

Work-in-Progress: Building a Collaborative Advising Structure through ECST Advising Council

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The importance of academic advising has been widely recognized in engineering and computing education communities. For institutions that serve a large number of first-generation and diverse group of college students, an effective advising structure is critical to student success. In line with the GI2025 initiative, the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology at Cal State LA has been exploring effective ways to provide holistic academic advising and student support services. Two years ago, the college established ECST Advising Council which consists of all professional advisors from Student Success Center and principal faculty advisors and chairs of all departments. With a focus on promoting consistent and collaborative advisement among constituency, the Advising Council offers an open channel for communication, a platform to share ideas and best practice, and opportunities for advisor training and professional development. It also provides a venue for sharing presentations on campus initiatives and new e-advising tools.

This work-in-progress paper presents the progression of ECST Advising Council in the past two years and how it drove the formation of a collaborative advising model that takes advantage of the expertise of both professional and faculty advisors. This model not only helped to provide more coherent advising, but also facilitated proactive planning for advising campaigns and other student success initiatives. The poster presentation of this WIP paper will describe how the collaborative model made it possible to integrate advising into various milestone courses to help students gain knowledge of their own degree requirements, develop academic planning skills, create proactive attitude, and enhance the sense of responsibilities. These soft skills are critical to their success not only in academic study but also in their professional careers. In addition, the presentation will elaborate a few representative advising campaigns that provide targeted advising and intervention for at-risk students who miss their success markers at various academic grade levels. As a result of the Advising Council, more and more advisors started to embrace the idea that advising is an essential educational practice. The perception change of individual advisors will impact the collective vision of the Advising Council to achieve cultural change in the long run.