Work with your academic advisor to:
Start on Track and Stay on Track to Graduate

Who is my advisor?

I’m struggling in a class, who can help me?

WHICH MAJOR AND CAREER IS BEST FOR ME?

When will I graduate?

Turn to the University Advising Center to get answers to these and many more questions. We’ll support you and help you to explore your academic and career options. We know life happens and can bring road blocks. We’ll help you sort out what’s important and we’ll be your bridge to other campus resources. We’ll connect you with faculty advisors, and help you utilize all the best success strategies to maximize your college experience.

What responsibilities do you have in the advising relationship? When you meet with an academic advisor, be ready to talk about your academic goals and to develop an action plan for any problems you are experiencing or decisions that need to be made. Come prepared to your advising session by exploring the university website to learn about your academic options, reading your degree audit in advance and bringing it with you to your advising session. Use the checklist below to jumpstart a great advising discussion.

- Explore major and minor interests
- Discuss academic and career goals
- Identify a target graduation date and assess your academic plan
- Discuss time management and outside responsibilities, such as work and family obligations
- Evaluate English and math placement results
- Assess academic strengths and areas of concern
- Learn about extracurricular and co-curricular opportunities
- Discuss tutoring resources
- Review degree progress report, grades, and academic performance
- Review transfer credit and address any outstanding credit issues
- Help with the transition from high school to college
- Connect with a career specialist and sign up for Focus2, a self-guided career assessment inventory
- Connect with a faculty advisor and explore research opportunities
- Discuss study abroad/National Student Exchange
TAKE ACTION: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

1. **Schedule and keep regular appointments with your academic advisor.** All students should receive advising prior to class registration for each upcoming semester. Advising is a partnership in which we are here to help you explore your options and imagine a larger meaning in your life. Once you have a major, there are faculty advisors in your major department who are prepared to meet with you one-on-one to discuss your current college plans and future career.

2. **Use your Degree Progress Report.** This is a report which lists all your degree requirements and tracks your academic progress. Bring it with you to every advising session. Your advisor will answer your questions and help you to develop an academic plan.

3. **Develop good time management skills.** Studying properly and practicing good time management are vital for success in college.
   - Begin by setting daily, weekly, and monthly goals for each of your classes. Use a planner and assign adequate study time to ensure that your goals will be accomplished. In general, two to three hours of study time is needed for every hour spent in class per week. Therefore, a student enrolled in 15 credit hours will need at least 30 to 45 hours per week for studying. Make your goals positive, specific, and realistic in regards to your workload.
   - If you’re attending classes full-time (12+ credits), try not to work more than 20 hours a week. Most people begin a downhill slide when they work over 20 hours.
   - Look for a job on campus to minimize commuting time and to develop a stronger support network.
   - Plan to study at times when you feel most alert and study challenging courses first while you’re fresh and concentration is at its peak.
   - Strive for balance. When possible, try to mix the types of classes you take each semester.
   - Make use of spare moments. The time spent between classes, waiting for the train, or before dinner can be used for study or review. Reading index cards with key terms, formulas, definitions, or facts are a great way to use spare moments.

4. **Know important dates and make informed decisions.** For example, do you know,
   - When is the deadline to drop a class without having to pay for it?
   - When is the last day you can withdraw from a class or declare it pass-fail?
   - When can you register for your next semester?
   - These are things you’ll need to know each semester. Talk to us before making these decisions.

5. **Pay attention to how your worldview is developing.** Is college changing your values, interests, or priorities? How so? Make thoughtful, deliberate choices about what to study. Take an increasingly active role in your own development of self and ownership of academic progress and goals.

6. **Build a support network.** Students who study together stay more motivated and study more efficiently. Why study alone when together is faster and more productive? Plus, you can make friends in the process!

7. **Strengthen your skills: Knowing what your strengths and weaknesses are is essential to progress in your coursework.** Being good at writing is vital, and seeking help from the Academic Support Department is a top priority. They offer subject tutoring, and workshops on time management, writing improvement, and how to make oral presentations.

8. **Build relationships with professors.** Meet your instructors outside of class. Each professor will have a different teaching style, so you may need to adjust your learning style. Check your course syllabi for their office hours and expectations of your work. Students who network with instructors outside of class are more likely to earn higher grades and to enjoy their college experience.

9. **Recognize when you need help: While academic life can be extremely rewarding, it can also be challenging and stressful.** Personal problems can sometimes create havoc in your life. Seek help. Academic advisors, professors, and counselors from the Counseling Center care a great deal about your well-being. Turn to them when you feel overwhelmed. At UMass Boston we care about your welfare as much as your academic success; so don’t hesitate to come for help!

10. **Develop a graduation timeline.** If you are attending classes full-time, realize that you will need to earn 30 credits each year in order to graduate in four years. It’s perfectly okay if you need to attend part-time, but be methodical about your graduation plan and decide how you will fulfill your degree requirements. Work carefully with an advisor to set and reach yearly goals.