

SAC Department ADVISING FAQs

1. **How do I know who my advisor is?** You can look this up on MYUSI. Select the “Self-Service Tab” and then select “Student Information.” If no advisor is listed, you may make your appointment with any department faculty with an appointment sheet on their office door.
2. **Do I have to meet with my advisor before registering for classes?** All freshman and academic probation students (students with a GPA “hold”) must meet with their advisor in order to register. It is strongly recommended, but not required that all students meet with their advisor at least once a year (preferably once per term).
3. **What does an academic advisor do?** In short, your advisor’s main duty is to assist you in reaching your education goals. They help you navigate major, UCC, and USI course requirements, inform you of educational and extra-curricula opportunities, provide information on careers and graduate schools, and help you create and achieve your college goals. An advisor suggests courses of action and plans, but ultimately it is the student’s responsibility to act (or not act) on the advice. Advisors do not dictate elective courses nor do they devise the student’s course schedule.
4. **How do I make an appointment with my advisor?** A week before priority registration, sign up sheets are available on your advisor’s office door. You simply print your name in an open time-slot. Record the appointment date and time on the front of this sheet. It is recommended that you sign up for the same day you are first able to register. In-person sign-up is the best method to get your preferred time. Asking for an appointment over the phone, by email or even in person is not usually possible since your advisor may not have access to the sign up sheet to check what is available. All department advisors are on the 3rd floor of the LA building. If you would like to meet with your advisor at other times during the term, you can simply come to their office during their posted office hours, no appointment necessary. Many students prefer meeting with their advisor throughout the semester rather than during priority registration simply because their advisor can take more time with them.
5. **What should I do to prepare for my advising appointment?** At minimum, you should examine the next term’s course schedule and select courses that you would like to take and fill in the other required fields of the advising form. Remember, you are the one that will be in the courses for 15 weeks, not your advisor, so you have a vested interest in knowing what is available. In addition, you should write down questions that you may have (there is space on the form) so that you remember to ask them during your appointment. You should also think about possible careers/graduation plans and the related skills you need to succeed. Finally, any special issues or problems you may be experiencing at USI can be discussed with your advisor. The more you prepare and think about your own goals, the more productive your relationship with your advisor will be.
6. **Do I have to register during priority registration, or can I wait?** It is in your best interest to register as early as you can. Many of our classes close very quickly. Waiting to register increases the likelihood that you will not get the classes you need and/or want. Payment for classes is not due at the time of (early) registration, and students can alter their schedules after priority registration. Therefore, waiting to register only hurts you and may result in delayed graduation. Please remember, the SAC department maintains policy of adhering to course enrollment limits.
7. **I’m getting errors when registering/I have holds on my account--what should I do?** The most typical error when registering is “TEST SCORES/PRE-REQ.” This simply means you do not have the necessary pre-requisites for the class. You can check the requirements for the class by clicking on the course title in MYUSI, or in the USI Bulletin. If you feel you are getting this message by mistake, you need to contact your advisor and/or the department chair by email. Include your name, student ID#, course(s) and briefly explain the problem. We can usually take care of it that same day (if during normal business hours). Holds need to be “lifted” by the department/agency that placed them. The department can only lift freshmen and GPA holds. Other holds, such as financial aid and the bursar’s office require you to contact the appropriate office.

Remember, your advisor is here to help you achieve your education goals, but ultimately they are your goals. Students who take advantage of regular academic advising generally report having a more positive college experience and are more likely to graduate in a timely manner. Be sure you take advantage of all USI and the SAC department has to offer by preparing and meeting with your advisor.