



Team-Based Advising Model

Vermont State University (VTSU) has created an advising model that takes the best parts of what our campuses have been doing and combines this with best practices in the field of academic advising. In this model, faculty will continue to serve as advisor to students, and students will also be assigned a Student Success Advisor (SSA). The faculty advisor and SSA will work together to provide students with the best possible support.

VTSU will have a Student Success Advising Center at our following locations:

- ✓ Castleton
- ✓ Johnson
- ✓ Lyndon
- ✓ Randolph
- ✓ Williston

Each center will be staffed with enough Student Success Advisors to advise the students who take most of their classes at that location as well as distance learners at our satellite locations around the state and online students. These centers will also house Student Financial Specialists, and Student Success Assistants (who will assist many of the areas in Student Success including advising, academic support, career development, disability services, and international student services). Employees in all locations will be available to assist any VTSU student regardless of the student's location.

We are identifying physical spaces for these centers at each of our five locations. When space permits, we aim to have them located near other student support areas such as academic support services, disability services, international student services, and career development. We are also developing a digital student success advising space for all students to access.

Castleton:

Associate Director of Advising, Svea Howard

Student Success Advisors:

Ashley Haggerty, Becky Eno, Austin Beauregard, Andrew Richardson, Sebastian Lury

Student Financial Specialists:

Joann Austin and Denise Rhodes

Student Success Assistant, Michele Stanley

Johnson:

Associate Director of Advising, Brady Rainville

Student Success Advisors:

Alison Chiarelli, Ryan McClure, Carrie Patterson, Norm Peterson

Student Financial Specialist, Tina Parvin

Student Success Assistant, Cindy Kullmann

Lyndon:

Associate Director of Advising, Kate Gold

Student Success Advisors:

Ben Arsenault, Daniel Haycook

Student Financial Specialist, Stacy Hopkins

Randolph:

Associate Director of Advising, Shelby Day.

Student Success Advisors:

Beth Camp and Mary Cooper

Student Financial Specialist, Marla Tillberg

Williston:

Associate Director of Advising, Shelby Day.

Student Success Advisors:

Patrick Jeffries and Krissy Navrat

A few things to note:

- The starting number of SSA's at each location was based on the 150 students per SSA formula. Locations with higher numbers of SSA's either have a larger number of students OR SSA's at that location will also advise satellite locations and fully online students.
- In addition to standard business hours, we will have evening and weekend advising hours to accommodate the various working, caretaking, learning schedules, and time zones, of VTSU students.
- All appointments with SSA's will be scheduled using Microsoft Bookings. This will help us to track usage patterns (e.g., which days and times are seeing more activity, etc.) and what types of support are most needed so that we can evolve to meet students' needs.

FAQ's

Will VTSU students still be assigned faculty advisors?

Yes. VTSU students will be assigned a faculty advisor according to their area of interest (major). In cases where students have more than one major declared, they will be assigned a faculty advisor for each major. These assignments will be made for new students before their first semester starts.

Will CNX1 instructors be assigned as advisor?

CNX1 instructors will not be assigned as formal advisors. Students will receive a faculty advisor in their major so in some cases the CNX1 instructor may end up being assigned as advisor (if students in the class are also majoring in the area the instructor advises). The CNX1 instructor will be an integral part of the first-year experience and as such, will be an important member of the support team. SSA's will work closely with CNX1 instructors to support first year students.

Who will provide advisor approval for course registration?

Faculty advisors will provide advisor approval. SSA's will not provide this approval unless specifically asked to do so by the faculty advisor.

What will the faculty advisor be responsible for? What will the SSA be responsible for? Will there be overlap?

Please see [Advisor Roles & Responsibilities.docx](#) for an overview of roles and responsibilities.

What is team-based advising?

Team based advising is a holistic advising approach that aims to support students in all aspects of their educational journey. In this model, students receive both a faculty advisor and a professional staff advisor (we are calling these Student Success Advisors (SSA)). This model is informed by the National Academic Advising Association's (NACADA) recommendations and is considered a best practice in the field.

What are the benefits of team-based advising?

This model provides students with an advisor who is an expert in their field of study (Faculty Advisor) and an advisor who is an expert in the personal/social/financial aspects of the university experience (SSA). Together, these advisors will assist students in navigating their educational journey from start through graduation and beyond. Faculty Advisors will continue to provide the important major-specific advisement they have delivered for many years. In addition to assisting advisees with class selection and registration, they will offer guidance around degree planning, applied learning opportunities, networking in their field of study, research, graduate school considerations, and potential career paths. SSA's focus will be on providing proactive outreach and follow up to advisees, management of AVISO alerts, teaching advisees about the various online advising tools, and connecting students with various resources to support their success. Through surveys, workshops, class visits, group meetings, individual meetings, digital resource development and management, and collaboration with faculty advisors and other support staff, SSA's will do everything they can to ensure students feel connected to VTSU, see a

purpose in being here, and feel like they belong. Working together as a team, the Faculty Advisor and SSA will provide students with a comprehensive advising experience.

How will Student Success Advisors be assigned?

SSA's will have areas of specialization but will also be able to advise any student. Specialization areas include international students, undeclared, fully online learners who never come to a physical campus, Veterans, and TRIO students. Because students already have an advisor who is a specialist in the area they are studying (Faculty Advisor), SSA's will not be assigned by major. A benefit to not assigning SSA's by major is that it allows the SSA to work with the student throughout their entire time at VTSU, regardless of any major changes they make.

How many advisees will each Student Success Advisor have?

In general, each SSA will have an average of 150 advisees. Depending on the SSA's specialty, some may have greater than, or fewer than, the established average of 150.

Will current students be assigned a Student Success Advisor?

No. Currently enrolled students will have access to support in the Student Success Advising Center as needed but will not be assigned an SSA. Beginning with our fall 2023 entering class, all VTSU undergraduates will be assigned both a Faculty Advisor and an SSA. The one exception to this is the student population that has part of the NVU Online program. NVU Online students currently have a professional online advisor and have not worked with faculty advisors. To provide these students with continuity of experience, they will continue to work with their current professional advisor in the new model.

Will Graduate Students be assigned a Student Success Advisor?

Graduate students will be assigned a faculty member within their program as Academic Advisor, and an Operations Advisor through the Office of Graduate Studies. Graduate advising will be coordinated through the Office of Graduate Studies.

What will the registration process be for newly admitted first-year students?

- New students will complete a Registration Questionnaire as part of the process of preparing to be registered for classes at VTSU. This questionnaire will ask them to confirm their major(s), identify interest areas (for general education), preferences for learning and instruction (such as time of day and course modality), and more.
- Students will complete the VTSU Online Orientation, designed to introduce them to everything they need to know to successfully transition to VTSU.
- SSA's will use the degree plan for the major, and the student's registration questionnaire responses, to inform the registration conversation and guide class selection with each first-year student. The SSA will consult with faculty if a student is transferring in courses that are in the first semester of the degree plan and it is unclear which courses in the major are the best option for the student to enroll in.
- The SSA will talk with the student about any concerns or worries they identified on the questionnaire, review which supports the student believes they will benefit from, explore what they are excited about/what their hopes and dreams are for their college experience, and

introduce them to our team based advising approach which will include a summary of how the SSA will support them and how the Faculty Advisor will. One of the outcomes of this conversation will be to listen to the student's perceived needs and concerns and help connect them to resources that will address these early on.

- The SSA will review the student's enrollment checklist and guide them through what their next steps are to prepare for the start of the semester. SSA's will be available to assist new students throughout the summer months on an as-need basis after their meeting.

What will the registration process be for newly admitted transfer students?

- Transcripts will be evaluated by the Registrar's Office and courses that equate with VTSU requirements will be coded as such (for example, general education or introductory major courses).
- If there are courses on the transcript that could fit into the major they are transferring into at VTSU, but are not obviously the same courses as ours, the evaluator will reach out to the faculty to get assistance in how to equate the credits. Credits will be coded accordingly.
- The student will receive correspondence from the Registrar's Office when the transfer evaluation is complete, including a summary of the evaluation.
- A Student Success Advisor (SSA) will meet with the student, review the program evaluation, and confirm the student believes we have applied all transferred credits to the appropriate categories. If they believe some of their transferred credits should be applied in a way they have not, the SSA will confer with Registrar's Office and/or faculty to determine if the course(s) can be equated with specific requirement. If the faculty wishes, we will connect the student with them for a conversation.
- The transfer student will be registered by the SSA using the degree plan for the major, and the program evaluation, as a guide. If there is any question about which coursework the student should take in the major, the SSA will reach out to the faculty.
- The SSA will discuss any concerns the student has and identify which supports they believe they will benefit from, review what they are excited about/what their hopes and dreams are for their college experience and be introduced to the team-based advising approach which will include a summary of how the SSA will support them and how the Faculty Advisor will.
- The SSA will review the student's enrollment checklist and guide them through what their next steps are to prepare for the start of the semester. SSA's will be available to assist new students throughout the summer months on an as-need basis after their meeting.

Note: We recognize that these are new academic programs, and it will take SSA's some time to become fluent in them. SSA's will consult extensively with faculty about the new programs, especially in the first years of VTSU.

What was the discovery process that led to the team-based advising model for VTSU?

In the beginning stages of transformation, a team was formed with the goal of developing an advising model for VTSU. Team members included:

Name	Prior to VTSU College/University	Current Role
Kelley Beckwith	Castleton	VP of Student Success
Nora Beltz	NVU-Johnson	Health Science Faculty
Shelby Day	VTC	Associate Director of Advising
Gillan Galle	Castleton	Mathematics Faculty & Dean of several schools
Robin Goodall	VTC	Interim Director, Center for Academic Success, and Trio Program Coordinator of Disability Services
Elaine Harvey	NVU	Director of Student Engagement & Persistence
Sara Kinerson	NVU	AVP of Advising & Career Development
Meaghan Meachem	NVU-Lyndon	Broadcast Journalism Faculty
Margaret Miles	Castleton	Social Work Faculty
Carolyn Stannard-Carlo	VTC	Nursing Faculty
Ted Thorndike	NVU-Online	NVU Online Operations Manager/Advising Coordinator

During the discovery process, this team:

- Researched and reviewed best practices in academic advising.
- Examined the most effective models of advising.
- Reviewed student input where it existed (advising surveys, student feedback surveys).
- Brought expert consultants from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) to our campuses to complete an audit of our current advising practices. They met with faculty, staff, and students at our institutions (Castleton, Johnson, Lyndon, VTC) and gathered feedback, learned about our processes, and then provided us with a report with observations and recommendations.
- Gathered student feedback via several meetings with the student transition team.
- Gathered faculty feedback via open meetings.
- Gathered feedback from all community members via campus and VTSU presentations.

Was the Faculty Federation consulted about the pieces of the team-based advising model that are governed by the contract?

Yes. The Faculty Federation was consulted, and their input was incorporated into the new model.

Do you have questions that were not addressed here?

Please let us know! You can submit questions [here](#) or email Sara Kinerson, VTSU AVP of Advising & Career Development, at Sara.Kinerson@northernvermont.edu