

ABSTRACT

GREEN, BYRON ANTHONY. The Perceived Importance and Satisfaction with Characteristics of Faculty Advisers and Athletic Academic Coordinators by both Student non-Athletes and Student-Athletes. (Under the direction of Dr. Jacklyn Bruce).

The advising process is vital to any university and the success of its students (Glennen,2003).

Students work with a faculty adviser, who will help them with class selection, general questions about the university, and often issues of counseling and employment. Student athletes, in addition to their faculty adviser, will have an academic coordinator who is focused on their success and NCAA eligibility. Astin's (1984) *Theory of Student Involvement* serves as the theoretical framework for this study. At its core the theory suggests that the more a student is involved in school the higher the level of satisfaction and growth. Cuseo declared that an adviser should serve as a confidante in whom students can look for advice and to help them explore their personal beliefs (2003). Additionally each adviser should possess knowledge about the university. The adviser is also an agent of incorporation bringing the many elements of college life together through questions that make students more aware of their interest, talents, values, and priorities (Cuseo 2003). Cuseo (2003) offers a discussion of the constructs through which the adviser-advisee relationship is explained. The conceptual framework for this study was based on Cuseo (2003). The population of this study was undergraduate students at North Carolina State University. Researchers surveyed all 662 student-athletes and a random sample of 662 student non-athletes with similar descriptors. From this total of 1324 a total of 272 usable surveys were obtained. The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS) was the University of Missouri College of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources Faculty Advising Instrument (CAFNR-FAI) that was developed by Smith and modified by the researcher. Constructs developed by Cuseo helped Smith (2008) group

the items. This grouping was also used in this research. In order to describe the perceived importance of advising characteristics the survey results were explored. These results informed findings about the constructs as a whole, the ratings of individual constructs, and specific adviser characteristics. To examine the constructs as a whole a calculation was made for each representing the student's importance ratings for that construct as a percent of the total possible score. The percentage for every importance construct was greater than 90%. Therefore all constructs were important to students. Students responding to the survey identified that qualities conveyed by the constructs of Availability/Accessibility, Personable/Approachable, Counseling/Mentoring, and Knowledge/Helpfulness were each important aspects of advising; it was important for their advisers to display the qualities and functions, and to have the skills dictated by these overarching constructs. When looking at performance all of the constructs were rated above 85% of the total possible score, which put them in the upper portion of *Satisfactory* or higher. From this, the conclusion can be drawn that students overall are satisfied with the advising experience they are receiving. This directly supports Smith (2008) who found all of the constructs rated at or above the *Satisfactory* level. Hale, Graham, & Johnson (2009) also found that students were satisfied with the advising they were receiving.

The Perceived Importance and Satisfaction with Characteristics of Faculty Advisers and Athletic Academic Coordinators by both Student non-Athletes and Student-Athletes

by
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis and degree to my mother, Felicia Reid, and stepfather, Chavis Reid. To my mother, I cannot express how much I thank you for the support you have provided, and sacrifices you have made, for me to have the things that I have. Mom, you have truly shown me that you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. To my stepfather, I would like to thank you for being a constant positive male role model in my life and allowing me the chance learn from you how to be a man. I hope neither of you are tired, because we have one more to go. I love you both.

BIOGRAPHY

Byron Anthony Green was born in Greensboro, North Carolina. His mother and father encouraged him to participate in as many sports as he could so he has been a part of a sports team since he was three years old. In high school, he began to cheer for the school team along with an all star team in Greensboro. After graduating high school in 2006, he started his collegiate cheering career at North Carolina State University. Though he thought he might go into nutrition upon graduation from his undergraduate program, in his last semester as an undergraduate he took a course taught by Dr. Jacklyn Bruce that changed his future plans. He was accepted into the extension education graduate program in the spring of 2010. Once in the department Dr. Bruce encouraged Byron to explore his interests which led him to begin research on collegiate athletes. He also spent every semester as a teaching assistant and enjoyed working with students and providing an atmosphere that he wished he had when he was an undergraduate. He has plans to continue his education in a PhD program with a focus on the development of the college student.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Introduction.....	1
Organizational Structure of Advising	2
History of Academic Advising	3
Adviser Roles and Responsibilities	5
Athletic Advising.....	7
Institutional Expectations of Advisers	9
Conceptual Framework.....	12
Need for study	14
Statement of the Problem	15
Research objectives	15
Definition of Terms.....	16
Assumptions Limitations of the Study.....	17
Summary	18
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
Introduction.....	20
Theoretical Framework.....	20
Literature Review	21
Summary	28
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	
Research objectives.....	30
Type of research.....	30
Population and sample	31
Research Instrumentation.....	32
Validity of the CAFNR Faculty Advising Instrument.....	33
Reliability of the CAFNR Faculty Advising Instrument	34
Data Collection	34
Data Analysis	35
Summary	35
Chapter Four: FINDINGS	
Population	37
Objective One	37
Objective Two	43
Objective Three	44
Objective Four	50
Chapter Five: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, and RECOMMENDATIONS	
Purpose of the Study	52
Summary of the Literature review and Theoretical Framework.....	52

Summary of Methodology	53
Research Objectives	54
Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Implications	55
Recommendations	65
REFERENCES	69
APPENDICES	76
Appendix A:	
Copy of Emails to be Sent to Potential Participants	76
Appendix B:	
Copy of informed consent	77
Appendix C:	
Copy of Questionnaire	78

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Perceived Importance of the Availability/Accessibility Construct.....	38
Table 2 Perceived Importance of the Knowledge/Helpfulness Construct	40
Table 3 Perceived Importance of the Personable/Approachable Construct.....	41
Table 4 Perceived Importance of the Counseling/Mentoring Construct	42
Table 5 A Comparison by Construct of the Perceived Importance	43
Table 6 A Comparison by Athletic Status of the Advising Needs	44
Table 7 Perceived Performance of the Availability/Accessibility Construct	45
Table 8 Perceived Performance of the Knowledge/Helpfulness Construct.....	47
Table 9 Perceived Performance of the Personable/Approachable Construct	48
Table 10 Perceived Performance of the Counseling/Mentoring Construct	49
Table 11 A Comparison by Construct of the Perceived Performance	50
Table 12 A Comparison by Athletic Status of the Advising Performance	51

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The advising process is vital to any university and the success of its students (Glennen, 2003). Raushi (1993) stated, “quality advising has been shown to impact both the student and the college community in general” (p.5). The Council for the Advancement of Academic Standards (CAS) concluded that academic advising is a critical aspect of higher education for all students (2000). For many, advisers represent the connection between students and the institution. As advisers, faculty members must thoroughly understand the university and its standards to effectively relate to students in one-on-one meetings (Glennen, n.d), and athletic academic advisers are no exception. In addition to understanding university life, they must understand all NCAA rules and regulations regarding academic eligibility.

Students are assigned a faculty adviser, who will help them with class selection, general questions about the university, and often issues of counseling and employment. Student athletes, in addition to their faculty adviser, will have an athletic academic coordinator who is focused on their success and NCAA eligibility. The coordinators keep track of how a student is doing academically, and can suggest help from other university sources. Student athletes at North Carolina State University have more required contact with academic coordinators than with faculty advisers, as they must complete four hours of weekly study hall; the athletic academic coordinator is nearby and available for consultation during study hall and other times. For all students (student athletes and student non-athletes) advisers provide general academic information, details about university life, and opportunities for growth and development: this relationship will contribute to the student’s success during college (Frost, 1991).

Organizational Structure of Advising

The decision about who should advise students is an important one. The organizational structure of advising varies by university, by college, and by department; however Pardee (2000) delineated three basic types of advising organizational structures; centralized, decentralized, and shared. These three were derived from an original seven models identified by Habley and McCaley (1987). The model used for a particular population must coincide with the institutional culture, according to Habley and Morales (1998).

The centralized model is described as a central campus location where professional advisers provide advising to students. All advising takes place at this location. Advisers' success depends on the amount and relevance of information provided to the student. In this model the student is the consumer and the adviser is providing a service; this set-up also emphasizes student evaluation of advisers. Aside from being focused on student satisfaction, additional benefits with this model include the fact that there is a central location for all advising and increased campus visibility. This central location makes the process of finding an adviser easier for students. At North Carolina State University (NCSU), the athletic department runs its academic support program using the centralized model, with staff devoted to student athlete development. All athletic academic advisers are located in one central location where students are required to complete study hours.

In the shared model, all students are assigned a departmental faculty adviser. NCSU generally uses this model; students have a faculty adviser in their department to help them manage their education. Additionally, there is a general campus advising center available to

students, but these advisers are not the adviser of record for students, and are primarily offering supplemental support.

In the last model, decentralized, all advising is performed exclusively by departmental faculty or staff. Students who have not declared a major are assigned to volunteer faculty temporarily. This is the only access to advising.

History of Academic Advising

The idea of academic advising has been present in the university in some form since the inception of the university (Gillispie, 2003). The American university system was based on the system at Cambridge which focused on the overall development of the student with faculty making most decisions (Gillispie, 2003). By the early 1800s, convention had shifted and students were responsible for their own developmental choices (Gillispie, 2003).

In 1870, Charles W. Eliot appointed the first administrator in charge of student discipline and development (Tuttle, 2000). This appointment was the beginning of academic advising as we know it today (Frost, 1991). During this time, faculty members began advising students on the courses for which they should register. It was also at this time that student acceptance of the advising process increased, but students did not feel that they received sufficient adviser input (Frost, 1991). In 1876, Johns Hopkins University created the first system of faculty advisers which was headed by a dean (Grites, 1979). The next school to follow was Harvard in 1889, and in 1940 almost every institution of higher learning had established a system of advising (Grites, 1979). According to Frost (1991) the academic advising profession began to take shape in 1979 when the newly formed National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) acquired a membership of 500 advisers within a year.

Gordon (1992) described academic advising as a “dynamic process that can have a significant impact on both student and institution” (p. 47). Gordon also identified seven skill areas in which advisers must perform; information dissemination, teaching skills, counseling skills, mentoring skills, referral skills, plus monitoring and decision-making skills (1992). He elaborated, “advising skills must be learned and refined on an ongoing basis” (p. 67). If one examines academic advising in greater depth, it becomes clear how students are affected by the advising process (Gordon, 1992). Academic advisers with the skills promoted by Gordon are able to positively affect students, which was corroborated by Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) as well as Habley (2003). According to Harrison (2009), academic advisers must understand the arts and sciences, and help all students adapt to the educational environment: this naturally includes both athletes and student non-athletes.

Given decreased enrollment patterns, plus increased operating costs, universities must address the issue of attrition (Glennen, Farren, & Vowell, 1996). According to the American College Test Service (ACT) nearly one-fourth of undergraduate students do not return to their four-year college or university after their first year (ACT, 2005). To better address the problem of student attrition, faculty must maintain a relationship with them, according to Astin (1984) and Pascarella (1985). Both authors also support the notion that regular interaction with faculty members can favorably impact student motivation and involvement. Astin suggested faculty-student relationships “could be a highly productive activity on most college campuses” (p. 304). When students interact with faculty, they feel more valued (Cox & Orehovec, 2007). Mohr, Eiche, and Sedlacek (1998) found senior students with meaningful relationships with both faculty and advisers were more likely to graduate than

those who were referred to student services. Metzner (1989) made similar findings; academic advising increases a student's satisfaction with school, thus reducing attrition rates. Further research also sees a link between student involvement and satisfaction (Tinto, 1985).

Habley and Crockett (1988) suggested students who formulate an educational/career plan, connected to their personal values, interests, and abilities, will be more likely to experience academic success and satisfaction. When properly advised, students can make appropriate decisions about their future, have the support to reach their full potential, and take advantage of what the university offers (CAS, 2000). The relationship itself can contribute to more meaningful interaction on both ends. In the same light, Cox and Orehovec (2007), noted each student must generally feel valued.

Adviser Roles and Responsibilities

Glennen (2003) summarized an academic adviser's role involved giving academic advice, helping students establishing goals, providing career guidance, assisting students in selecting a major course of study, clarifying graduation requirements, disseminating general information, and assisting all students in achieving academic success. Students have come to expect this level of service and more from their academic advisers, as advisers must also be able to create a more humanistic university environment, help with counseling issues, and resolve academic problems (Glennen, 2003). Students used to be content with basic advising, in order to "keep records of students' progress...and make sure that students have fulfilled both college and major requirements" (Walsh, 1979, p. 446); however, this is not currently the case. Academic advisers must now be able to take on many different roles and duties. Kramer and Gardner (1983) identified roles including being a mature adult, an expert, a

teacher, a researcher, a friend, and even a judge. Petress (1996) later identified four primary adviser roles: being resource people, student advocates, referral resources, as well as friends. O'Banion (1994) offers that counselor advisers have training in which they become skilled listeners; this is beneficial in helping students explore their goals and plan successful academic careers (O'Banion, 1994). Counselor advisers are also likely to communicate student personal services and referrals to their students (O'Banion, 2004). All of these studies indicate an enrichment of the role of the adviser-student interaction and a broadening of duties from advisers to provide students with a variety of services; this deeper role also makes a deeper relationship more likely. Students' expectations of advisers change with the situation, and needs; successful advisers adjust and provide dynamic advising. Additionally, exploring these expectations provides insight into students' stated and implied advising needs, how an adviser can best serve their students, and the changing outlook of the college student. According to Kramer, Taylor, Chynoweth, & Jensen (1987), "advisers who recognize academic class differences and who successfully coordinate institutional resources to promote student development will be in a position to anticipate needs and discriminately offer students information and planning assistance" (p. 26). Based on these various needs, it seems logical students would also tend to have different expectations of their advisers.

Athletic Advising

NCSU is a Division-1 school and, according to Figler (1987), should offer necessary academic support services to student athletes. The Academic Support Program for Student Athletes (ASPSA) handles this by providing programs that facilitate student learning outside

of the classroom. This department also provides tutors for supplemental learning and a conducive environment for studying. Additionally, the ASPSA offers programs to successfully deal with time management and focus on life after college (North Carolina State University Academic Support Program for Student Athletes, 2011).

Ferrante, Etzel, and Lantz (1996) argued most student athletes who attend college have the same academic, emotional, and personal goals as other students (Ferrante & Etzel, 1996). However, while they are similar to other college students, Broughton and Neyer (2001) found student athletes are a unique population, requiring a greater degree of support for their academic, personal, and athletic issues. Student athletes may face more complex demands, stresses, and challenges in the university setting, given their involvement in a competitive sport. Figler (1987) suggested student athletes have more pressures than student non-athletes, such as devoting time for training, public performances, and a public expectation for the school's success. According to Ferrante, Etzel, and Lantz (1996), there are three things that create differences for student athletes, including their role on campus, their atypical lifestyles, and their special needs. Research has shown athletes may need additional advising, and "approximately 10% of them require counseling for these additional stressors (Ferrante & Etzel, 1991; Hinkle, 1994; Parham, 1993; Pinkerton, Hinz, & Barrow, 1989)" (Broughton & Neyer, 2001 p 47). Gunn and Eddy (1989) recommend student athletes participate in student services like orientation, academic advising, registration techniques, academic progress reports, workshops, study hall and tutorials, and interacting with peer mentors to promote success. They also found student athlete support programs

should provide life skills workshops, while also serving as mediators between faculty members and student athletes.

When athletic advising was in its initial stage, the main focus areas were time management, academic tutoring, and class scheduling (Shriberg & Brodzinski, 1984). Since then, the services offered exceed that of solely advice about class schedules. Mand and Fletcher (1986) found the rate for both advising and counseling student athletes is increasing. According to Petitpas, Buntrock, Van Raalte, and Brewer (1995), athletic advisers differ from academic advisers by maintaining a student's athletic eligibility. Figler (1987) continued by outlining some of the responsibilities of athletic academic advisers: monitoring eligibility, helping with course selection, acting as an intermediary between athletes and faculty, assessing skill deficiencies, providing tutoring, study halls, seminars to enhance skills, offering support about one's major, as well as personal/career counseling. The National Association of Academic Advisers for Athletics (N4A) states their purpose via their website:

“To be personnel who are committed to enhancing the opportunities for academic, athletic, and personal success for collegiate student athletes. These objectives are achieved primarily by providing informed, competent advising, and by serving as a liaison between the academic and athletic communities on college campuses”
(<http://nfoura.org/about/>)

Institutional Expectations of Advisers

As NCSU utilizes a shared advising organizational model there is both a general advising center and faculty advisers from each department. The institutional expectations for the advising center include developing knowledge and building a relationship with the

student. The adviser is expected to provide a safe space in which the student can share thoughts, aspirations, concerns, and interest while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and university regulations. The adviser should explain college and university policies and procedures while also providing information and guidance on majors, minors, and special opportunities. In this process of guidance the adviser should follow through on agreed upon meeting times while assisting the student in identifying the appropriate path to achieving academic goals, encouraging and supporting the student in gaining the skills and knowledge necessary for success. Lastly the adviser should be able to communicate critical information in a timely manner.

<http://advising.ncsu.edu/about/expectations.html>

Each college also established its own adviser expectations. For example the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences adviser expectations are to be available for conferences during their posted office hours or by appointment and provide accurate information about academic regulations, procedures, course prerequisites and graduation requirements. The adviser should assist students in preparing the Plan of Work and developing career objectives while discussing with their advisees appropriate course choices in fulfilling curriculum requirements and the possible consequences of various alternative course choices. Further expectations include informing their advisees when the advisee's proposed course selections conflict with university academic or curricular regulations and assisting advisees in dealing with exceptions to university rules and regulations (for example, late adds, late drops, repeating a course without penalty). Referral of their advisees to appropriate university staff

for special testing or counseling is expected of advisers along with considering the appropriateness of academic adjustments where these become necessary in cases of serious illness or personal tragedy. (<http://harvest.cals.ncsu.edu/academic/index.cfm?pageID=648>)

The college of Agriculture and Life Sciences acknowledges the fact there are different means and methods of advising and the faculty relies heavily on the student handbook and outside information to provide students a quality advising experience. They also encourage students to explore outside information and other printed material (<http://harvest.cals.ncsu.edu/academic/index.cfm?pageID=648>)

At NCSU Athletic advising falls under the purview of ASPSA. The Office of Academic Support Program for Student Athletes (ASPSA) at NC State espouses they are a “comprehensive support program which strives to meet the academic, personal and professional development needs of all student athletes, promoting excellence and effectiveness in undergraduate and graduate education as well as leadership and civic engagement” (<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/missionvisionvalues>). This mission statement continues to explain its commitment to the college experience of its participants with special attention on

“empowering student athletes to become strong self advocates, providing specialized initiatives to facilitate a smooth transition from high school to college and from college to professional life while successfully integrating student athletes into the campus community; enhancing academic skills for student athletes at all skill levels and providing academic support personalized to the needs of each student athlete” (<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/missionvisionvalues>).

ASPSA Academic Coordinators are the advisers of record for any student athletes in the First Year College [a transition program for students who have not yet declared a major]. In this role, each Academic Coordinator will assist students in the registration process for the following semester and provide information to students about North Carolina State University's academic policies and procedures, and intra-campus transfer requirements. They will also provide information to students about the NCAA rules and regulations impacting their eligibility. (<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/advisinginformation>)

ASPSA Academic Coordinators will also act as supplemental advisers for student athletes in a major. In this role, each Academic Coordinator will pre-advise students during the registration process to be sure they are prepared to meet with their major adviser and are aware of their practice/travel schedule. These coordinators will also review class schedules once approved by the student's major adviser for practice conflicts and to be sure that missed class time due to travel is minimized. Lastly they will provide information about the NCAA rules and regulations that could impact eligibility.

(<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/advisinginformation>)

As the adviser-advisee relationship is often crucial to student success, research that informs the development, growth, and success of this relationship is beneficial. By providing a comparison of what national advising organizations (NACADA and N4A) expect and what is provided at NCSU (advising center and college), this researcher's aim was to provide a frame for exploring student advising. This research will describe the perceived characteristics of faculty advisers and athletic academic coordinators by both student non-athletes and

student-athletes; it will also explore the perceptual differences of each group regarding these relationships.

Conceptual Framework

Cuseo (2003) describes the adviser as a faculty member with whom students can interact outside of the classroom in an informal and more frequent manor. It is for this reason the academic adviser is uniquely positioned to serve as the human face of the university. Students should feel comfortable with their academic adviser, and in turn, the adviser should take a special interest in the personal progress of the student (Cuseo, 2003).

Cuseo (2003) declared an adviser should serve as a confidante in whom students can look for advice and to help them explore their personal beliefs. Additionally, each adviser should possess knowledge about the university. The adviser is also an agent of incorporation bringing the many elements of college life together through questions that make students more aware of their interest, talents, values, and priorities (Cuseo, 2003).

Cuseo (2003) offered a discussion of the constructs through which the adviser-advisee relationship is explained. “Several authorities contended that academic advising must be redefined by emphasizing students’ developmental concerns (Crockett, 1978; Crookston, 1972; Grites 1979; Mash, 1978; McCaffrey and Miller, 1980; Walsh, 1979)” (Winston, Enders, & Miller, 1982, p 6). From the foundations of desired adviser characteristics research, Cuseo incorporated these established characteristics and organized them into constructs. Cuseo (2003) stated from the students’ perspective that undergraduates value advisers who function as mentors and who personify the constructs of Available/Accessible, Knowledge/Helpful, Counseling/Mentoring, and Personable/Approachable.

The Available/Accessible construct focuses on aspects of advising that precipitates student access to advising; for example the process of scheduling appointments. Smith (2008) stated an adviser effectively communicates with students outside of the classroom more frequently and has continuous contact throughout the college experience.

The Knowledge/Helpful construct focuses on the actual knowledge the adviser has about general courses and progress towards the degree.

“An adviser is also someone who, through effective questioning and dialogic techniques conducted in a personalized context, enables students to see the ‘connection’ between their present academic experience and their future life plans” (Cueso, 2003, p15).

Winston, Enders, & Miller (1982) stated the adviser should act as the vehicle to bring the knowledge and resources of faculty and student affairs professionals to the student. When the adviser is able to bring all of these knowledge sources together the adviser will be most helpful to the student.

The next construct, Personable/Approachable, measures how the advisers interact with the student and if students feel the adviser can be approached outside of the office, or in public situations. Cueso suggested that an academic adviser may be “the one institutional representative with whom each student can have continuous contact and a stable, ongoing relationship that may endure throughout the college experience” (Cueso, 2003, p15).

Winston, Enders, & Miller stated advisers should establish a caring human relationship. This relationship will aid in the adviser in becoming more personable and approachable (1982).

The last construct, Counseling/Mentoring, considers how the adviser listens to personal issues students may have. Cueso stated “that an adviser is an experienced guide who

helps students navigate institutional policies, and a referral agent who directs and connects students to campus support services that best serve their needs” (Cueso, 2003, p15).

Winston, Enders, & Miller (1982) argued that not only should the adviser be concerned with human growth they should serve as a role model to the student. “The adviser reflects, for the student, both the image of a faculty/ staff member and the philosophy of the institution (Winston, Enders, & Miller, 1982, p 7).

Need for the Study

Frost (1991) stated “involved students are more likely to be academically and socially integrated into a college community” (p. 2). This involvement tends to increase a student’s success during college (Tinto, 1987). Therefore increasing understanding of adviser-advisee relationships contributes to increasing student involvement and success. There has been a great deal of research about academic advising, in terms of its definition and the qualities that make an effective adviser. Class selection is one of those characteristics; the effective class selection process can encourage students to stay on the path toward graduation which in turn will positively affect graduation rates (Schnell, Louis, & Doetkott, 2003) and school rankings. Another of those qualities includes acting as the human face of the university which will also increase retention at the university. Astin (1991) suggest that the more a student is involved with a faculty member the more satisfied with the college experience they will become. This satisfaction will contribute to the retention rates. Other studies have identified how student-athletes are similar to student non-athletes and how they are different, necessitating athletic academic coordinators. The relationship between adviser- advisee can be beneficial, and help the student become more independent. Smith (2008) examined what

type of advising characteristics student's value. It is clear that students perceive academic advisers in a certain way, and it is also clear that student athletes are categorically different than their counterparts. The advising process can provide each student group with a multitude of benefits along with acting as a guide through the university system; it is for this reason that the relationship between adviser and advisee should be studied.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to examine student satisfaction with academic advising, and to explore whether satisfaction with academic advising differs between student athletes and student non-athletes. Additionally this study explores the perceived importance of academic advising characteristics for students and compares those rankings of importance for student-athletes and student non-athletes.

Research Objectives

The following objectives were used to guide the study:

1. Describe the perceived importance to students of academic advising items as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).
2. Compare the perceived importance of TASS academic advising items of student athletes and student non-athletes.
3. Describe the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by students as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).

4. Compare the satisfaction levels of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by student athletes and student non-athletes.

Definitions of Terms

- Academic advising is a developmental process, which assists students in the clarification of life and career goals, and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals (Crockett 1987, in Marti, 2004).
- Academic Support Program for Student athletes (ASPSA) is a comprehensive support program that strives to meet the academic, personal, and professional needs of all student athletes, as well as promote excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, which includes leadership and civic engagement.
(<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/missionvisionvalues>)
- ASPSA Academic Coordinators are the advisors of record for any student-athletes in the First Year College (undecided). In this role, each Academic Coordinator will: assist students in the registration process for the following semester, provide information to students about intracampus transfer requirements as they explore different majors and move to matriculation. Academic Coordinators will also pre-advise students during the registration process to be sure they are prepared to meet with their major advisor and are aware of their practice/travel schedule.
(<http://ncsu.edu/aspsa/student/advisinginformation>)
- Academic Advising Services (AAS) provides accurate and timely advising, helps students learn to effectively navigate and use the resources at NCSU, guides them in the exploration of majors and careers, and assists them with any transition to a new major. (<http://advising.ncsu.edu/about/overview.html>)
- Student-athlete any student that is on the roster of a varsity sport as recognized by the North Carolina State University athletic department.

- Student non-athlete any student who is not is on the roster of a varsity sport as recognized by the North Carolina State University athletic department.

Assumptions of Study

The first assumption was that respondents had some experience with their faculty adviser and or athletic academic coordinator prior to completing the online survey instrument. The second assumption was that respondents completed the instrument honestly and objectively.

Limitations of Study

The first limitation was that the assignment of faculty advisers and athletic academic coordinators is handled by individual divisions or departments. Differences in terms of adviser preparation, distribution of advisees, as well as number of advisees could not be controlled. The second limitation was that generalizability was limited to NCSU students enrolled during the Fall 2011 semester. Lastly the survey returned a response rate of 20.5 %, therefore restricting the conclusions and implication made to the population sampled.

Summary

The process of academic advising is not only vital to the university but a crucial part of the student's success in the college environment (Glennen 2003, Raushi 1993). It is for this reason that the process of advising must take place and be effective. Gordon described

the process of academic advising as a “dynamic process that can have a significant impact on both student and institution” (1992, p 47). Pardee (2000) delineated three basic types of advising organizational advising structures; centralized, shared, and decentralized. These three are derived from seven models identified by Habley and McCaley (1987). Regardless of where advising takes place, the process is similar at all locations. Glennen (2003) summarized an academic adviser’s role to involve academic advice, helping to establish student goals, providing career guidance, assisting students in selecting a major course of study, clarifying graduation requirements, disseminating general information, and assisting all students in achieving academic success. Research has been done that concluded that if advisers take into considerations the different needs of their advisees they will be in a better position to offer students information and assistance in planning (Kramer, Taylor, Chynoweth, & Jensen 1987). Cuseo (2003) provided characteristics of advising that fall into four distinct constructs; Available/Accessible, Knowledge/Helpful, and Personable/Approachable, and Counseling/Mentoring. Smith (2008) used these constructs and found, overall, students were satisfied with their advising experience. With this research we aim to look at the difference between student athletes and student non-athletes. Ferrante, Etzel, and Lantz (1996) argue that most student athletes who attend college experience the same academic, emotional, and personal goals as other students. However, while they are similar to other college students, Broughton and Neyer (2001) found that student athletes are a unique population, requiring a greater degree of support for their academic, personal, and athletic issues. It is for these reasons that perceptions between the two groups would differ

based on their needs and how they experience the university. This study will explore these differences.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will provide the theoretical framework for this study and a review of salient literature.

Theoretical Framework

Astin's (1984) *Theory of Student Involvement* serves as the theoretical framework for this study. At its core the theory suggests the more a student is involved in school the higher the level of satisfaction and growth. Astin (1984) defines student involvement as the amount of physical or psychological energy a student devotes to the academic process. For example a student who is involved in campus activities or athletics, spends time with faculty, or spends time with academic work would be considered highly involved.

Astin (1984) proposed the student involvement theory has five basic postulates:

1. Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific such as one specific course or club.
2. Regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is, different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.
3. Involvement has both quantitative and qualitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbooks and daydreams).
4. The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program.
5. The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement.

To further explain the theory, Astin (1984) argued in order for college curriculum to achieve the professor's intended affects it must encourage students to put forth a certain

amount of energy. On the other side of the theory, Astin (1984) states educators should focus less on what they do and more on what the individual student needs.

Astin (1984) addressed specific relationships, between athletes and student group members, within the context of theory. Regarding student faculty interaction, he stated students who interact with faculty members are more likely to express satisfaction with the overall college experience. The next type of involvement Astin (1984) mentions is athletics; athletic involvement parallels the pattern associated with academic involvement and was associated with increased satisfaction in four areas: the institution's academic reputation, the intellectual environment, student friendships, and institutional administration. In a practical sense, if a university is committed to student involvement then student personnel workers would have a great presence in students' lives. If student personnel workers are more involved with students there is a higher capability to monitor the involvement of their students.

Academic advisers can serve as the faculty member with whom students develop a relationship. The required time need for advising provides a prolonged interaction between the adviser and advisee that far extends the bounds of a semester. The faculty/student relationship, according to Astin (1984), is beneficial to the student therefore the relationship between the adviser-advisee could provide the same benefits.

Literature Review

Factors that contribute to student satisfaction.

A study by Smith (2008) looked at the type of adviser students prefer, as well as associated characteristics. The purpose of the research was to first asses the importance of

academic advising characteristics to undergraduates, examine faculty performance as perceived by advisees, and identify factors influencing students' academic advising needs and satisfaction (Smith 2008). Smith distributed surveys by email to 1619 undergraduate students at a university and received a response rate of 44.84% (Smith 2008). Smith explored differences in the ratings of different sub groups within the original sample (male/female, underclassmen/upperclassmen, and degree program). Smith (2008) concluded that, while faculty advisers have many obligations, making the student feel valued and cared for is essential. The researcher also found students did not express a desire to discuss personal problems with their adviser. Smith (2008) concluded the lack of discussion of personal problems could be due to the fact students wanted to have a professional relationship with their adviser. Results for this study found that students were, overall, satisfied with faculty advisers' performance.

Lowe and Toney (2001) examined satisfaction with academic advisement among students enrolled in a university teacher education program. The researcher's aim was to ascertain if student satisfaction was influenced by student's year in school, type of adviser, and frequency of contact with that adviser. Researchers randomly selected 200 students of the total population of 600 (Lowe & Toney, 2001). Participants of the study were asked to rate the importance of select responsibilities on a scale from 1-4. Researchers found no relationship between satisfaction and the type of adviser (staff or faculty) by student status but did find a significant relationship between satisfaction and frequency of contact with advisers for all student groups (Lowe, and Toney, 2001). The most important advising responsibilities reported by the sophomores, juniors and seniors involved certification

requirements, graduation requirements, scholarship information, information on career options, and the availability of advisers (Lowe & Toney, 2001). Researchers also found there was a significant difference between students' and advisers' perceptions of importance of advisory responsibility in the following areas: makes referral to other campus resources, establishes a caring relationship, understands the needs of traditional and non-traditional students, assists in students' orientation to campus life, assists students in clarifying educational goals, helps students establish personal goals, and helps identify academic problems (Lowe & Toney, 2001). Academic advisers rated these statements more highly than students. The advisers tended to view each advisory responsibility as important. The results of this study show that meeting with an academic adviser was among the important variables when the student's level of satisfaction with the advising process was concerned (Lowe & Toney, 2001).

Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino (2004) used a policy capturing approach to examine the advising factors that contributed to student satisfaction. Four hundred and sixty eight students enrolled in undergraduate psychology courses at a large southeastern university served as the sample (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004). The researchers created different scenarios in which five different cues were manipulated. The five cues and the levels of measure, included adviser gender, adviser type, depth of advising relationship, type of advising approach, the emotional nature of the advising relationship (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004). Researchers found of the 468 participants the mean score for all scenarios was 5.5 on a 7 point scale which suggested that some participants did not show a distinct preference for certain advising scenarios that were presented (Mottarella, Fritzsche,

& Cerabino, 2004). The results of this study suggest personality differences among students have little effect on their advising preferences; students value warmth and depth in advising relationships (Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino, 2004).

Damminger (2001) sought to identify the level of student satisfaction with the quality of academic advising, delivered by an integrated department of academic advising.

Researchers used mixed methods in order to thoroughly answer the research questions; and a convenience sample of 78 students sought advising from the advising center in a ten day period (Damminger, 2001). Participants filled out a questionnaire after receiving advising at the center. After questionnaires were complete, five students were chosen at random to be interviewed. Researchers found, when asked about the level of satisfaction with the quality of advising they received, 63% (n=50) of respondents were extremely satisfied, 29% were very satisfied, and 8% were satisfied (Damminger, 2001). When asked to check all traits they considered important in an adviser, 100% marked advisers should be easy to talk with. The second highest marked trait was that the adviser spends sufficient amount of time with student at 92% (Damminger, 2001). Lastly when asked how important it was to the student that the adviser provide links between academic choices and the future, 51% felt it was extremely important, 40% felt it was very important, and 8% felt it was important (Damminger, 2001).

Adviser-advisee relationship satisfaction.

Dunker and Belcastro (1994) sought out to assess the satisfaction of full and part time students with their faculty academic advisers, with the intent to determine if the process could be improved. The population of this study was a random sample of full and part time

students at a community college. Of the possible 750 students, 513 completed the survey providing a response rate of 68.4%. Researchers found a significant difference existed in student satisfaction based on the number of times they met with their adviser. Researchers also found a significant satisfaction difference between students who met with their adviser once a year and students who met with their adviser more than once a year (Dunker & Belcastro, 1994). While exploring student satisfaction with advising appointments, researchers found a significant difference in student satisfaction based on the length of time spent in advising appointments, students preferred an appointment lasting longer than 15 minutes (Dunker & Belcastro, 1994).

Type of advisers

Hale, Graham, & Johnson (2009) looked to find what type of adviser students had, what type of advising they preferred, and their satisfaction with the advising they received. Researchers surveyed 1187 undergraduate students. Of the 1187 questionnaires that were sent out, 429 (response rate 36.1%) completed instruments. As described by Bland: “prescriptive academic advising merely addresses course selection and academic regulations. It is a one-way street – the adviser holds the control and power” (2004, p. 6). Developmental advising helps students identify the tools for exploring all options (for classes), and expects them to be involved in decision-making about future plans (Bland, 2004). A majority (95.5%) of respondents stated that they preferred developmental advising (Hale, Graham, & Johnson 2009). It was also found that although a large number of students had a prescriptive adviser they preferred a developmental adviser.

Characteristics of advisers.

Hester (2008) analyzed the student evaluations of advising to find a relationship between student characteristics and evaluation items. To do this, researchers used 50 annual student advising evaluation forms completed over a five-year period. The form also included categorical descriptors of advising skills that student's rate on a Likert scale (Hester, 2008). Researchers used Pearson correlations that indicated a significant positive relationship between number of advising sessions and increased ratings of professional manner which implies that the more advising sessions students experienced the higher the rating they provided. However, a significant negative relationship was found when considering class level and rating of adviser's knowledge. Which means that as class level increase the rating of the adviser decreased.

Harrison (2009) surveyed a convenience sample of 33 pre-nursing and nursing students. Students received the questionnaire during a two week period designated for advising. Participants were asked to list a number of qualities they felt an affective academic adviser possessed and rate them from 1-6. The functions included: helping students develop a meaningful program of study, knowing about and informing students of administrative procedures helping students develop good study skills, knowing about and responding to students' needs and personal academic problems, promoting student's development of long-term professional goals, and providing students with information about available resources. A majority of responses from pre-nursing and nursing students indicated, either directly or indirectly, that knowledge was a valuable quality in their academic adviser.

Sources of dissatisfaction with advising.

Allen and Smith (2008) sought to understand the source of dissatisfaction in academic advising. In order to do this, researchers examined both the students (733, 5.4%) receiving the advising and the faculty (171, 23.3%) adviser. Using a pre-established questionnaire (*inventory of academic advising functions*), students rated the importance of specific advising functions and their satisfaction with those functions (Allen & Smith, 2008). The instrument asked faculty to rate the same functions for importance to undergraduates and satisfaction of that advisers' provision of the function. The instrument also asked faculty whether each function was their responsibility to provide. The functions highlight connections (school, major, extracurricular), policies and procedures, referrals (academic and otherwise), and student planning, and decision making. The faculty rated the importance of a majority of the functions higher than students; these functions include all connection functions and referral functions (Allen & Smith, 2008). The two groups did not differ on the importance of the *how things work* and *accurate information* functions (Allen & Smith, 2008). This shows that there is overlap as to what both groups perceive as important. Both groups rated *accurate information* most important (Allen & Smith, 2008). "Faculty rated their satisfaction with the advising they provide significantly higher than students rated their satisfaction with the advising they received on all 12 advising functions" (Allen & Smith, 2008, p. 618). In general, faculty responsibility ratings coincided with student importance ratings. The results of faculty's interpretation of responsibility emphasize functions related to the student's major more so than non-academic functions (Allen & Smith, 2008). This study concluded students deem (wide variety of adviser functions) as important as; however the advisers only felt

responsible for those functions that were academic in nature. Allen and Smith (2008) concluded a shared model of advising, faculty and student affairs, would be best. This organizational format would allow faculty advisers to give advice on academic matters while student affairs would handle co-curricular and non academic issues (Allen & Smith, 2008).

Summary

The theoretical framework for this study is Astin's (1984) *Theory of Student Involvement*. This theory contends that the greater the degree of student involvement in their college career, the more successful and satisfied a student will be.

The literature review focused on factors that contribute to student satisfaction with advising, and highlights several interesting findings. Researchers found students are overall satisfied with their current advising experience (Smith, 2008; Damming, 2001; Hale, Graham, & Johnson, 2009) This means that what students expect from the advising process is being provided to them. We also have a basic understanding of the rankings of academic advising characteristics as provided by Smith (2008)

Researchers also found a strong correlation between the type of adviser's behavior and student satisfaction. Mottarella, Fritzsche, and Cerabino (2004) found that potential differences between students have little effect on the preference for advising but student's value warmth and depth in advising relationships. These students want to be mentored and prepared for the future. Students also want what they believe is adequate time with their adviser (Dunker & Belcastro 1994). Lowe and Toney (2001) found that the more meetings students had with advisers the higher the satisfaction level.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a detailed account of the steps that were taken in the process of this research; a discussion of the population, the instrument, and the data collection and analysis processes are provided.

Research Objectives:

The following objectives were used to guide the study:

1. Describe the perceived importance to students of academic advising items as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).
2. Compare the perceived importance of TASS academic advising items of student athletes and student non-athletes.
3. Describe the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by students as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).
4. Compare the satisfaction levels of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by student athletes and student non-athletes.

Type of Research

This study uses descriptive research, specifically survey research, which is described as: “An attempt to obtain data from members of a population (or a sample) to determine the

current status of that population with respect to one or more variables” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p. G-8).

Population and Sample

For this study, the population is comprised of undergraduate students, both student athletes and student non-athletes at North Carolina State University. Student athletes are defined as those who participate in varsity sports recognized by the university. Student non-athletes do not participate in varsity sports recognized by the university.

The NC State Office of Survey Research within the University Planning and Analysis department provided the email addresses, academic year, and gender of 662 registered student athletes. Information was provided for all student athletes, so all were surveyed. The Office of Survey Research also provided a list of 2501 student non-athletes with similar information. From this list, 662 student non-athletes with identical descriptors (gender and year in school) were randomly selected, providing a total sample population of 1324. A total of 272 usable surveys were received, 121 (an 18.3% response rate) student athletes and 151 (a 22.87% response rate) student non-athletes. This constitutes an overall response rate of 20.5%. This is similar to the 27% response rate usually achieved with an email survey (Fraze, Hardin, Brashears, Smith, & Lockaby, 2003).

The handling of non-response error must be identified and discussed to mediate threats to external validity (Dooley & Lindner, 2003). In this study non-response error was addressed by comparing early to late respondents as suggested by Armstrong and Overton (1977) and Lindner, Murphy, and Briers (2001). For this study, following the protocol

established by Armstrong and Overton (1977) all responders were divided in half by response date. The response results of the first half was compared to the results of the second half. There was no statistical difference in the responses of early and late responders. The results are generalizable since late responders are assumed to be typical of non responders (Lindner & Wingenbach, 2002).

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS see appendix D) was excerpted from the College of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources Faculty Advising Instrument (CAFNR-FAI) developed by Smith (2008). Smith (2008) based her CAFNR-FAI on a previous CAFNR advising instrument and the Survey of Academic Advising from The ACT Corporation. According to Smith (2008) the characteristics “were developed after reviewing academic advising literature as well as many academic advising evaluations, student satisfaction instruments, and related research materials” (p. 46). Smith (2008) utilized constructs developed by Cuseo to group the characteristics; the same constructs were used in this study. Smith’s instrument consisted of three sections, but for the purposes of this research, only Section 1 was used. Section I utilized a modified Borich Needs Assessment format to identify faculty adviser performance. A total of 33 adviser characteristics were included in this section and were condensed into one page to reduce scrolling. The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS) was modified to remove identifiers and reflect the research objectives of this study. The researcher changed items that were specific to the University of Missouri to items that reflected those items at NCSU.

Participants were asked to identify the perceived level of importance of each characteristic. A five point Likert Scale offered the following options: not important, of little importance, somewhat important, important, and very important. Students were then asked to evaluate their faculty adviser's performance with regard to the same characteristics. The Likert Scale options for adviser performance were: not applicable, poor, fair, satisfactory, good, and excellent. The Likert Scale options were chosen following protocol established by Smith (2008); additionally "not applicable" was included for performance ratings, so students were not forced to rate adviser qualities if those qualities had not been observed.

Validity of the CAFNR Faculty Advising Instrument

The validity of the TASS is derived from the validity of the original instrument developed by Smith (2008). To ensure face and construct validity, Smith (2008) consulted a panel of experts. The panel consisted of 11 university faculty members in higher education across the United States. Faculty were provided with the instrument along with the purpose and research objectives. A link to the online instrument at HostedSurvey™ was also provided so that expert panel members could determine face validity. Based on the approval of the panel of experts, items were officially assigned to one of the four academic advising constructs. Smith (2008) then conducted a pilot test with recent graduates of the CAFNR. The graduates were chosen because they were similar to the target population (Smith, 2008).

Reliability of the CAFNR Faculty Advising Instrument

Reliability coefficients of the original instrument (CAFNR-FAI) were established by Smith (2008) for the four constructs included in Section I of the CAFNR-FAI and Cronbach's alpha was calculated using the pilot test data (Smith, 2008). The resulting Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .82 to .94. "For research purposes, a useful rule of thumb is that reliability should be at least .70 and preferably higher" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009, p157) Based on the resulting coefficients, the Section I of the CAFNR Faculty Advising Instrument was deemed reliable.

In the case of the TASS and this study, for the importance constructs the Cronbach's Alpha for Knowledge/Helpfulness was .796, for Counseling/Mentoring .794, Availability/Accessibility .811, and Personable/Approachable .802. For the performance constructs the Cronbach's Alpha for Knowledge/Helpfulness was .795, for Counseling/Mentoring .793, Availability/Accessibility .775, and Personable/Approachable .766. This demonstrates that the instrument, when used with this population is still reliable.

Data Collection

Data were collected through Qualtrics™, a web-based survey research site, using Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method. A pre notice was sent via email to participants letting them know what the research was about and to let them know that a link would be sent soon. An email was then sent to participants, in the form of an e-mail, reiterating the study and its relevance (see appendix A and B). This email also contained the link to the questionnaire. An Informed Consent form was also attached with the email, so that the

participant had a copy as well. A week later, there was a reminder email message with a link to the survey, with additional information about the study, length of time involved, and appreciation for participation. This process was completed a total of six times over the course of seven weeks. Each reminder was sent on Monday of each week.

Data Analysis

Data were exported from Qualtrics.com into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Program 18.0 for Windows. Ordinal data were collected, with items listed in a ranked system ranging from 1-5. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected from the study. Data were summarized using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. For objectives two and four, *t*-tests were utilized to determine differences of means.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to examine student perception of importance and satisfaction with academic advising and conclude if a difference exists between student-athletes and student non-athletes. In order to do this survey research was done. The population of this study was undergraduate students at North Carolina State University. Researchers surveyed all 662 student-athletes and a random sample of 662 student non-athletes with similar descriptors. A total of 272 usable surveys were obtained providing the researcher with a response rate of 20.5% (similar to the 27% of Internet surveys Frazee,

Hardin, Brashears, Smith, & Lockaby, 2003). This and the handling of the non response error was based on Dooley & Lindner (2003). TASS was the University of Missouri College of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources Faculty Advising Instrument (CAFNR-FAI) that was developed by Smith and modified by the researcher. A total of 33 advisers characteristics were exhibited in the survey after modification. Constructs developed by Cuseo helped Smith (2008) group the items. This grouping was also used in this research. On the instrument participants were asked to identify the perceived level of importance of each item characteristic on a five point Likert Scale, and then asked to provide a rating of their adviser's performance on a similar five point Likert Scale. Reminder emails followed Dillman's (2007) Tailored Design Method. The collected data was then summarized using frequencies, percentages, t test, means, and standard deviations.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Chapter four presents the findings of this research. The findings are organized by objectives and then presented by the constructs that guided this study.

Population

For this study, the population is comprised of undergraduate students, both student-athletes (n=121) and student non-athletes (n=151) at North Carolina State University. Student-athletes are defined as those who participate in varsity sports recognized by the university. Student non-athletes do not participate in varsity sports recognized by the university. When asked to identify gender 105 (39.3%) answered male and 162 (60.6%) answered female. The academic year of the respondents was reported as: 26.9% (72) freshmen, 23.1% (62) sophomores, 17.9% (48) juniors, and 32.1% (86) seniors. Demographic data were collected for the purposes of describing the population and provide the reader with data to compare to other populations.

Objective One

Describe the perceived importance to students of academic advising items as determined by the Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS)

The first research objective sought to describe the perceived importance of academic advising items by all students. The 33 advising items are presented in four constructs developed by Cuseo (2003), Availability/Accessibility, Knowledge/Helpfulness, Personable/Approachable, and Counseling/Mentoring.

Considering the six academic advising items included in the Availability/Accessibility construct, all were found to have mean importance ratings of 4.81

or greater (very important). See Table 1. The highest of these items included “Responds to my request in a timely fashion (e.g. email, phone calls)” ($M = 4.94$; $SD = 0.27$), and “Maintains an open line of communication” ($M = 4.90$; $SD = 0.31$). “Responds to my request in a timely fashion (e.g. email, phone calls)” was tied as the highest rated item on the instrument overall. The lowest mean importance within the Availability/Accessibility construct was “Provides an effective process for scheduling appointments” ($M=4.81$; $SD=0.50$).

Table 1

<i>Perceived Importance of Advising Items within the Availability/Accessibility Construct</i>			
<i>Construct Item</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n=</i>
Responds to my request in a timely fashion (e.g. email, phone calls)	4.94	0.27	263
Maintains an open line of communication	4.90	0.31	261
Available when I need assistance	4.89	0.38	265
On time for advising appointments with me	4.86	0.46	262
Provides sufficient time for advising appointments	4.84	0.46	260
Provides an effective process for scheduling appointments	4.81	0.50	262

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Not Important, 1.51 – 2.50 = Of Little Importance, 2.51 – 3.50 = Somewhat Important, 3.51 – 4.50 = Important, 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Important.

The Knowledge/Helpfulness construct was comprised of fourteen academic advising items. The highest of this construct included three items that had mean importance ratings of 4.91 or greater (very important). See Table 2. The three items included “Communicates degree requirements” ($M = 4.91$; $SD = 0.32$), “Aware of my academic progress” ($M = 4.92$; $SD = 3.18$), and “Encourages academic success” ($M = 4.94$; $SD = 0.25$). “Encourages

academic success” was tied for the highest rated item on the instrument. This construct had two items rated at or lower than 4.25. “Provides information regarding study skills” ($M = 4.25$; $SD = 0.95$), and “Helps obtain employment on campus” ($M = 3.93$; $SD = 1.19$). “Helps obtain employment on campus” was the lowest rated item on the instrument, but 31.9% of respondents rated this item as somewhat important or less while the rest of respondents rated it as important or above.

Table 2

Perceived Importance of Advising Items within the Knowledge/Helpfulness Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Encourages academic success	4.94	0.25	264
Aware of my academic progress	4.92	3.18	272
Communicates degree requirements	4.91	0.32	270
Knowledgeable about general education courses	4.85	0.46	260
Assists in identifying potential areas of employment after college	4.83	0.51	266
Helps clarify life/career goals	4.71	0.63	268
Provides information about education opportunities beyond my bachelors' degree	4.69	0.67	264
Assists in selecting/changing my major	4.60	0.87	270
Provides information about using MyPack Portal	4.47	0.74	271
Provides information about obtaining financial assistance (e.g. student loans, grants, scholarships)	4.44	0.95	263
Suggest academic resources (e.g. student writing center)	4.42	0.89	270
Encourages involvement in co curricular activities (e.g. student organizations, internships, study abroad programs)	4.40	0.89	262
Provides information regarding study skill	4.25	0.95	270
Helps obtain employment on campus (e.g. work study, assistantships)	3.93	1.19	261

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Not Important, 1.51 – 2.50 = Of Little Importance, 2.51 – 3.50 = Somewhat Important, 3.51 – 4.50 = Important, 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Important.

The third construct, Personable/Approachable, consisted of six academic advising items. Considering the six items, all but one had mean importance ratings of 4.78 or greater, the exception reported a mean score of 4.13 (see Table 3). The highest ranked items within this construct were “Easy to talk with” ($M = 4.91$; $SD = 0.35$) which 91.7% of respondents rated it at or above important, and “Respects my decisions” ($M = 4.92$; $SD = 0.33$) which

93.1% of all respondents rated it at or above important. The item rated the lowest of the construct “Acknowledges me in social settings (e.g. walking across campus, at community events/activities)” yielded a mean importance rating of 4.13 ($SD = 1.08$).

Table 3

Perceived Importance of Advising Items within the Personable/Approachable Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Respects my decisions	4.92	0.33	259
Easy to talk with	4.91	0.35	256
Provides a caring, open atmosphere	4.80	0.47	262
Seems to enjoy advising	4.78	0.51	258
Familiar with my academic background	4.70	0.62	262
Acknowledges me in social settings (e.g. walking across campus, at community events/activities)	4.13	1.00	261

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Not Important, 1.51 – 2.50 = Of Little Importance, 2.51 – 3.50 = Somewhat Important, 3.51 – 4.50 = Important, 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Important.

Within the Counseling/Mentoring construct, eight academic advising items were included. One item, “Willing to discuss personal problems” ($M = 3.98$; $SD = 1.09$) resulted in a mean importance rating that did not exceed 4.50 (see Table 4). This item was also the second lowest rated item on the instrument. Two items produced mean importance ratings that were more than 4.80, “Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program” ($M = 4.83$; $SD = 0.41$) and “Helps select courses that match my interest in an academic discipline” ($M = 4.89$; $SD = 0.38$), both look at planning the academic program.

Table 4

Perceived Importance of Advising Items within the Counseling/Mentoring Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Helps select courses that match my interest in an academic discipline	4.89	0.38	260
Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program	4.83	0.41	264
Suggest strategies to cope with academic challenges	4.74	0.57	268
Encourages me to explore career areas of interest	4.71	0.62	268
Expresses concern for my personal development	4.70	0.62	260
Helps me identify obstacles to overcome before I reach my educational goals	4.67	0.65	263
Willing to discuss personal problems	3.98	1.09	263

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Not Important, 1.51 – 2.50 = Of Little Importance, 2.51 – 3.50 = Somewhat Important, 3.51 – 4.50 = Important, 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Important.

Mean importance ratings for each of the academic advising constructs are reported in Table 5. Each construct is based on a varying number of items and overall values should be considered when discerning the findings. The Personable/Approachable and the Availability/Accessibility construct consist of six items which makes the highest possible mean score for each construct 30. The Knowledge/Helpfulness construct consisted of fourteen items making the highest possible score 70. The last of the four constructs was Counseling/Mentoring which consisted of seven items and the greatest mean score for this construct was 35. To obtain the percent of total score, the mean score was divided by the highest possible mean score for that construct. The highest ranked construct based on available items was Availability/Accessibility with 97.38% of the total possible ranking.

Personable/Approachable was the second highest ranked with 94.12% of the total possible ranking. The third highest ranked construct was Counseling/Mentoring which had a score of 92.93%. The lowest ranking construct was the knowledge/Helpfulness with 91.9 % of the total possible ranking.

Table 5

A Comparison by Constructs of the Perceived Importance of Advising Need

Advising Construct	M	SD	% of total score
Availability/Accessibility	29.22	1.79	97.38
Personable/Approachable	28.24	2.18	94.12
Counseling/Mentoring	32.53	2.77	92.93
Knowledge/Helpfulness	64.34	5.49	91.90

Objective Two

Compare the perceived importance of TASS academic advising items of student athletes and student non-athletes.

The second research objective compared the perceived importance ratings of academic advising items by NC State undergraduate student-athletes and student non-athletes. To compare importance ratings by students' athletic status, means and standard deviations for each of the four advising constructs are listed in Table 6. A two-tailed *t*-test was used to determine if the difference in overall construct mean scores between student-athletes and student non-athletes was statistically significant. Table 6 also shows those *t*-test calculations. For the Counseling/Mentoring construct the *t*-test resulted in a *p*-value of .049,

which is less than the pre-established *alpha* of .05, therefore providing a statistically significant difference.

Table 6

A Comparison by Athletic Status of the Perceived Importance of Advising Needs by Constructs

Advising Construct	Athletic Status				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
	Student-Athlete n= 123		Student Non- Athlete n= 153				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Personable/Approachable	28.59	1.92	27.94	2.34	2.315	243	.091
Availability/Accessibility	29.18	2.00	29.24	1.60	0.23	247	.638
Knowledge/Helpfulness	64.77	5.69	63.98	5.32	1.13	248	.745
Counseling/Mentoring	32.92	2.51	32.20	2.94	2.07	250	.049*

Note: $p < .05$

Objective Three

Describe the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by students as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS). The third research objective sought to describe the perceived performance of

academic advising items by all students. The 33 advising items are once again presented in the constructs developed by Cuseo (2003). Of the six academic advising items included in the Availability/Accessibility construct, all were found to have mean performance ratings of 4.60 or greater (see Table 7). The highest of these items included “On time for advising

appointments with me” ($M = 4.86$; $SD = 0.46$). This item was also the highest rated item of the performance ratings. The lowest mean performance within the Availability/Accessibility construct was “Available when I need assistance” ($M=4.61$; $SD= 0.77$).

Table 7

<i>Perceived Performance of Advising Items within the Availability/Accessibility Construct</i>			
Construct Item	M	SD	n=
On time for advising appointments with me	4.86	0.46	259
Responds to my request in a timely fashion (e.g. email, phone calls)	4.69	0.73	261
Maintains an open line of communication	4.66	0.71	258
Provides sufficient time for advising appointments	4.65	0.81	257
Provides an effective process for scheduling appointments	4.62	0.78	258
Available when I need assistance	4.61	0.77	259

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Poor, 1.51 – 2.50 = Fair, 2.51 – 3.50 = Satisfactory, 3.51 – 4.50 = Good, 4.51 – 5.00 = Excellent.

The Knowledge/Helpfulness construct was comprised of fourteen academic advising items. The highest of this construct included four items that had mean performance ratings of 4.60 or greater (see Table 8) and all dealt with academic progress in the degree. The four items included “Aware of my academic progress” ($M = 4.64$; $SD = 0.72$), “Knowledgeable about general education courses” ($M = 4.67$; $SD = 0.77$), “Communicates degree requirements” ($M=4.6$; $SD= 0.69$) and “Encourages academic success” ($M = 4.76$; $SD = 0.64$). “Encourages academic success” was tied for the second highest rated item on the performance ratings. Two items within the Knowledge/Helpfulness construct reported mean performance ratings less than 4.00. Those particular items included “Provides information about obtaining financial assistance” ($M = 3.89$; $SD = 1.23$), and “Helps obtain employment

on campus” ($M = 3.48$; $SD = 1.39$) both of these items are in reference to finances while in college. These three items were the lowest rated items on the performance ratings for the overall instrument.

Table 8

Perceived Performance of Advising Items within the Knowledge/Helpfulness Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Encourages academic success	4.76	0.64	259
Communicates degree requirements	4.68	0.69	268
Knowledgeable about general education courses	4.67	0.77	257
Aware of my academic progress	4.64	0.72	267
Provides information about using MyPack	4.36	0.99	268
Helps clarify life/career goals	4.27	1.04	266
Encourages involvement in co-curricular activities	4.27	1.10	261
Suggest academic resources (e.g. student writing center)	4.26	1.07	268
Assists in selecting/changing my major	4.24	1.18	266
Provides information about education opportunities beyond my bachelors’ degree	4.15	1.11	260
Assists in identifying potential areas of employment after college	4.11	1.13	261
Provides Information regarding study skill	4.05	1.18	267
Provides information about obtaining financial assistance	3.89	1.23	262
Helps obtain employment on campus (e.g. work study, assistantships)	3.48	1.39	261

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Poor, 1.51 – 2.50 = Fair, 2.51 – 3.50 = Satisfactory, 3.51 – 4.50 = Good, 4.51 – 5.00 = Excellent.

Within the Personable/Approachable construct all but one item had mean performance ratings of 4.50 or greater (placing these items within the *Excellent* category of the scale). The highest ranked items within this construct were “Easy to talk with” ($M = 4.76$; $SD = 0.63$), and “Respects my decisions” ($M = 4.73$; $SD = 0.71$). “Easy to talk with” was tied for the second highest rated item on the performance ratings. The one item that did not have a mean rating of at least 4.50, “Acknowledges me in social settings,” reported a mean score of 4.15 ($SD = 1.25$) (see Table 9).

Table 9

Perceived Performance of Advising Items within the Personable/Approachable Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Easy to talk with	4.76	0.63	256
Respects my decisions	4.73	0.71	258
Provides a caring, open atmosphere	4.72	0.66	258
Seems to enjoy advising	4.72	0.71	258
Familiar with my academic background	4.55	0.87	260
Acknowledges me in social settings	4.15	1.25	258

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Poor, 1.51 – 2.50 = Fair, 2.51 – 3.50 = Satisfactory, 3.51 – 4.50 = Good, 4.51 – 5.00 = Excellent.

The Counseling/Mentoring construct had one item, “Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program” ($M = 4.72$; $SD = 0.73$), produced a mean performance rating that was more than 4.70. Although three items, “Willing to discuss personal problems” ($M = 3.96$; $SD = 1.27$), “Suggest strategies to cope with academic challenges” ($M = 4.30$; $SD = 1.05$), and “Encourages me to explore career areas of interest”

($M=4.36$; $SD=0.99$) that resulted in a mean performance rating that did not exceeded 4.50 (see Table 10). Respondents were almost split down the middle when it came to the lowest of these items, “Willing to discuss personal problems,” 33.3% rated it below satisfactory.

Table 10

Perceived Performance of Advising Items within the Counseling/Mentoring Construct

Construct Item	M	SD	n=
Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program	4.72	0.73	260
Helps me identify obstacles to overcome before I reach my educational goals	4.67	0.65	261
Helps select courses that match my interest in an academic discipline	4.65	0.78	258
Expresses concern for my personal development	4.53	0.92	256
Encourages me to explore career areas of interest	4.36	0.99	267
Suggest strategies to cope with academic challenges	4.30	1.05	267
Willing to discuss personal problems	3.96	1.27	259

Note. Scale: 1.00 – 1.50 = Poor, 1.51 – 2.50 = Fair, 2.51 – 3.50 = Satisfactory, 3.51 – 4.50 = Good, 4.51 – 5.00 = Excellent.

Mean performance ratings for each of the academic advising constructs are reported in Table 11. Again each construct is based on a varying number of items and overall values should be considered when discerning the findings. The Personable/Approachable and the Availability/Accessibility constructs consist of six items which makes the highest possible mean score for either construct 30. The Knowledge/Helpfulness construct consisted of fourteen items making the highest possible score 70. The last of the four constructs was Counseling/Mentoring which consisted of seven items and the greatest mean score for this

construct was 35. To obtain the percent of total score, the mean score was divided by the highest score for that construct. The highest ranking construct based on available items was Availability/Accessibility with 92.90% of the total possible ranking.

Personable/Approachable was the second highest ranked with 91.87% of the total possible ranking. Counseling/Mentoring ranked third with 88.09%. The lowest ranking construct was Knowledge/Helpfulness with 85.38 % of the total possible ranking.

Table 11

A Comparison by Constructs of the Perceived Performance of Advising Items

Advising Construct	M	SD	% of total score
Availability/Accessibility	27.87	3.66	92.90
Personable/Approachable	27.56	3.63	91.87
Counseling/Mentoring	30.83	5.07	88.09
Knowledge/Helpfulness	59.77	9.84	85.38

Note: $p < .05$

Objective Four

Compare the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by student-athletes and non-student-athletes.

The final research objective compared the perceived performance ratings of academic advising items by NC State undergraduate student-athletes and student non-athletes. To compare performance ratings by students' athletic status means, standard deviations, and *t*-test calculations for each of the four advising constructs are listed in Table 12. Researchers used a two-tailed *t*-test to determine if the difference in overall construct means between

student-athletes and student non-athletes was statistically significant. No statistically significant differences were found.

Table 12

A Comparison by Athletic Status of the Perceived performance of advising items by constructs

Advising Construct	Athletic Status				<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
	Student Athlete n=123		Student Non Athlete n=153				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Personable/Approachable	28.04	3.54	27.16	3.67	1.901	243	.229
Availability/Accessibility	27.72	4.09	27.97	3.30	0.528	239	.074
Knowledge/Helpfulness	60.07	10.50	59.52	9.32	0.429	242	.192
Counseling/Mentoring	31.267	5.29	30.47	4.88	1.226	248	.578

Note: $p < .05$

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, and RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine student satisfaction with academic advising, and to explore whether satisfaction with academic advising differs between student athletes and student non-athletes. Additionally, this study explores the perceived importance of academic advising characteristics for students and compares those rankings of importance for student athletes and student non-athletes.

Summary of Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The process of academic advising is not only vital to the university but a crucial part of the student's success in the college environment (Glennen, 2003; Raushi, 1993). It is for this reason that the process of advising must take place effectively. Gordon (1992) described the process of academic advising as a "dynamic process that can have a significant impact on both student and institution" (p. 47). In an attempt to better serve student research has been done to explore the different structures of advising departments. Pardee (2000) delineated three basic types of advising organizational structures; centralized, decentralized, and shared. These three are derived from seven models identified by Habley and McCaley (1987). Regardless of where advising takes place the process is similar at all locations. Glennen (2003) summarized an academic adviser's role as involving academic advice, helping to establish student goals, providing career guidance, assisting students in selecting a major course of study, clarifying graduation requirements, disseminating general information, and

assisting all students in achieving academic success. Research has been done that concluded if advisers take into considerations the different needs of their advisees they will be in a better position to offer students information and assistance in planning (Kramer, Taylor, Chynoweth, & Jensen 1987).

The theoretical framework for this study is based upon the work of Astin (1984) which at its core the theory suggests that the more a student is involved in school the higher the level of satisfaction and growth. Regarding student faculty interaction, he stated students who interact with faculty members are more likely to express satisfaction with the overall college experience. This interaction includes athletics which he mentioned that the involvement parallels the pattern associated with academic involvement and was associated with increased satisfaction in four areas: the institution's academic reputation, the intellectual environment, student friendships, and institutional administration (Astin 1984).

The conceptual framework for this study is based upon the work by Cuseo (2003). Cuseo (2003) developed four constructs that can be used to organize and examine advising characteristics. He developed these constructs from studies which explored advising functions and adviser characteristics. It was primarily the work of Winston, Enders, & Miller, who offered that advising should focus on "students' developmental concerns (Crockett, 1978; Crookston, 1972; Grites 1979; Mash, 1978; McCaffrey and Miller, 1980; Walsh, 1979)" (1982, p 6), which forms the foundation for Cuseo's theory and this study.

Summary of Methodology

The population of this study was undergraduate students at North Carolina State University. Researchers surveyed all 662 student-athletes and a random matched sample of 662 student non-athletes with similar descriptors. From this total of 1324, 272 usable surveys were obtained, a response rate of 20.5%. The survey used, TASS, is a researcher modification of the University of Missouri College of Agriculture Food and Natural Resources Faculty Advising Instrument (CAFNR-FAI) developed by Smith (2008). Participants were asked to identify the perceived level of importance of each item characteristic on a five point Likert Scale, and then asked to provide a rating of their adviser's performance on a similar five point Likert Scale. The collected data were summarized using frequencies, percentages, *t*-tests, means, and standard deviations.

Research Objectives:

The following objectives were used to guide the study:

1. Describe the perceived importance to students of academic advising items as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).
2. Compare the perceived importance of TASS academic advising items of student athletes and student non-athletes.
3. Describe the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by students as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).

4. Compare the satisfaction levels of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by student athletes and student non-athletes.

Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Implications

This section will provide conclusions and implications based on the findings from this research.

Objective One

Describe the perceived importance to students of academic advising items as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS).

In order to describe the perceived importance of advising characteristics the survey results were explored. These results informed findings about the constructs as a whole, the ratings of individual constructs, and specific adviser characteristics. To examine the constructs as a whole a calculation was made for each construct representing the student's importance ratings for that construct as a percent of the total possible score. The percentage for every construct was greater than 90%. Therefore all constructs were important to students. Students responding to the survey identified that qualities conveyed by the constructs of Availability/Accessibility, Personable/Approachable, Counseling/Mentoring, and Knowledge/Helpfulness were each important aspects of advising; it was important for their advisers to display the qualities and functions, and to have the skills dictated by these overarching constructs. According to Smith (2008) all items within the construct were derived from the literature identifying important adviser qualities, so it follows that all of the constructs are important to students.

Examining the individual constructs by percentage resulted in a ranking order of Availability/Accessibility highest, Personable/Approachable next highest, Counseling/Mentoring third, and Knowledge/Helpfulness lowest. Smith (2008) found a similar construct rating: Availability/Accessibility, Personable/Approachable, Knowledge/Helpfulness, and Counseling/Mentoring respectively. This also substantiates Lowe and Toney (2000) who found that the availability of advisers was most important to students.

The highest rated construct, at 97.38%, was the Availability/Accessibility construct. In this study, students deemed adviser availability as the most valuable quality. This conclusion seems reasonable because no matter the attributes of an adviser if he is not available to students the adviser cannot advise and his skills are irrelevant. Students indicated it was important for their adviser to be ready when the student needed them to be. Items within this construct indicate that the process of and ease with which meetings are scheduled is important to students, but the student's overall goal is to gain access to the adviser. The high rating of this construct could be due to the fact that students value their time highly. Students could also believe it is the job of the academic adviser to be available to the student. While students can find information online, that information can only be validated by the adviser. Therefore students recognize they have a need for individual time with their adviser.

The second rated construct was the Personable/Approachable construct with an overall 94.12% of the total possible score. From this we can conclude students value advisers who are friendly and are easy to talk with; students want an open environment and to be

respected when they make decisions. Hester (2008) also found students want their decisions to be respected. The student rating for this construct was high because students want to be able to talk with their adviser. Students develop a relationship with the adviser over the course of their tenure at the university. If the students do not view the adviser as someone they can easily ask questions, then the relationship is stunted and will never reach the full potential. Interestingly this construct is composed of six items; of these only one item is not within the range of the *Very Important* category. This item “Acknowledges me in social settings” still rates as *Important*, but is categorically different from the other items within the construct. It appears students want an adviser who is amiable, but are not necessarily looking for a relationship nor needing adviser acknowledgement outside of the advising office.

The next construct was Counseling/Mentoring. This construct rated third with 92.93% of the total possible score. While the results identify this construct as important to students, it carries a lower percentage than either the Available/Accessible or Personable/Approachable constructs. It can be concluded even though students want to be able to talk with their advisers, they do not necessarily want to discuss their personal problems with them. Students may feel that exposing personal problems may not be appropriate when a strong relationship is not present. Interestingly, Cuseo (2003) suggested an adviser is (and should be) a confidante for students. Students can turn to advisers for advice, counsel, guidance, or encouragement; Cuseo continued, stating the adviser is one who listens actively and without judgment (2003). In the search for identity that often occurs during college, students need an adult who is willing to help and provide guidance when requested. The counseling mentoring construct is important to students because they understand why this relationship is important

but may not want to take full advantage of all that the adviser has to offer. It would appear students want to be able to talk with their adviser about academics but maintain some sort of professionalism and not go into detail about their personal problems. With access to a counseling center on campus, other adult mentors, family, and a network of friends, students may be more likely to rely on these sources for personal problems and not their academic adviser.

The lower ranking of the Knowledge/Helpfulness construct indicates specific information about the university and degree requirements was considered the least important among the constructs. Although this was the lowest rated construct it was still rated important. Similarly, Nadler and Nadler (1999) found a majority of students indicated knowledge was a valuable quality, but these students found other constructs more valuable. Students may rate this construct lowest because they are able to find information online. Information about the degree and degree requirements can be located on the NC State website student section in *MyPack Portal* (a student services website for class registration). Further explanation for the low rating could be students expect advisers first to be knowledgeable. The subsequent items are rated higher because students take for granted their advisers have specific university knowledge; to the student it is the core of the adviser role.

It was found that students value “Encourages academic success” and “Responds to my request in a timely fashion” the most, as they were both rated the highest in the instrument with a mean score of 4.94. From this we can conclude that students want their adviser to contact them back within a reasonable amount of time and to be encouraged when

they interact with that adviser. This coincides with what Cuseo states that the adviser is someone who can provide help to the students by giving certain strategies for success, and who can create integration into students' college experience (2003). Students believe this is the most important aspect of the advising process.

It can also be concluded that adviser assistance in obtaining employment is the least important, as this item was rated the lowest of all items in the instrument. The mean score for this item (which is in the Knowledge/Helpfulness construct) is still in the important range. So while students may value it the least among all items, they still believe this information is important to the advising process. Students may not think that campus employment assistance is the responsibility of the academic adviser.

Objective Two

Compare the perceived importance of TASS academic advising items of student athletes and student non-athletes.

The second research objective compared the perceived importance ratings of academic advising characteristics by NC State undergraduate student-athletes and student non-athletes. There was no statistically significant difference for the Availability/Accessibility, Personable/Approachable or Knowledge/Helpfulness constructs.

While not statistically significant, the fact that for three constructs student-athletes and student non-athletes are congruent in their ratings of important adviser characteristics, is an interesting finding. There is literature (Broughton & Neyer, 2001; Figler, 1987; Leach & Conners, 1984; Ferrante, Etzel, & Lantz 1996) highlighting the many differences between these two groups, however they are similar in many ways. While they may have different

identified needs they are not so different in the skill set they believe an adviser should have. All students seem to desire advisers who are available, accessible, personable, approachable, knowledgeable, and helpful.

For the Counseling/Mentoring construct the resultant p -value (.049) was less than the pre-established α of .05, demonstrating a statistically significant difference. Therefore there is a difference in the overall mean of the Counseling/Mentoring construct score between student-athletes and student non-athletes. Student non-athletes reported a mean importance score lower than student-athletes. From this, it can be concluded that student-athletes value counseling and mentoring more than student non-athletes.

Student-athletes have required study time in the same location as the athletic academic coordinators; as such, student athletes have more interaction with their advisers. This increased interaction may deepen the relationship between student-athletes and their athletic academic coordinator. A deeper relationship may move the student's needs of that adviser from congenial to counsellorship.

Student-athletes could also place a greater importance on this construct because they may receive more counseling or counseling about a greater variety of issues than student non-athletes. This could be due to responsibilities held by the student-athlete academic coordinators. These advisers not only provide general advising, but they also deal with the complicated and delicate subject of academic eligibility. When student non-athletes go on academic probation they have to address the implications (parents, scholarships, enrollment, and graduation). The implications for student-athletes are the same plus pressure from coaches and team-members, or even for their ineligibility being local news. Issues of

reduced or eliminated eligibility negatively affects a student-athlete's chance to continue their sport in college, on a national level or possibly even at a career/professional level. Certainly this strain alone could warrant a student-athlete placing greater importance on the Counseling/Mentoring role their adviser might play.

Objective Three

Describe the satisfaction level of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by students as determined by The Advising Satisfaction Survey (TASS). To examine the satisfaction levels students reported for their adviser-advisee relationship, the constructs were looked at as a whole, and by rankings among the other constructs. All of the constructs were rated above 85% of the total possible score, which put them in the upper portion of *Satisfactory* or higher. From this, the conclusion can be drawn that students overall are satisfied with the advising experience they are receiving. This directly supports Smith (2008) who found all of the constructs rated at or above the *Satisfactory* level. Hale, Graham, & Johnson (2009) also found students were satisfied with the advising they were receiving. While students may experience greater satisfaction with some constructs or certain aspects of advising and less satisfaction with others, the overall experience is positive.

The constructs were ordered in this way: Availability/Accessibility, Personable/Approachable, Counseling/Mentoring, and Knowledge/Helpfulness. Smith (2008) found the ordering of these constructs to be the same. All constructs were rated important but the ranking of these constructs provides insight into which constructs advisers are doing the best. Students are more satisfied with the ease of access they have to their

advisers than they are with how easy it is to talk with them. Even so, they are more satisfied with how easy advisers are to talk with than they are satisfied with their adviser's performance as counselors. Each of these conditions are more satisfactory to students than their adviser's performance on issues of school expertise and utility.

The highest rated construct was found to be Availability/Accessibility. This construct received 92.9% of the total possible score. Students believe their advisers are doing an excellent job of making themselves available assistance is needed. Therefore student perception of adviser performance is high. It could be that advisers performing well in this construct because increased use of technology enables them to respond to emails and schedule meeting times quickly. Additionally, advisers often advertise an open door policy.

The next highest rated construct was Personable/Approachable. For this construct, 91.87% of the total possible score was reported. It can be concluded advisers are doing a very good job of being personable and approachable when dealing with students; students are satisfied with how easy their advisers are to talk with. Students believe their advisers are doing an excellent job of making the conversational aspect of the advising process very easy. Amiable advisers give a human face to a large university. It is important to note these advisers may be the only faculty who do not change over the course of the student's tenure at the university (Cuseo, 1993). Advisers recognize students interact with very few faculty over the course of their enrollment. Because of this, it is crucial that the one constant in the student's academic career (their adviser) be someone they can confide in. An implication of this may be in an attempt to make sure students have someone they can look to advisers create an atmosphere in which students can come and talk with them.

The construct that was rated next was the Counseling/Mentoring construct, with a reported 88.09% of the total possible score. Students believe their advisers are doing a satisfactory job of Counseling/Mentoring; students, however, are ranking this construct lower than the Available/Accessible and Personable/Approachable constructs. Characteristics within this construct include indications of advisers who encourage students to play an active role in planning their own academic programs. This is indicative of a developmental adviser, who allows students to participate in the advising process rather than providing a rigid step by step prescription for the student to follow.

Despite the fact advisers may be trained to address students' personal problems, characteristics within the construct demonstrate lower performance regarding adviser willingness to discuss personal issues. Students may not feel their advisers are qualified to serve in a counseling capacity. Cuseo (2003) says advisers may act like a referral agent who connects students to campus support services. Advisers may be solely providing recommendations to the counseling center. Additionally students may not even seek counseling referrals from their advisers, but instead are going straight to these services. Overall students may not believe their adviser does an adequate job of providing an atmosphere for counseling. This could also be indicative of a weakness within the adviser-advisee relationship.

The lowest rated construct within the perceived performance section was the Knowledge/Helpfulness construct. This mean performance score places this construct into the bracket of '*Satisfactory*.' While satisfactory is not a negative term the implications when

compared to the other scores displayed are the advisers are not providing students with as much help.

Because the overall construct was rated lowest, students may believe this aspect of advising is not receiving as much attention from advisers as others. This could also, be due to the fact that advisers may encourage students to incorporate other sources of information into their search of knowledge about the university and classes. Another possibility is both students and advisers believe items in this construct and the general focus of the construct could (and maybe should) should be handled outside of the advising process.

Students might rate the performance of the knowledge construct low because advisers, like students, have began to understand what students want out of the advising relationship. Students want more of a relationship from the connection with their adviser. Advisers may be focusing more on the other aspects of the advising process and less on the straight forward knowledge aspects.

Objective Four

Compare the satisfaction levels of the student-academic adviser relationship as perceived by student athletes and student non-athletes.

This research objective compares the satisfaction level of students based on their athletic status. The results of the *t*-tests indicated no statistically significant differences between student athletes and student non-athletes regarding their satisfaction level with the adviser-advisee relationship.

All four constructs indicated similarities between student-athletes and student non-athletes regarding the satisfaction level with their advisers overall. It is because of these similarities no statistical significance was found. Given the many differences between these

groups, particularly the pressures of maintaining eligibility and the role athletic academic coordinators have in keeping themselves and the student-athlete informed and up to date on that issue, it is interesting that both groups were satisfied (at least 85% so) with their adviser relationship. The fact that these similarities exist within the realm of level of satisfaction coincides with the conclusions of Ferrante and Etzel, (1996), who said, that for the most part, student-athletes and student non-athletes enter college with similar needs. These groups appear to have more in common than not.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions and implications of this study, recommendations for further research include a more in depth look into the characteristics that surround advising.

Researchers have been able to ascertain many of the items that are the most important to students, but a holistic view of advising could also provide a list of things students find the least important. A focus group should be conducted or an open ended questionnaire sent to students to find out which items they feel are most important and which items they feel are least important to the advising process. This will allow the population to express the characteristics they feel should be involved which could paint a wider picture of advising.

Students are the consumers in the adviser-advisee relationship, and as such student satisfaction is very important. Results that inform what students are seeking could provide advisers with a better understanding of student success. Further research on the actual performance of advisers and what type of advising they provide to students should be done to ensure that student needs are being met. Other adviser performance measures could include

adviser self-ratings, formal student evaluations, and workplace evaluations to enrich the understanding of adviser performance.

More research should also be done on the differences between student-athletes and student non-athletes. The research available provides only a partial view of the differences between the two groups. Further research in this area could not only indicate more differences (and similarities) but also better explain those differences and how each should be addressed with regard to advising. With regard to academic advising, understanding the differences will be vital to ensuring that each group receives the specialized attention they deserve. Advisers should be aware of how to deal with both groups to ensure the experience is positive.

Further research could be done to examine the differences between other special populations. For example students who participate in student government, fraternal organization members, or high achieving high school students.

Knowledge & Helpfulness - Recommendations for practice

Students should increase their appreciation of advisers by participating in a seminar that outlines what all advisers do for their advisees. Advising supervisors should also establish a baseline performance score based on the importance score. Advisers should continue to renew their knowledge about the university and the software in which the students have to use. With changes being made in the university and with degrees, advisers need to continually keep up with the changes and relay those changes to the students. If advisers keep up with the software the university uses they will also be better equipped to answer student questions about registration.

Availability/Accessibility - Recommendations for practice

Increase students' patience with the advising process and understand that they are not the only advisee, this could be done by allowing students to see advisers time blocked off for other students. Advising staff should also be trained to prioritize availability and be provided with training on the university's tools to make and manage appointments. The university could also hire more advisers to meet the needs of the students. Students are currently satisfied with the advising they are receiving but with increasing student population, the current adviser population may not be able to handle the increase in volume and satisfaction with the process could decrease.

Counseling/Mentoring - Recommendations for practice

Advisers should inquire about the students' life apart from the academic portion to ensure that factors apart from academia are interfering with progress towards the desired degree. Advisers should also be provided with training on how to recognize warning signs, that something could be wrong physically or mentally, with their advisees and how to deal with these signs. This will help advisers feel more prepared to make a recommendation to the counseling department.

Personable/Approachable – Recommendations for practice

According to student ratings, advisers are doing a great job of being personable and approachable. Although doing a great job, advisers who are identified as less personable should attend workshops on interpersonal communications. Advisers should continue their current interactions with students. Maintaining the high rating of this construct will allow for other recommendations to be implemented with greater ease.

In practice advisers should provide continued support to their advisees as the satisfaction level has been shown to increase with the amount of personalization they receive. According to Astin (1984), student satisfaction is tantamount to retention. Advisers should also look into following (or increasing their following of) the tenets of developmental advising and less so prescriptive advising. Previous research on student preference (Mottarella, Fritzsche, & Cerabino, 2004) or the type of adviser desired suggested students prefer developmental advisers. In this study students were not given the chance to specifically pick developmental but they did mention developmental items as very important, such as respecting student decisions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Copy of pre notice email sent to participants:

Good Afternoon,

My name is Byron Green and I am a current graduate student here at State and a former cheerleader for the university. The research that we are conducting is going to give you a chance to have your voice heard about how you feel about your Academic Adviser. The survey will take the five minutes during a study break or free time to make your voice heard. What do you prefer when working with your Academic Adviser? All responses will completely anonymous! A follow up email will be sent to you with a link to the survey

Byron Green
Masters Student
North Carolina State University

Copy of email sent to participants:

Good Afternoon,

My name is Byron Green and I am a current graduate student here at State and a former cheerleader for the university. The research I mentioned in my previous email is going to give you a chance to have your voice heard about how you feel about your Academic Adviser. Take the five minutes during a study break or free time to make your voice heard. What do you prefer when working with your Academic Adviser?

Here is the link to the survey: http://ncsu.qualtrics.com//SE/?SID=SV_3ZRQyjZpNjuprZW
All responses are completely anonymous!

Byron Green
Masters Student
North Carolina State University

APPENDIX B

North Carolina State University INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH

Colligate level athletics as a tool for decision making, problem solving, team work, goal setting, and communication.

Byron A. Green
Principal Investigator

Dr. Jackie Bruce
Faculty Sponsor

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between academic adviser and student, and also the relationship between athletic adviser and student athlete.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to agree with this consent form by continuing onto the questionnaire. Participation is not required for graduation or course requirements.

Risks

The risks associated with participating in this study are minimal. When collecting identifiable information there is a chance that a connection can be made but the information that is collected in this survey will only be used to compare groups. No identifiers will be published in any paper or publication.

Benefits

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate. The data will help to produce an insight into improving student/ adviser relationship

Confidentiality

The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be stored securely in locked desk drawer located in an office with a locked door and on a password protected computer. You will NOT be asked to write your name on any study materials so that no one can match your identity to the answers that you provide. Only the principal investigator will have access to files and will know the

participants. Upon completion of the study, all forms of data (recordings, paper and electronic copies of interview transcript, and consent form) will be erased or shredded promptly.

Compensation

For participating in this study you will not receive anything for participating.

What if you are a NCSU student?-

Participation in this study is not a course requirement and your participation or lack thereof, will not affect your class standing or grades at NC State.

What if you are a NCSU employee?-

Participation in this study is not a requirement of your employment at NCSU, and your participation or lack thereof, will not affect your job.

What if you have questions about this study?

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Byron A. Green, at Bagreen@ncsu.edu, or 336-317-05817.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Deb Paxton, Regulatory Compliance Administrator, Box 7514, NCSU Campus (919/515-4514).

Consent To Participate

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.”

Should I have any questions about this study or its conduct, or participants’ rights, I may contact:

Byron A. Green, Principal Investigator
336-317-0581
bagreen@ncsu.edu

By clicking YES you agree to take the survey and over the age of 18

By clicking NO you have not agreed to take the survey or that you are under the age of 18

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX C

Copy of instrument

Are you a current varsity athlete at NC State?

Yes
 No

Please read the items in the left column, which relate to academic advising. In the left column, indicate the items IMPORTANCE TO YOU. In the right column, evaluate your faculty ADVISER'S PERFORMANCE

	Importance					Adviser's performance					
	Not important	Of little importance	somewhat important	important	very important	Not Applicable	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Aware of my academic progress	<input type="radio"/>										
Provides information about using mypack portal	<input type="radio"/>										
Assists in selecting/ changing my major	<input type="radio"/>										
Communicates degree requirements	<input type="radio"/>										
Provides information regarding study skills	<input type="radio"/>										
Suggest academic resources (e.g student writing lab)	<input type="radio"/>										
Helps clarify life/ career goals	<input type="radio"/>										
Encourages me to explore career areas of interest	<input type="radio"/>										
Suggest strategies to cope with academic challenges.	<input type="radio"/>										

Please read the items in the left column, which relate to academic advising. In the left column, indicate the items IMPORTANCE TO YOU. In the right column, evaluate your faculty ADVISER'S PERFORMANCE

	Importance					Adviser's Performance					
	Not important	Of little importance	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Not Applicable	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Assists in identifying potential areas of employment after college	<input type="radio"/>										
Provides information about education opportunities beyond my Bachelor's degree	<input type="radio"/>										
Willing to discuss personal problems	<input type="radio"/>										
Acknowledges me in social settings (e.g walking across campus, at community events/ activities)	<input type="radio"/>										
Available when											

Available when I need assistance	<input type="radio"/>										
Provides a caring, open atmosphere	<input type="radio"/>										
Maintains an open line of communication	<input type="radio"/>										
Encourages me to assume an active role in planning my academic program	<input type="radio"/>										
Encourages academic success	<input type="radio"/>										

Please read the items in the left column, which relate to academic advising. In the left column, indicate the items IMPORTANCE TO YOU. In the right column, evaluate your faculty ADVISER'S PERFORMANCE

	Importance					Adviser's Performance					
	Not important	Of little importance	Somewhat important	Important	Very Important	Not Applicable	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Responds to my request in a timely fashion (e.g. email, phone calls)	<input type="radio"/>										
Respects my decisions	<input type="radio"/>										
Helps select courses that match my interest in an academic discipline	<input type="radio"/>										
Knowledgeable about general	<input type="radio"/>										

Knowledgeable about general education courses	<input type="radio"/>										
Seems to enjoy advising	<input type="radio"/>										
Easy to talk with	<input type="radio"/>										
Expresses concern for my personal development	<input type="radio"/>										
On time for advising appointments with me	<input type="radio"/>										

Please read the items in the left column, which relate to academic advising. In the left column, indicate the items IMPORTANCE TO YOU. In the right column, evaluate your faculty ADVISER'S PERFORMANCE

	Importance					Adviser's Performance					
	Not important	Of little importance	Somewhat important	Important	Very Important	Not Applicable	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
Provides information about obtaining financial assistance (e.g. student loans, grants, scholarships)	<input type="radio"/>										
Familiar with my academic background	<input type="radio"/>										
Helps me identify obstacles to overcome before I reach my	<input type="radio"/>										

goals		
Provides sufficient time for advising appointments	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Helps obtain employment on campus. (e.g. work study, assistant-ships)	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Provides an effective process for scheduling appointments	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Encourages involvement in co-curricular activities (e.g. student organizations, internships, study abroad programs)	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Which of the following methods is your PRIMARY method of communicating with your faculty adviser?

Email

Face to Face meeting

Telephone

Other

During the past year, how often have you met with your adviser?

Never

once

During the past year, how often have you met with your adviser?

Never

once

twice

three times

four times

five or more times

Was the number of meetings that you indicated in the in the previous question sufficient for your advising needs?

No

undecided

Yes

On average, how much time do you usually spend in each meeting with your adviser?

I have not met with my adviser

5 minutes or less

6- 15 minutes

16- 30 minutes

more than 30 minutes

Have you sought academic information from sources other than you faculty adviser?

Yes

No

Please indicate your PRIMARY SOURCE for academic information ASIDE FROM your academic adviser?

Parents

Please indicate your PRIMARY SOURCE for academic information ASIDE FROM your academic adviser?

- Parents
- Siblings
- Friends
- Other undergraduate students (e.g. sorority/ fraternity members, Student organization members)
- NC State Faculty / Instructor
- Electronic resources (E.g. Internet, Mypack)
- print materials
- other

overall would you recommend your faculty adviser to other students?

- Yes
- undecided
- No

Please indicate your academic major status

- Freshmen
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Please indicate your sex

- Male
- Female

Please indicate your racial/ ethnic group