

ADVISING CENTER

McMullen Hall First Floor West, (406) 657-2240
City College, Room A017, (406) 247-3019

The Advising Center assists students in understanding academic requirements, enabling them to complete their program requirements as efficiently as possible. Through one-on-one meetings, advisors help students develop the skills necessary to be successful in their major(s).

New Students will receive information regarding General Education requirements, navigate their DegreeWorks account, and learn about program requirements related to their major(s) and minor (if applicable). Students who have not yet selected a major will be advised to begin working on General Education requirements. Transfer and returning students will have evaluations completed and plans of study developed.

Depending on students' programs, they will be assigned to a faculty "major advisor" for planning and mentoring of upper-division coursework while retaining their Advising Center advisor in a "secondary advisor" capacity.

Mandatory Advising

All first-time entering students at MSU Billings are required to see an academic advisor before registering for classes. During the initial advising session, students will receive information regarding General Education requirements and program requirements for their major and minor.

Students who plan to develop a graduation guarantee must contact the Advising Center and complete this agreement prior to the first semester of attendance.

Students are ultimately responsible for meeting graduation requirements, but advisors assist students with selection of courses, academic plans, and academic and career related questions.

General Studies Students

Students who have not selected a major are registered as General Studies majors. In an effort to assist students in completing degree requirements as efficiently as possible, General Studies students are encouraged to focus on General Education requirements their first semester. Students are also encouraged to visit Career & Employment Services (<https://www.msubitings.edu/careers/>) to explore career interests and to clarify how their academic program may support their career goals.

Transfer Students

Students transferring to MSU Billings are required to apply for admission and submit official transcripts of all post-secondary institutions attended. Once these documents are submitted, Registrar Office staff and advisors will be able to complete a transcript evaluation. The transcript evaluation will reflect how prior credits will apply to the degree/program the student is considering at MSU Billings. In order to give an accurate transcript evaluation, transfer students should provide copies of transcripts of all previous college level work.

Declaring a Major

Students are encouraged to select and declare a major during their Freshman year. Students should contact the Advising Center to declare their major. The student will see their advisor to review the requirements for the major selected and receive an updated major/degree work sheet and information on when they will be transferred to a faculty advisor in their selected major.

Changing a Major

Students complete the change of major form with an advisor in the Advising Center.

The academic advisor will clarify new program requirements, update the student's DegreeWorks account and/or advising file with new program worksheets, and let the student know when they will be transferred to a faculty advisor. The changing of an academic major may have significant impacts on a student's long-range academic plan and graduation date. All students are encouraged to keep in close contact with their advisor through the process of changing majors.

Pre-Nursing Students (MSU Bozeman BSN)

MSU Billings has developed a very close relationship with the MSU Bozeman Nursing Program which enables students to complete pre-nursing requirements as MSU Billings students and then transfer into the MSU Bozeman program which is offered on the Billings campus. The Advising Center provides advising services through the first two years of the program and provides guidance for making application to upper-division courses.

Pre-Professional Majors

Students planning to transfer to another college or university to complete a program not available at MSU Billings may choose to enroll in a pre-professional program. There are several important steps to take in order to coordinate a pre-professional program with the school to which one is going to transfer:

1. Acquire a degree worksheet or catalog information from the school to which one is going to transfer
2. Take General Education courses which match requirements of the transfer school
3. Select other equivalent courses which will meet transfer school requirements and/or prerequisites

Many of the pre-professional programs at MSU Billings have been designed to prepare students to transfer to professional programs offered at other Montana University System units. Programs may be developed to meet the prerequisites for other pre-professional programs.

Graduate Student Advising

Academic advising for graduate students is provided by faculty advisors in the College of the student's graduate program. Initial advising is provided through the Office of Graduate Studies with subsequent assignment to a permanent faculty advisor. The faculty advisor assists the student with the development of a plan of study and guidance in completing the requirements for the chosen degree program.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Office of Graduate Studies, (406) 657-2238.

Graduation Guarantee

MSU Billings has created a Graduation Guarantee for Undergraduates which students may utilize as they begin study. The Guarantee includes a set of conditions that the student needs to fulfill as well as the University; the Guarantee itself is signed by the student as well as the advisor. If the student fulfills his/her conditions and the University fails to do so, postponing graduating, the student may appeal to the Academic Standards and Scholastic Standing Committee prior to the beginning of classes for the last term of the signed Guarantee. If the Committee finds the University at fault, appropriate actions will include waiving course requirements, waiving tuition and fees, or a combination of the two.

Copies of this Guarantee are available from the Advising Center. Students are urged to examine this Guarantee to see if it will assist them in facilitating their completion

of requirements and graduation. Advisors in the Center can explain the Guarantee and prepare appropriate plans of study for students.

Assessment Testing

Students who have been out of high school three years or longer and have not completed their General Education requirements in English or mathematics may be encouraged to utilize assessment options (Accuplacer, EdReady, submit a writing assessment etc). Results of these placement assessments, along with ACT and/or SAT scores (if available), and high school transcripts are used to advise students into the most appropriate math and English courses. Students who have completed a HiSet or other high school equivalency credential must take EdReady and the writing assessment for placement. For further information, contact the Advising Center at (406) 657-2240 or Jacket Student Central at (406) 247-3019.