student advising requires comprehensive knowledge of the many offices and programs that provide holistic support, including, but not limited to: SJSU Cares; Student Wellness Center; Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS); Accessible Education Center (AEC); Peer Connections; Education Opportunity Program (EOP); Bursar's Office; Financial Aid Office; Cultural Centers and other Resource Centers.

Members of the SJSU advising community should be capable of providing appropriate referrals to a variety of offices based on student needs.

### III. Undergraduate Academic Advising

**Major/minor Advising.** Major and minor advising is defined as the utilization of program information and advising tools in partnership with student information to design a pathway to completion of their academic program(s).

Major and minor advising should be governed by curriculum and policies as described in the university catalog. Major and minor curriculum is developed by the faculty and is department-driven. Advising may be formal or informal and shall be conducted by staff advisors and/or faculty.

**General Education Advising.** General Education advising is defined as the utilization of General Education and SJSU Studies guidelines to assist students in identifying coursework that satisfies these requirements. Such guidance requires specialized knowledge for select programs that have General Education requirements met within the major.

General Education advising should be primarily staff advisor-driven, with appropriate consultation with departments, at the college level in the student success centers.

### IV. Graduate Academic Advising and Research Advising

Effective academic advising is an important aspect of all successful graduate degree and credential programs. While graduate students should receive strong advising at all stages of their educational career, their advising needs vary as they progress through their programs.

There are two types of advisors that the majority of graduate programs utilize: Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Research Advisor. Departments may have additional faculty or staff advisors. Students should consult with their department to identify the program's specific advising structure for graduate students.

**Graduate Program Coordinator.** The Graduate Program Coordinator (also sometimes called a Graduate Advisor or Graduate Director) is the primary point

of contact for graduate students at the program level and serves as a liaison between programs/departments and the College of Graduate Studies. While the specific responsibilities of Graduate Program Coordinators vary across programs, they are generally responsible for supporting academic student success, assisting students in making timely progress towards degree, overseeing comprehensive examinations, and advising students on degree requirements and policies and procedures at the program, college, and university levels. Further, Graduate Program Coordinators formally approve students' candidacy forms, assist with student petitions and forms, and assist students who are placed on academic notice or probation, and refer students to other support services on campus when needed.

**Graduate Research Advisor.** The Graduate Research Advisor is responsible for overseeing a student's research, scholarly, and creative activity as it most often relates to the student's culminating experience (e.g., thesis, project, and/or dissertation). The Graduate Research Advisor almost always serves as a student's thesis chair or project advisor. Because of their close academic relationship to the student, Graduate Research Advisors often advise students on issues specific to their program of study, such as course selection and career pathways.

Approved: April 29, 2024

Vote: 14-0-0

Present: Samuel Brown, Diya Doshi, Lisa Giampaolo, Estevan Guzman, Ravisha Mathur, Kelly Masegian, Gilles Muller, Sarab Multani, Iris Price, Eric Rollerson, Soma Sen, Jon Tucker, Julian Vogel, Gregory Wolcott

Absent: Melinda Jackson (non-voting), Amy Leisenring (non-voting), Romey Sabalius, Laura Sullivan-Green