Causing a Quiet Riot: MSU’s Transformation of Student Academic Advising

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History of Advising at MSU

- All freshmen and sophomores are advised by the Undergraduate University Division (UUD), representing 16,000+ students. Approximately 35,000 undergraduate students in total.

- A folder was kept for each student containing information such as grade reports, academic progress plans, and various ‘notes’.

- The folder did not contain all needed information when advising. Advisors had to access several systems, along with the folder, to have the complete student academic picture.

- UUD advisers are located across several advising centers across campus. Students can request advising at any location; however, the student’s folder was housed in the center nearest his/her residence hall.
History of Advising at MSU
(cont’d)

• Upon admission to upper school, the student’s folder was sent to the college, e.g. Arts & Letters.

• If a student changed majors, the folder was often given to the student to walk it to the new college.

• If a student wanted to explore a new major, the consulting adviser did not typically have access to the student’s folder or other systems and, therefore, did not have a complete picture of the student’s academic history.

• Students could “shop” around campus for different answers.

• Advisers were not always aware of what another adviser may have discussed with a student.
The Riot Begins: The Launch of ESAF

• In May, 2005, the Office of the Registrar (RO) began working on a new system, after discussion with UUD, leveraging the technology from several successful web applications.

• Numerous colleges, including the Directors of Undergraduate Student Affairs from several large colleges, were involved in defining system specifications, as well as testing of the system.

• By August 2005, the Electronic Student Academic Folder (ESAF) was launched with immediate success across campus.

• Several Colleges chose to implement the system fully in Fall 2005 and ‘go paperless’.

• Several demonstrations and ‘hands-on’ computer lab sessions were held, often to capacity crowds.

• In the first month:
  ▪ 6,500 “folder” views
  ▪ 148 different users logged in representing every college and major academic unit at the university
  ▪ 3,500 notes saved
The RO Website

Home to...
• Academic Calendar
• Academic Programs
• Descriptions of Courses
• Instructor Systems
  – class lists, grades, etc
• Schedule of Courses
• Various Online Administrative and Academic Forms
• Student Information Generator

So? Advisors were familiar with our systems...
Welcome to the ESAF

- Authorized users login with MSU NetID and password.
- Access granted by the College Security Administrator in a secure online application.
- Access changes take immediate effect.
- Student record access limited by college and department (and sometimes major) registered in security system.
Don’t Forget FERPA!

First, a reminder of the responsibilities that come with accessing student data: a link to MSU’s FERPA and privacy guidelines page.
ESAF Guide

Guide drafted by an Advisory Committee of several key advisers from across campus.

The Guide includes:

- The Goal of the ESAF
- Note-Taking Guidelines
- When/How to Use the Note Feature
- Student Authorized Access Explanation
- Note Type Glossary
What Can I Access?

- Authorized users can view system access at any time.
- Student ID Image Policy for review.
Student Authorized Access

- Advisers can access the folder of a student not affiliated with the college, department, or major of which they have security access by providing several identifying points of data.

- The advisers must have the student’s permission.

- Access to the folder is logged and only available for the current advising session.

Student Academic Folder - Student Authorized Access

About Student Authorized Access

Accessing a student's academic folder through this method should ONLY be used if a student is not in your system access and is sitting in front of you requesting an advising session.

If a student does not wish to give you the requested information below, you will not be able to access the student record.

Each and every attempt to access a student's academic folder through this method is recorded and logged for security and audit purposes.

I HAVE THE STUDENT'S APPROVAL TO ACCESS HIS/HER ACADEMIC FOLDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student First Name</th>
<th>Student Last Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PID</th>
<th>Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Find a Folder
Search by Student Name or Number

To view a student academic folder, enter the PID or Student Name in the boxes below and click on the search button. Search results are limited to your system access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search by PID (Student Number)</th>
<th>Search by Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Search

Not Found...

Searched SRINFO database for
First Name: spar
Last Name: xxx

Either the student was not found or the student is not within your access level.
If you believe the student you searched for is valid within your access level, but the student has not been active within the last two years, please use the Restore a Folder function to view the student's information.

More than one match...

More than one student matched your search criteria. Please select a student to continue.

- Student0, Sparty (A12345670)*
- Student1, Sparty (A12345671)*
- Student2, Sparty (A12345672)*
- Student, Sparty (A12345678)

* Indicates only an application was found - no enrollment records
Sparty Student’s Folder

Student Summary Information
(as defined by advisers)

- Academic information for most recently enrolled term
- ID Image
- “Hot” link to email address

Folder “Tabs”

- Notes
- Academic Progress Plans
- Confidential Messages
- Student Report
- Application Data Sheet
- Course Listing
- Credits & GPA Summary
- Degree Reports
- Other Academic Forms
- Archived Images
Each note must have at least one category or ‘type’ identified.

Note types and definitions were developed by the advisory committee.

Student can be ‘copied’ on the note – keeps student ‘in the loop’.

Advisers can include his/her ‘signature’ in the copy to the student.

Permanent Note - submits note to the student folder.

Prep Note – most often used by advisers to prepare for appointments. Prep notes are temporary and only visible to the ‘creating’ adviser.

Temp Notes – most often used by advisers when dealing with a sensitive situation. Temp notes are temporary and only visible to the advisers in the ‘creating’ college.
Permanent notes and Temporary notes within the adviser’s college are displayed in reverse chronological order.

The student’s level, class, and major at the time of the note submission is saved.

Links to the student’s copy are provided, if appropriate.

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**Student Notes**

### 6/23/2006 2:58:30 PM  Jane Spartan, Broad College of Business
**Enrollment Conference, Major Exploration**
Student discussed interest in Finance.
Suggested Sparty begin taking core business courses and to explore interest further at the business fair.
_Copy sent to Student_  
UN 3 1267—Finance

### 11/17/2005 10:33:13 AM  MSU Counselor, Undergraduate University Division
**Degree Check, Professional/Graduate School**
Student considering law school. Student has three letters of recommendation but hasn’t taken LSAT.
_Copy sent to Student_  
UN 2 5151—No Preference

### 9/6/2005 9:33:09 AM  Sparty Counselor, Undergraduate University Division
**Study Abroad**
Student interested in study abroad program in Germany.
_Copy sent to Student_  
UN 1 5151—No Preference
Academic Progress Plans

• The Academic Progress Plan (APP) was added in January 2006 – just prior to annual enrollment.

• The APP allows advisers to store recommended course work.

• Student copy can be reviewed at any time by student – useful during annual enrollment.

• Future enrollment from student information system, if found, preloaded into form.
Warning!

F806 FRN 330 001 3 - no seats left in the section.
F806 MTH 126 003 3 - no seats left in the section.
F806 STT 315 021 3 - no seats left in the section.
S807 ITM 309 007 3 - no seats left in the section.
S807 MSC 317 012 3 - no seats left in the section.

Go back to APP  Ignore Warning and Submit APP to Folder

- Valid course and seat count checks.
- Adviser can override warning.

- After submission, Adviser can access a ‘print friendly’ version of the form.

- During AOP (Academic Orientation Programs), APPs can be sent to enrollment lab printers.
### Academic Progress Plans

#### FS06

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Courses</th>
<th>Alternative Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EC 340 003 3</td>
<td>EC341 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC 311 002 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRN 336 001 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITM 202 002 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTH 126 003 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STT 315 021 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 15-16

### SS07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Courses</th>
<th>Alternative Courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITM 309 007 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGT 409 006 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSC 247 012 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEC 373 001 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 12

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### Academic Progress Plan - Academic Orientation Program

**Student:** Sparry, Student  
**Major:** 1267-Finance  
**RID:** A12345678

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Courses</th>
<th>Alternative Courses</th>
<th>Progress To Date</th>
<th>STAFF SIGNATURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| EC 340 003 3    | EC341 4             | January 2023     | Jane Spartan,  
Broad College of Business |
| FRN 336 001 3   |                     |                  |                  |
| ITM 202 002 4   |                     |                  |                  |
| MTH 126 003 3   |                     |                  |                  |
| STT 315 021 3   |                     |                  |                  |

Total Credits: 15-16

Comments:

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### Academic Progress Plan - Academic Orientation Program

**Student:** Sparry, Student  
**Major:** 1267-Finance  
**RID:** A12345678

<table>
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<th>Progress To Date</th>
<th>STAFF SIGNATURES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ITM 309 007 2   |                     | January 2023     | Jane Spartan,  
Broad College of Business |
| MGT 409 006 3   |                     |                  |                  |
| MSC 247 012 3   |                     |                  |                  |
| MEC 373 001 3   |                     |                  |                  |

Total Credits: 13

Comments:
Using the Confidential Message Board: A method of sending secure, confidential messages to students.

- Student receives email stating “A Confidential Message is waiting for you.”

- Student logs into a secure application on the RO web site to access message. Students should be comfortable with the RO site.

- Once student accesses the message, the ‘Date Read’ is recorded, allowing the adviser to see that the student has received the message.

- If message not ‘read’, reminder sent one week later.
“Unofficial, Internal Transcript”

Includes:

- Award History
- Major History
- AOP Placement Scores
- Admission Application Data
- Course Listing
Admit Reports & Application Data

- Admit Reports for College, Department, and/or Major can be generated by term and/or specific dates.

- Adviser can ‘click’ on student number in resulting data to open specific student’s Application Data Sheet.
Course Listing

Summary of student courses by subject area.

Details of accepted transfer credit by institution, including pending and accepted credits.
Credits & GPA Summary

Full student history of credits and GPA term-by-term for each student academic level.
• In May 2006, Degree Reports were launched using extracted data from Degree Navigator.

• Advisers can select various reports based on current needs.

• Specific student degree work, e.g. substitutions, must still be done in Degree Navigator.
Other Online RO Systems

• Links to other student specific online Academic Forms.

• Access granted to adviser through student folder.
Archived Images

Certain documents from the Admissions and Registrar’s Office imaging solution are made available in the folder.

Student Academic Folder - Archived Images

Name: Jane Spartan, Broad College of Business

Friday, 6/23/2006

About Archived Images

- The images displayed through this system are made available by the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Admissions & Scholarships in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and MSU's Guidelines Governing Privacy and Release of Student Records.
- The images are for your use only and are not for redistribution.
- The images will always be available to authorized users here. Therefore, it is not necessary to print, save, or copy the images.

I have read, understand, and agree with the above statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sparty Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PID</td>
<td>A12345678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Class</td>
<td>UN 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>1267-Finance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following image(s) were found.

To view an archived image, click on the link. The image will open within a PDF file.

Admissions - College Transcripts (12 pages)
• Advisers can access their saved Prep Notes and APPs through the system main menu.

• Saved preps can be accessed and submitted to folder or deleted.
My Signature

• For use when ‘copying the student’, the adviser can save a ‘signature’ in the system.

• Signature can be plain text or HTML.
• Formerly distributed by the Admission Office, AOP lists can now be generated at any time.

• Additional features include direct student folder access, viewing degree reports, and sending email to students.
Degree Audit

• In 2006, MSU implemented a “results” database, containing Degree Navigator audit results.

• Combining information from the results database and SIS enabled MSU to build an automated degree audit and certification system, now being piloted with one of the colleges for Spring 2007.

• Advisers, at their request, still put the final stamp of approval (conferral decision) on the student’s degree.

• If data attributes stay within guidelines (GPA above the minimum, No In Progress courses fulfilling requirements, etc.), the degree is automatically conferred at the end of the term.

• Advisers can run problem reports, such as a report showing students who did not successfully complete a course, leaving a requirement unfulfilled.
Degree Audit

- Advisers select students to review via a report interface.
- Decisions are entered, with space for comments.
Degree Audit

• It’s a little more complicated than that…
System Statistics

• 550 active users in 23 major academic and administrative units
• 268,000 folders accessed
• 85,000 notes
• 12,000 APPs (since Jan 06)
• 113 signatures
• Copy to student
  – 36,700 notes
  – 6,100 APPs
• 92+% of copies read
Campus Impact

- **Paper**: UUD has gone completely paperless and greatly improved turnaround time in student services at multiple locations across campus.

- **Environment**: The College of Business was able to remove eight 5-drawer file cabinets and completely renovate the Undergraduate Advising Center into a more relaxing, inviting location.

- **Communication**: Communication Arts & Sciences sent all end-of-term warning letters to students via the ESAF’s confidential message board. This not only gave advisers the ability to track message receipt, but the speed in communication gave students more time to work with advisers prior to the next term.

- **Efficiency**: Information can be accessed more easily in the ESAF than in hard-copy folders. Most, if not all, information is in one location. “We can concentrate on more ways to serve students.”
**Campus Impact (cont’d)**

- **Consistency**: The electronic folder ‘follows’ the student throughout his/her academic career, increasing consistency in advising.

- **Awareness**: The ESAF improved FERPA awareness and compliance, bringing further clarity to what constitutes a student’s education record.

- **Even the Toughest Critics**: Many advisers were against going electronic (not as efficient, won’t have everything I need, etc.). However, after many ‘just tried it once’, they never left.

- **Nothing is Perfect**: There have been amazingly only a few complaints: system time out, screen size limitations.

- And of course, additional feature requests…
Future Plans

• Degree Audit…launching in Spring!
• Degree Data Query Builder
• Additional forms, e.g. Probation Conference Worksheet

• Integration with other units and their forms, such as Study Abroad
• Stylized text, spellchecker
• System ‘tweaks’, e.g. being able to ‘copy’ another adviser on a note
• ???
Questions?

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