First Year Advising and a Liberal Arts Education

Dr. Vickie Folse
Associate Professor
First Year Advising Coordinator
First Year Advising (FYA)

- Facilitate students’ transition from high school to college
- Integrate each student into the IWU community
Role of First Year Advisors

- Assist first year students with academic decisions
- Provide GUIDANCE in selection of course
- Monitor anxiety about registration process
- Promote reasonable balance of work
- Encourage strategic planning for cohesive academic plan
- Facilitate assistance with academic difficulty
- Direct access to resources (e.g., psychological difficulty, career counseling, writing skills)
Promoting FY Transitions

- Academic environment
  - Rigor of IWU
  - First B or C
  - Dropping a course/ Incompletes
- Living environment
  - Being away from home
  - Establishing/redefining relationships
  - Self-regulation
    - Studying
    - Sleeping
    - Extracurricular
    - Social Networks/Texting
First Year Advisor

- Interface with Gateway instructor
- Academic focus is on liberal arts foundation (general education credits)
- Follows template for recommended course of study for first three semesters of each major
- Select majors assigned mentors/liaisons (Nursing, Music, Accounting)
First Year Advising

- Builds a relationship between student and advisor and among Gateway classmates
- Encourages resourcefulness/flexibility
- Facilitates exploration of new intellectual interests and cohesive plan of study
  - Breadth of liberal arts foundation
  - Study abroad
  - May Term options
  - Addition of Minors/Change of Major
Advising

- Participating in formal advising sessions/informal meetings
- Monitoring academic progress
- Ongoing conversation about successes and problems (First exam/Midterm/Finals)

Maximizing University Resources

- Tutors/Study Sessions
- Career Center
- Writing Center
- Counseling and Consultation Services
- Dean of Students
- Office of Multicultural Student Affairs
- Academic Advising Center
Role of Parents

- Communicate with your college student
- Allow uncertainty
- Redirect concerns to FYA
- Respect role of FYA
  - Issues of confidentiality
    - Academic progress
    - Personal turmoil
- Support goals of liberal arts education
Core Values of a Liberal Arts Education

- Expanding horizons
- Building understanding of the wider world
- Developing analytical and communication skills
- Fostering responsibilities beyond self
Liberal Education Defined

“Non-vocational” corresponding to the “non-marketable” part of the curriculum

A set of aims and outcomes that are essential both for a globally engaged democracy and for a dynamic, innovation-fueled economy

Achieved through studies in arts and sciences disciplines
Liberally educated students are curious about new intellectual questions, open to alternative ways of viewing a situation or problem, disciplined to follow intellectual methods to conclusions, capable of accepting criticism from others, tolerant of ambiguity, and respectful of others with different views. They understand and accept imperative of academic honesty. Personal development is a very real part of intellectual development.”

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Board of Directors’ Statement on Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility
General Education Program at Illinois Wesleyan University

General Education at IWU strives to provide a foundation for a liberal education of quality and breadth through a continuously evolving program which fosters intellectual independence, critical thinking, imagination, social awareness, and sensitivity to others. These qualities of mind and character are developed through a coordinated academic and co-curricular program of active learning, problem solving, collaborative inquiry, and community involvement.
A liberal education at IWU fosters **creativity, critical thinking, effective communication, strength of character** and a **spirit of inquiry**; it deepens the specialized knowledge of a discipline with a comprehensive world view. It affords the greatest possibilities for realizing **individual potential** while preparing students for **democratic citizenship and life in a global society**. (IWU) helps students to follow a wide range of career paths, offering diverse curricula in the liberal arts, fine arts and professional programs as well as opportunities for **interdisciplinary study and off-campus learning**. The University through its policies, programs and practices is committed to diversity, social justice and environmental sustainability…
IWU Distinctive Curricula and Programs

The University includes

- A liberal arts college with 17 departments
- A fine arts college with 3 schools: School of Art, School of Music, and School of Theater Arts
- A School of Nursing
General Education Requirements

Gateway Colloquium
Analysis of Values
The Arts
Contemporary Social Institutions
Cultural and Social Change
Formal Reasoning
Intellectual Traditions
Literature
The Natural Sciences (2): LSI, LSL, PSI, PSL;
Second Language (third-semester level)
Physical Education
Encountering Global Diversity Flag
Encountering US Diversity Flag
Writing Intensive Flags (2), at least one in the major
Gen Ed Graduation Requirements

All students must complete a program of general education. The general education program of the College of Liberal Arts sets the standard for the University.

There are variations in the general education requirements for the professional schools and for the education certification program within the College of Liberal Arts.
Select General Education Policies

- A course may count for both a General Education or a major or minor requirement, but may not be counted toward both a major and a minor requirement or toward two different majors.
- No general education unit or flag courses may be taken on a Credit/No Credit basis.
- No course unit may be counted toward more than one General Education unit requirement. However, a single course may count for both General Education unit and flag credit.
- No more than 2 General Education unit credits may come from a single department or school, not counting Gateway Colloquia and elementary language courses (101, 102).
- No more than 2 units of “D” work may be counted toward general education credit.
- No activity course in Physical education may be repeated for credit.
Credit Transfer Guidelines

- The Director of General Education, in consultation with the Registrar, evaluates all requests for transfer credit for general education courses and flags. The Registrar processes the AP exam and International Baccalaureate (IB) exam credits.
- Once enrolled at IWU, a student can earn no more than 4 units of General Education credit through a combination of AP exam credits, IB exam credits, and courses transferred from other institutions, except for courses in approved off-campus study programs.
- In order to receive General Education credit for AP exams, the student must have successfully completed the courses associated with the exams and the score on the AP exam must be a 4 or 5. The score on the IB exam must be a 4, 5, 6, or 7.
- A student may not receive transfer credit for GW once he/she has enrolled at IWU.
- In addition to the 4 Gen. Ed. credits a student can earn for AP exams, a student can earn a WI Flag if score is a 4 or 5 on the English language and Comprehensive Exam, the corresponding course was taken and a grade of B or higher was received in the GW course.
Beyond the Classroom

- Major field of study
- Minor field of study
- Independent Study and Honors Research
- The May Term: emphasis on immersion in learning
- Internships
- Off-campus study: Urban Studies, United Nations Semester, Washington Semester
- Study Abroad: Affiliated study abroad programs: Arcadia University, Australearn, Butler University, Central College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, College Year in Athens, Pembroke College at Oxford, IWU Madrid and London Programs, The Art School of Florence...
Contact Information

Dr. Vickie Folse
Illinois Wesleyan University
P.O. Box 2900
Bloomington, IL 61702
vfolse@iwu.edu