

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing on a small, white notepad. The person is holding a yellow and black marker. The background is blurred, showing a blue shirt and a brown surface. The text "West Liberty University" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font in the upper right, and "Academic Advising Handbook" is overlaid in the same font in the lower left.

# West Liberty University

## Academic Advising Handbook

# Table of Contents

Overview .....	2
Effective Advising Outcomes: .....	3
Advisor Role & Responsibilities.....	4
Advisee Responsibilities.....	5
Hints for Successful Advising .....	5
Confidentiality of Student Records .....	6
The Basics.....	7
WINS .....	7
Search for Student .....	8
Schedule Search .....	9
DegreeWorks .....	9
Registration .....	13
Forms .....	16
Additional Information.....	17
Course Catalogs.....	17
Academic Calendar .....	17
Registrar’s Office Staff .....	18
Blank Schedule Form.....	18
Student Athletes .....	18
Support Services .....	19
Why It Is Difficult.....	20
The Challenges Students Present.....	20
Appreciative Advising.....	22
Other Challenges/Items To Be Aware.....	23
Major/Career Path Change .....	23
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) .....	23
Academic Probation/Suspension .....	24
Scholarship/Grant Renewal .....	24
Course Repeat Policy .....	25
Which Math/English Course?.....	25
Graduation Requirements – Undergraduate Students.....	26
Closing.....	27

## **Overview**

Welcome to the fantastic opportunity to serve as an Academic Advisor at West Liberty University! Advising is far more critical and important than simply assisting students schedule courses and providing their Alternate PIN. West Liberty University views academic advising as a student support service, making available the best possible tools for guidance to assist your students in making life choices which will be personally rewarding and fulfilling. The positive relationships you may form with these students can not only provide the student with a better experience at our institution, but also reflect positively on your department and academic disciplines.

This Handbook is designed as a resource and quick reference for useful and pertinent information. As information can change, it is always recommended to consult the appropriate [Course Catalog](#) for the most up-to-date and relevant material. The Handbook is by no means comprehensive and is intended to supplement the [Course Catalog](#) and other official university printed material, policies, and procedures.

**“Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience...**

**Nearly without exception, the happiest and academically most successful undergraduates ... have at least one intense relationship built around academic work with other people.”**

**Dr. Richard J. Light, Harvard University  
From his book, *Making the Most of College***

The **academic advising relationship** is a vehicle you can use to share yourself, your knowledge and your experience in a more personal way than is possible in the formal classroom atmosphere. Effective academic advising can assist the student bridge the gaps between personal, academic, and career requirements. Supported by effective advising, students will clarify, plan, implement, and monitor a program of study consistent with their goals, interests, and strengths. This will, hopefully, lead to success and satisfaction in their personal, academic, and career development.

When students meet with their advisors, they come with varying needs and expectations. Generally, students want the following from an advisor:

1. **Accessibility** - An advisor who is reasonably available for advising appointments and who conveys an attitude that says "advising is an important educational task";
2. **Accurate information** - An advisor who knows current information regarding requirements, policies, procedures, or where to find that information; an advisor who knows when to refer to another person or office;
3. **Advice** - An advisor who is willing to challenge, recommend, and encourage without imposing personal preferences;
4. **Relationship** - an advisor who is willing to sit face-to-face and care about the educational and career plans of the student.

### **Effective Advising Outcomes:**

- Student major/career exploration and selection consistent with the student's values, goals, strengths, and abilities
- Student satisfaction with their academic program, advising, and West Liberty University
- Student/faculty advisor relationship that is positive
- Student persistence in academic programs (retention)
- Student success after degree completion from West Liberty University

## Advisor Role & Responsibilities

- Help students define and develop realistic educational and career plans.
- Assist students in planning a program consistent with their strengths, abilities, goals, and interests.
- Monitor progress toward educational goals through use of DegreeWorks (TopperTracks).
- Discuss and reinforce connections/relationships between academic programs and career paths.
- Interpret and provide rationale for academic policies, procedures, and requirements.
- Assist students in understanding how to execute educational transactions (e.g., drop/adds, withdrawals, etc.).
- Refer students when academic, attitudinal, attendance, or other personal problems require intervention by other university faculty/staff.
- Inform students of the nature of the advisor/advisee relationship.
- Assist advisees in identifying career development opportunities.
- Develop a caring relationship with advisees.
- Inform students of special services available to them for remediation, academic assistance, and other needs.

Source: Adapted from *Williams-Crockett (1995)*. Defining the Essential Elements of Successful Advising Programs. Colorado: *The Noel-Levitz Center for Enrollment Management*, p.12.

**“After teaching, advising is the most important responsibility of the faculty. Done well, it results in students' utilizing campus resources to formulate sound educational, career, and life goal plans. In addition, studies show that advising is the cornerstone of retention. Effective advisors enjoy working with students, are good listeners, and are knowledgeable about campus resources and services. Satisfied and successful students are the products of good advising.”**

*Faculty Advising Handbook, Wilkes University*

## Advisee Responsibilities

- Clarify their personal abilities, interests, and goals.
- Contact and make an appointment with the advisor when required or when in need of assistance. If the student finds it impossible to keep the appointment, the student will notify the advisor.
- Become knowledgeable and adhere to policies, procedures, and requirements.
- Prepare for advising sessions and bring appropriate resources or materials.
- Follow through on action items identified during an advising session.
- Accept final responsibility for all decisions.

Source: Adapted from *Williams-Crockett (1995)*. Defining the Essential Elements of Successful Advising Programs. Colorado: *The Noel-Levitz Center for Enrollment Management*, p.13.

## Hints for Successful Advising

- Appreciate the emotion behind your advisee's words (voice intonation and body language). Be an active listener.
- Constantly try to check your understanding of what you hear (not hear what you want to).
- Fight off external distractions (phones, computer screen, etc.).
- Establish and maintain good eye contact.
- Use affirmative head nods and appropriate facial expressions.
- Ask clarifying or continuing questions (it demonstrates to your advisees that you are involved in what they are saying). Do your best to avoid questions that could be potentially embarrassing.
- Engage in self-disclosure which can support the student's experience. Example: "I remember how nervous I was the first time I went in to see an advisor."
- Ask "what" or "how" questions to steer them away from giving simple "yes", "no," or "I don't know" answers.
- Empathize with the advisee. Try to put yourself in the student's place to better understand what the advisee is thinking.
- Try to hide your emotions if you are irritated or frustrated with the advisee.
- Do not make hasty judgments. Wait until all of the facts are in before making a judgment.

Source: Adapted from *Guidebook for Advising Undergraduate Students (1994)*. Shippensburg University, pp. 9 – 10.

## **Confidentiality of Student Records**

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, West Liberty University students have the right to review, inspect, and challenge the accuracy of information kept in a cumulative file by the University, unless the student waives the right. The law further ensures that records cannot be released except in emergency situations without the written consent of the student. There are a few exceptions, including faculty with a legitimate educational interest and other school officials.

*In Practical Terms:* Unless the student has signed a waiver which is on file in the Registrar's Office, advisors are prohibited by law from releasing confidential student records (grades, transcript information, etc.) to parents. Students can be directed to [THIS FORM](#) through the Registrar's Office web page to complete if they would prefer parents be privileged to this information.

# The Basics

## WINS

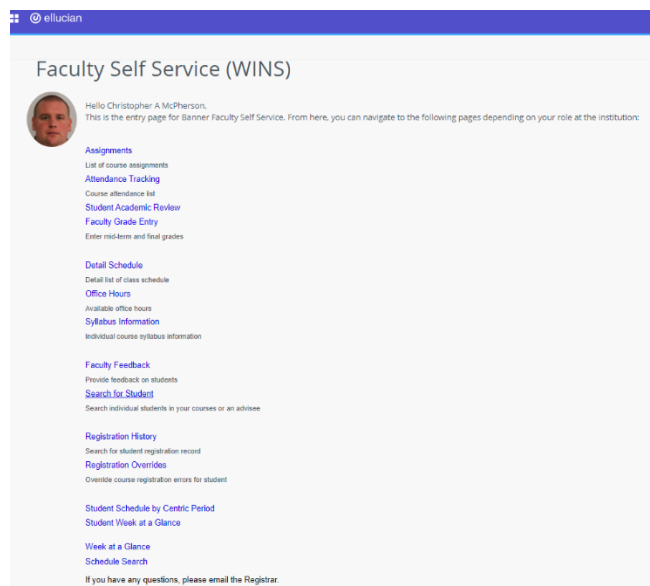
As an advisor, you will have access to a Faculty & Advisor option within WINS 9 for Faculty, available through the [Go WLU](#) link. Login information for WINS 9 is Hello ID/Single Sign On credentials

- Username - everything before @ symbol of WLU email address; e.g. christopher.mcpherson
- Password - initially eight (8) digit birthdate, but this can be changed upon initial login and at any time through Hello ID/Single Sign On. If you have issues or concerns, you are encouraged to contact the IT Department directly through their [Help Desk Form](#).

Once accessing WINS 9, you will be directed to a screen with various options, including:

- Search for Student
- Registration History
- Registration Overrides
- Student Schedule by Centric Period
- Student Week at a Glance
- Week at a Glance
- Schedule Search

Of these options, the two (2) that will be most beneficial within your role as an advisor are the *Search for Student* and *Schedule Search* options.





## Search for Student

You can search for a student that is your advisee or a student in one of your courses using this function. You can enter a student's ID or First/Last Name to find that student. Once their name appears on the options to choose, select that student's name to access their record.

The screenshot shows the 'Search Student' page in the ellucian system. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the ellucian logo and the user's name, Christopher A McPherson. Below the navigation bar, there's a breadcrumb trail: 'Faculty and Advisors' > 'Search Student'. A light blue informational box states: 'Enter the ID of the Student or Advisee you want to process or enter partial names, student search type or a combination of both. Then select Submit.' Below this, there's a 'Term' dropdown menu set to 'Spring 2022 - 202201'. The main search area has three input fields: 'Student or Advisee ID' (containing '@00113790'), 'Last Name', and 'First Name'. There's an 'OR' label between the ID and Last Name fields. A blue 'Submit' button is to the right. Below the input fields, there's a 'Search Type' section with three radio buttons: 'Students', 'Advisee', and 'Both' (which is selected). Below the search form, there's a table titled 'Student and Advisee Selection'. The table has four columns: 'ID', 'First Name', 'Last Name', and 'Type'. One row is visible with the following data: ID: '@00113790', First Name: 'West', Last Name: 'Student', Type: 'Student'.

ID	First Name	Last Name	Type
@00113790	West	Student	Student

You can click the student name to access additional information about this student, including:

- Bio Information
- General Information
- Graduation Information
- Degree Evaluation
- Academic Transcript
- Hours & GPA

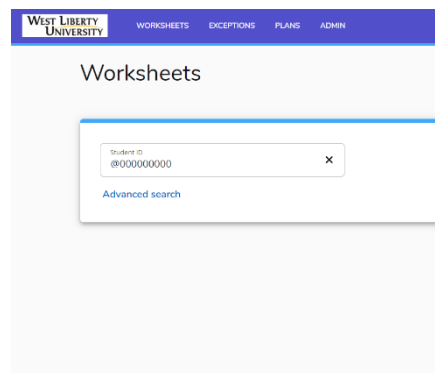
The screenshot shows the 'Student Profile' page for 'West Lib Student (@00113790)'. The page has a yellow header with the ellucian logo and the user's name, Christopher A McPherson. Below the header, there's a navigation bar with 'Student' > 'Student Profile'. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there's a sidebar with a list of links: 'West Lib Student', 'Curriculum and Courses', 'Prior Education and Testing', 'Additional Links', 'Degree Evaluation', 'Academic Transcript', 'Registration', 'Student Schedule', 'Registration Overrides', 'View Application to Graduate', and 'Work at a Glance'. The main content area has a 'Bio Information' section with fields for Email, Phone, Gender, Date of Birth, Ethnicity, Race, Citizenship, and Emergency Contact. Below this is a 'General Information' section with fields for Level, Class, Student Type, Residency, Campus, Prior Term Attended, Registration Term, Last Term Attended, and Letter of Admission. To the right of these sections is a 'CURRICULUM HOURS & GPA' section with tabs for 'Primary', 'Secondary', and 'Hours & GPA'. Below this is a 'REGISTERED COURSES' section with a 'Not Registered' status. At the bottom, there's a summary row: 'Total Hours | Registered Hours: 0 | Billing Hours: 0 | CEU Hours: 0 | Max Hours: Not available | Max Hours: Not available'.

## Schedule Search

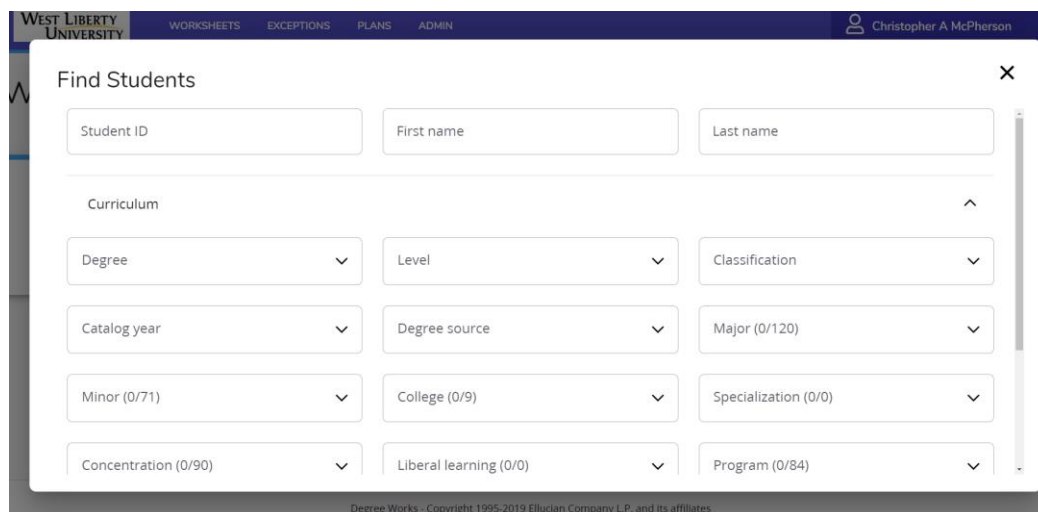
By choosing the Schedule Search option, you will be able to access course offerings for a given semester to assist in identifying courses your advisee can consider taking for a given semester. More detailed information is available regarding how to utilize this function within the [Registration](#) section of this handbook.

## DegreeWorks

Access to DegreeWorks allows an advisor to review degree progress for an advisee. Access your advisor DegreeWorks through either the DegreeWorks option in the [Go WLU Menu](#) or through the DegreeWorks option within [Single Sign On](#). Once you are in DegreeWorks, you can enter a student's ID to generate their degree audit or select the dropdown menu of Advisees to select the appropriate student. Type in the @00000000 ID for a particular student and press Enter to display this information.

The screenshot shows the 'Worksheets' page in the DegreeWorks system. At the top is a navigation bar with 'West Liberty University' and links for 'WORKSHEETS', 'EXCEPTIONS', 'PLANS', and 'ADMIN'. Below the navigation bar, the title 'Worksheets' is displayed. A search box contains the text 'Student ID @000000000' with a clear 'x' button. Below the search box is a link labeled 'Advanced search'.

You can also utilize the Advanced Search option and enter a student's First Name and Last Name. Entering the full first/last name is not required, so if you're not sure how to spell a student's name, you can enter partial information.

The screenshot shows the 'Find Students' search form in the DegreeWorks system. The form has a title bar with 'West Liberty University' and a user profile for 'Christopher A McPherson'. The search criteria are organized into three rows of input fields: the first row contains 'Student ID', 'First name', and 'Last name'; the second row, under the 'Curriculum' section, contains 'Degree', 'Level', and 'Classification'; the third row contains 'Catalog year', 'Degree source', and 'Major (0/120)'. Below these are four more rows of filters: 'Minor (0/71)', 'College (0/9)', 'Specialization (0/0)', 'Concentration (0/90)', 'Liberal learning (0/0)', and 'Program (0/84)'. Each filter has a dropdown arrow. At the bottom, a copyright notice reads 'Degree Works - Copyright 1995-2019 Ellucian Company L.P. and its affiliates'.

Once you are in a student's degree audit, you will be able to do the following: within the Worksheets tab

- Confirm student information, including advisor, holds, GPA, and degree program within the top section

Data refreshed 11/16/2021 7:47 PM

Student ID  
@00113790

Name  
Student, West Lib

Degree  
Bachelor of Sci in Bus Admin

[Advanced search](#)

**Level** Undergraduate   
**Classification** Freshman   
**Major** Marketing   
**Program** Business Administration   
**College** College of Business

**Advisor** Loy, Ingrid | Email: Ingrid.Loy@westliberty.edu   
**Holds(s)** Business Office, Withdrawal Balance

[Academic](#)   
[What-if](#)   
[Athletic Eligibility](#)

[View historic audit](#)

Format  
Student View

Degree progress  

0%  
Requirements

NaN%  
Credits

Overall GPA  
0.00

☒ In-progress classes   
☒ Preregistered classes   
[Process](#)

- Assess degree progress and courses still needing completed for both general education requirements and major requirements

**General Education Requirements** INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 34    Credits applied: 0  
Catalog year: 2021-2022    GPA: 0.00

**Unmet conditions for this set of requirements:** 34 to 42 credits are required. You currently have 0, you still need 34 more credits.

COMPOSITION		
ENGLISH COMPOSITION	Still needed:	Choose from 1 of the following:
College Comp I & II		2 Classes in <a href="#">ENG 101</a> and <a href="#">102</a>
Accelerated College Comp		1 Class in <a href="#">ENG 103</a>
COMMUNICATIONS	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">COM 101</a>
QUANTITATIVE REASONING		
College Algebra	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MATH 130</a>
SCIENTIFIC REASONING	Still needed:	Choose from 1 of the following:
Life Science for Non-majors and Lab		2 Classes in <a href="#">BIO 105</a> and <a href="#">106</a>

**Major in Marketing, BSBA** INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 27    Credits applied: 0  
Catalog year: 2021-2022    GPA: 0.00

**Unmet conditions for this set of requirements:** 27 credits are required. You currently have 0, you still need 27 more credits. Your GPA in these classes is 0.00. Your GPA is 0.00; a GPA of 2.0 is required.

Minimum credits taken at West Liberty University.	Still needed:	Minimum credits taken at West Liberty University: You have 0 but still need a minimum of 15 credits
Professional Selling	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 332</a>
Retailing	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 334</a>
Consumer Behavior	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 340</a>
Integrated Marketing Communications	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 341</a>
Social Media Marketing	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 425</a>
Marketing Research	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 485</a>
Marketing Management	Still needed:	1 Class in <a href="#">MKT 498</a>
Business Electives	Still needed:	2 Classes in <a href="#">GBUS 300:499</a> or <a href="#">ACC 300:499</a> or <a href="#">MGT 300:499</a> or <a href="#">MKT 300:499</a> or <a href="#">FIN 300:499</a> or

- Confirm courses taken do apply to a student's degree

College of Business - Electives to total 120 hours
INCOMPLETE

Credits required: 3   Credits applied: 0  
Catalog year: 2021-2022   GPA: 0.00

Unmet conditions for this set of requirements:   3 to 14 hours of electives are needed to total 120 hours. You currently have 0, you still need 3 more credits.

○ Electives to total 120 hours

Still needed:   3 to 14 Credits in @ @

Within the **“What If”** tab under the student information section, a student and/or advisor can choose a different degree program to assess what degree progress would look like if a student were to change their major or degree program. By choosing the drop-down options and selecting the appropriate degree, catalog year, and major/minor/concentration, a temporary degree audit will be generated once the “Process” option is selected within this section.

Student ID  
@00113790

Name  
Student, West Lib

Degree  
Bachelor of Sci in Bus Admin

Advanced search

Level Undergraduate   Classification Freshman   Major Marketing   Program Business Administration   College College of Business  
Advisor Loy, L   Email Loy@westliberty.edu   Hold(s) Business Office, Withdrawal Balance

Academic   **What-If**   Athletic Eligibility

View historic what-if audit

What-If Analysis

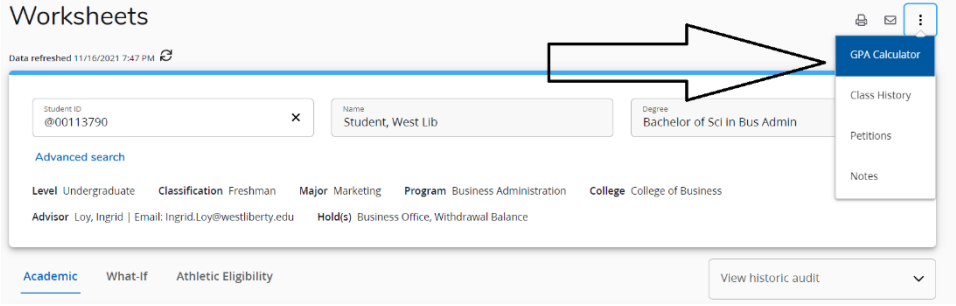
Program

Catalog year \*   Campus \*   Level \*

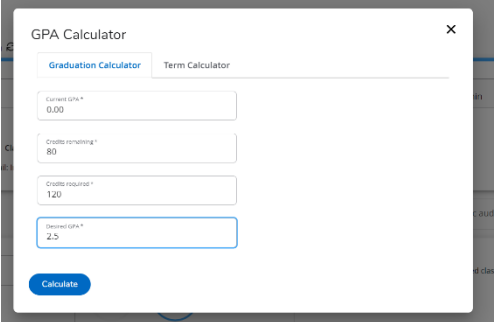
Degree \*   College \*

DegreeWorks also has a **GPA Calculator** that can be utilized for the following functions:

- **Graduation Calculator** – Displays Current GPA along with Credits Remaining/Required and Desired GPA. This allows a student to understand a GPA necessary over remaining credits needed to achieve a desired GPA



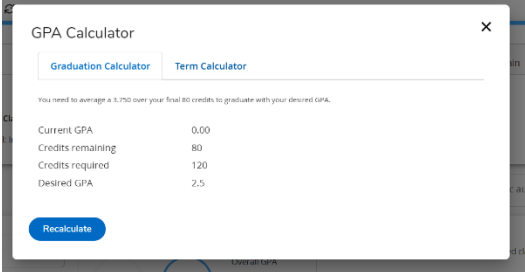
The screenshot shows the 'Worksheets' page in DegreeWorks. At the top, it says 'Data refreshed 11/16/2021 7:47 PM'. Below this is a search bar with fields for Student ID (@00113790), Name (Student, West Lib), and Degree (Bachelor of Sci In Bus Admin). There are also tabs for Level (Undergraduate), Classification (Freshman), Major (Marketing), Program (Business Administration), and College (College of Business). An 'Advisor' field shows 'Loy, Ingrid | Email: Ingrid.Loy@westliberty.edu' and a 'Hold(s)' field shows 'Business Office, Withdrawal Balance'. A 'View historic audit' button is at the bottom right. A large arrow points to the 'GPA Calculator' button in the top right corner of the page.



The screenshot shows the 'GPA Calculator' window with the 'Graduation Calculator' tab selected. It displays the following information:

Field	Value
Current GPA *	0.00
Credits remaining *	80
Credits required *	120
Desired GPA *	2.5

A 'Calculate' button is at the bottom.



The screenshot shows the 'GPA Calculator' window with the 'Term Calculator' tab selected. It displays the following information:

Field	Value
Current GPA	0.00
Credits remaining	80
Credits required	120
Desired GPA	2.5

A 'Recalculate' button is at the bottom.

- **Term Calculator** – A student can utilize this to plug in anticipated course grades for a specific term to understand term GPA. This option also calculates cumulative GPA after a given term as well

GPA Calculator

Graduation Calculator | **Term Calculator**

Current GPA \* 2.5 Credits earned \* 65

Add Course

Course *	Credits *	Grade *
BIO 124	3	B
BIO 125	1	C
ENG 101	3	A

Calculate

GPA Calculator

Graduation Calculator | **Term Calculator**

Calculated GPA

By achieving the grades listed here, your GPA at the end of the term will be 2.576

Current GPA 2.5 Credits earned 65

Course	Credits	Grade
BIO 124	3	B
BIO 125	1	C
ENG 101	3	A

Recalculate

## Registration

Course Registration is the element most associated with Academic Advising and the one that most commonly generates conversation and meetings/discussions with students. While students are responsible for completing the task or registering in WINS 9, advisors can be instrumental in the process of confirming students are developing a schedule that will support their personal and academic needs to set themselves up for a successful semester. Here are a topics/ways in which you can be helpful in this process:

- **Course Offerings** – Within the Schedule Search option in WINS 9, you can review course offerings for a past, current, or upcoming term. Select the “Schedule Search” option and then you will select the appropriate term from the “Select a Term for Class Search” dropdown option; then click “Continue”. From the “Browse Classes” screen, select the appropriate “Subject” option from the either the dropdown options or begin typing the appropriate subject option (i.e. starting typing Criminal Justice and this option will appear). You can keep it simple by selecting a specific subject (Biology, General Business, etc.) to show all course offerings for that particular subject or you can enter a “Course Number” to represent a specific course offering (e.g. ENG 102)

ellucian

Student • Registration • **Select a Term**

Select a Term

How would you like to search?

☒ Term ☐ Date Range

Select a Term for Class Search

Fall 2022

Continue

ellucian

Student • Registration • **Select a Term** • Browse Classes

Browse Classes

Enter Your Search Criteria

Term: Fall 2022

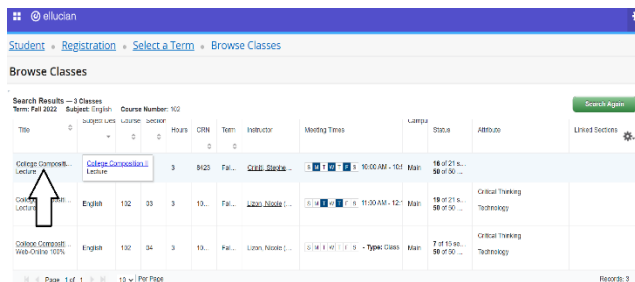
Subject English

Course Number 102

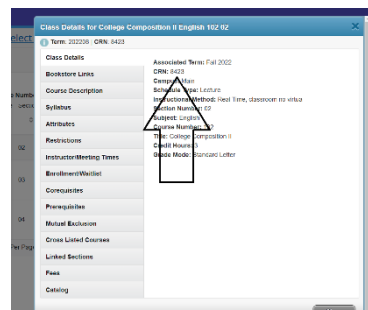
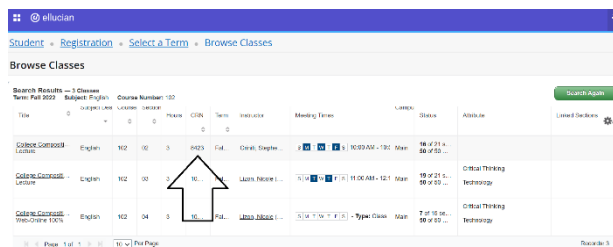
Keyword

Search Clear Advanced Search

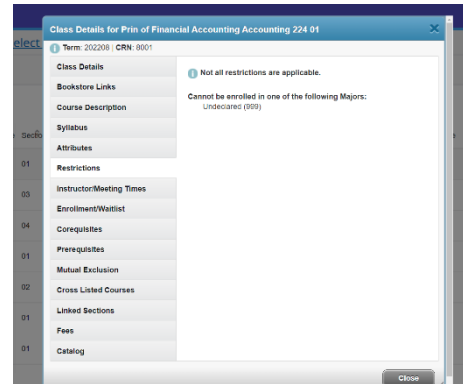
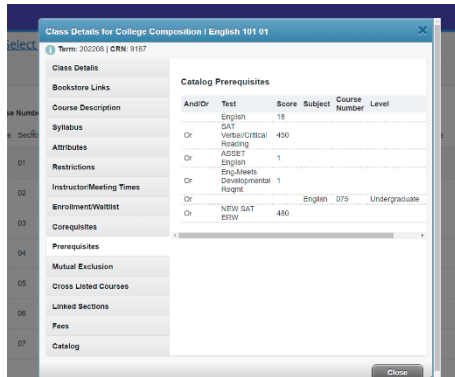
- **Course Information** – Once you have the desired course offerings selected to review, you can review various elements of a course, including: Class Details (includes Course Registration Number {or CRN}), Course Description, Restrictions, Instructor/Meeting Times, Corequisites, and Prerequisites. These options can be found by simply clicking the course “Title” link as shown below:



- **Course Registration Number (CRN)** – This is the specific number associated with each section of each offered course for a given term. This can be found either in the “Browse Courses” screen or within the “Class Details” screen for a specific course. Students can utilize this number to more easily complete registration within the student view.



- **Course/Schedule Restrictions or Prerequisites** – Certain courses may have restrictions, such as an Accounting course only being open to students within certain majors or concentrations. Another example is for ENG 101 for which a student must have a certain SAT/ACT score to register for the three (3) credit option. Those not meeting this test score requirement would have to register for the four (4) credit option. An example of a Schedule Restriction is that students on Academic Probation may not register for more than 16 total credit hours.



- **Pre-Registration Dates** – Dates when current students are able to register by class standing are released by the Registrar’s Office. The date Pre-Registration opens is available on the [Academic Calendar](#).
- **Alternate PIN** – In order for a student to complete Course Registration in WINS, they must receive their Alternate PIN from their Academic Advisor. This requires a student to discuss their course schedule with this person and confirm courses are appropriate for degree progress. This six (6) digit number is provided with Pre-Registration information from the Registrar’s Office.



## Forms

There are various forms associated with Course Registration available through the Registrar's Office. The full list of forms is available through the Registrar's Office web page at [THIS LINK](#). Here is a short list of forms and their purpose:

- [Blank Pre-Registration Schedule Form](#) – This can be helpful for students and advisors to use as a guide for course registration.
- [Data Change Request Form](#) – This online form is utilized for various student purposes, including: Address Change, Major Change, Declare Minor, Course Catalog Year Change, Switch Academic Advisors.
- [Permission to Disclose/Discuss Educational Records](#) – Students can complete this in order for a person to be able to discuss education records at WLU with members of the University community. Commonly this is completed for student parent/guardians to be able to discuss education records.
- [Petition Form](#) – Students petition through this form to have certain courses be permitted towards degree progress that are not typical degree requirements.
- [Pre-Requisite Override Form](#) – Students can work with Faculty to complete this form and be permitted to register for a course in which a student may not have fulfilled all pre-requested requirements.
- [Transient Application](#) – If a student is taking courses outside of West Liberty University, students complete this form to confirm that WLU will accept those credits and what course credit will be provided by WLU. Students should complete this prior to starting a course outside of WLU to confirm how a course will transfer to WLU.
- [Verification of Enrollment](#) – Students may need to complete this online form for various personal or financial reasons.

Also available on the Registrar's Forms page is information on institutions for which West Liberty University has an existing Transfer Agreement and the courses that these courses transfer to WLU. If students are interested in taking summer courses or other course options while at WLU, they can refer to these agreements [HERE](#).

## Additional Information

Here is additional information that can be helpful when working with students as an Academic Advisor:

### Course Catalogs

Students are automatically assigned the Course Catalog for the academic year which they start their academic career at West Liberty University. If there is a beneficial reason for a student to switch Course Catalog years (e.g. General Education requirement changes, degree requirement amendments), students can request this by completing the Data Change Request Form or visiting the Enrollment Center in Shaw Hall 121. Course Catalogs are available [HERE](#).

*It's important to note that students can move forward in Course Catalog, but cannot move backward. For example, a student that begins during the 2019-2020 academic year can move to the 2021-2022 Course Catalog, but cannot move backward to the 2017-2018 Course Catalog. Also, once students move forward in Course Catalog year, they cannot then move backward to a previous year in which they have initially been assigned.*

### Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar provides a roadmap for the semester and important dates/items to be aware. You can utilize this to effectively communicate information to your students so they are aware of key points within a given semester. Here are items to consider reminding students as they approach.

- **Drop/Add** – Dropping a course by this deadline means that the course will not count towards attempted credits and have a negative impact on Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students needing to add a course to become full-time or remain on track for financial aid/scholarship criterion can take advantage of this as well.
- **Mid-Term** – General awareness of when these grades will be available as a time to check-in with students and connect them with support services as may be needed/helpful.
- **Two-Thirds Point of Semester** – This is a **VERY** important date for students that may be struggling in a class. If a student is failing a course and will not be able to recover this grade, Withdrawing from this course may be a necessary option. After the two-thirds point of the semester, if a student Withdraws with a failing grade and earns a WF, this is counted towards their GPA just like an “F”. Prior to this deadline, students can Withdraw from a course with a “W” and while this does count against their course progress rate, it does not negatively impact their GPA.
- **Last Day To Drop a Class** – Again, if a student is not doing as well as they would like in a course, considering withdrawing from a course prior to this deadline may be worthwhile..

### ***Registrar's Office Staff***

There are various members of the Registrar's Office staff. Here are basic areas of responsibility covered by staff within this area:

- Registration issues
- Grade changes
- VA certification
- Major Changes
- Advisor Changes
- Recording Credit from Transcripts
- Petitions
- Transient Forms
- Credit by Exam
- Transfer courses/credit

### **Blank Schedule Form**

Referring students to this form can be helpful for Course Registration as well as for time management.

### ***Student Athletes***

There is a whole other set of requirements student-athletes have to achieve in order to remain eligible for practice/competition. Questions on this should be referred to Brad Forshey in Athletics to coordinate with Registrar staff to confirm. Here are basic requirements to be aware:

- Students must be full-time (at least 12 registered credits) to practice and compete. The only exception is if a student is in their final semester and does not need 12 credit hours to complete degree requirements.
- Must complete at least 24 credit hours in the previous academic year (includes summer terms).
- Must complete at least 18 total credit hours during the fall/spring semesters.
- Starting in a student's fifth (5th) semester, at least 24 hours per academic year must be towards their degree requirements.
- A student must pass at least nine (9) credit hours during their most recent full-term semester. This does not include summer terms.
- A student must have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA.

### ***Support Services***

Various offices/areas on campus are available to assist students with academic challenges, personal struggles, or students that are just searching for guidance on certain topics. Here are some of those areas:

- [Learning & Student Development Center \(LSDC\)](#) – The LSDC offers Peer Tutoring, Academic Coaching, Career Development, and Accessibility services to students. These offices are located in Main 147.
- [Robinson Writing Center](#) – The Robinson Writing Center offers writing tutors for students. More information can be found in the bottom floor of the Elbin Library (L14).
- Counseling Services – Student counseling services are available by appointment in the College Union, Second Floor, S14. Appointments can be made through WINS, emailing [lwitzberger@westliberty.edu](mailto:lwitzberger@westliberty.edu), or calling 304-336-8215.
- [Elbin Library](#) – The Elbin Library and its staff provide students with wired PCs, Mac computers, wireless access, printing, photocopying, and digital imaging. Students are able to meet with Library staff to understand how to search for available books, journal articles, or resources through available databases.
- Office of e-Learning – Students experiencing issues with Sakai and/or viewing course content can reach out directly to the Office of e-Learning through their [Help Form](#).
- Information Technology (IT) – IT Services can assist students in understanding more about how to utilize university or personal technology. Students can visit IT Offices in the Main Hall Basement or submit a [Help Desk Ticket](#).

## **Why It Is Difficult**

There are various challenges that present themselves while serving as an Academic Advisor. They can be as simple as confirming to a student that the courses they have selected are best suited for degree progress or as difficult as students presenting personal struggles that have had a significant, negative impact on their academic progress and ability to continue as a student now and in the future. While it is not possible to prepare you for every situation that may arise, here are common items and strategies you can use to assist/support students.

## **The Challenges Students Present**

Here are some common challenges and strategies/methods you can utilize to address:

- ***Unresponsive*** – Students may not respond to your best attempts to engage them throughout a given semester/academic year. This could be for a variety of reasons (academic and personal). Here are options for what you can do if this occurs:
  - If you have not already, consider scheduling points of contact throughout a given semester, not just prior to course registration for the next semester. It is possible a student is not responsive because there was an issue earlier in the semester you are not aware of due to gaps in communication. When students don't see or engage in communication with their advisor, your outreach may not seem as important to the student.
  - Reach out to other faculty/instructors if you are aware they are enrolled in a certain course. Is the student attending? Are they participating normally? If so, maybe that person can encourage the student to visit you during office hours or respond to an email.
  - If you have concerns about a student not responding, complete an [Academic Alert](#) and staff in the Learning & Student Development Center can assist with this outreach.
- ***Unprepared*** – Students may show up to an advising meeting without having completed necessary items to prepare for that meeting. Maybe a student comes in without having looked at courses offered for the next semester for a course registration meeting. Or you specifically requested a student to complete research about internship opportunities for next semester. Whatever the task, here are things to consider:
  - If you do not already, ask students to bring items to take notes during meetings. Maybe this is a notebook and pen/pencil, laptop, or students can take notes on their cell phones. Whatever the method, it is more likely for a student to remember to complete a task that you assigned if they have it written down or stored in a location to review later.

- Have note taking items available in your office space to provide students if they do not bring these items. If possible, also provide a file folder and ask a student to keep items and notes from your meetings in this folder.
- After a meeting, follow up with a quick email confirming what you have discussed and the expectations of the student for the next time you meet.
- While dismissing a student meeting is not the best option to foster an advisor-advisee relationship, consider redirecting your conversation if a student is not prepared. So, instead of talking about internship opportunities, discuss current topics or use the time to do a check-in with that student about how they feel about career options or graduate school options post-graduation. You can then reschedule the meeting to discuss the intended topic while still utilizing the scheduled time productively.
- ***Unrealistic Expectations*** – Students may show up to an advising appointment with the understanding that their involvement will be minimal. In short, that you will be doing the work for them and all they will do is take the schedule you have prepared and complete course registration. Additionally, students may expect when they are being challenged academically or have underperformed, you have the “magic wand” to wave and make it all better. Here are strategies you can use to help avoid these unrealistic expectations:
  - Be clear in your communication with students from the beginning about course registration. If you are clear about your role when students set up advising appointments and reinforce that as you begin a meeting, you will have set clear expectations from each side.
  - Intentional communication about key dates on the academic calendar, campus support services, and your role as an advisor can help eliminate the expectation that you can be the “fixer” for all issues and ensure success. When difficult conversations about academic progress are required, communicating clear expectations, clear options, and assisting to develop a plan of action for the student demonstrate student expectations to improve academic standing – not advisor action items to resolve this for the student.

## Appreciative Advising

There have been many iterations of trendy terms utilized to identify best practices for developing meaningful relationships with your advisees; the newest of those terms is Appreciative Advising. According to [appreciativeadvising.net](http://appreciativeadvising.net); “Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking generative, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials. It is perhaps the best example of a fully student-centered approach to student development.”

Appreciative Advising utilizes Six (6) Phases to guide interactions with students and create a meaningful Advising relationship that can positively impact student retention and academic success.

1. Disarm – Make a positive first impression with the student, build rapport, and create a safe/welcoming space.
2. Discover – Ask positive, open-ended questions that help advisers learn about student strengths, skills, and abilities.
3. Dream – Inquire about student hopes and dreams for their futures.
4. Design – Co-create a plan for making their dreams a reality.
5. Deliver – The students deliver on the plan created during the Design phase and the advisor is available to encourage and support students.
6. Do Not Settle – Advisors and students need to set their own internal bars of expectations high.

To learn more about how you can become an Appreciative Advisor, consider these resources:

- [Appreciative Books](#)
- [Appreciative Articles](#)
- [Appreciative Advising Inventory](#)
- [The Journal of Appreciative Education](#)

## Other Challenges/Items To Be Aware

This Handbook is meant to provide you basic information and the tools to successfully advise students. As will always be the case, unanticipated challenges will present themselves and connecting students with resources/staff may be necessary. Here are other challenges you may encounter while advising students.

### *Major/Career Path Change*

- Students that are unsure of their career path and want to discuss a major change can present unique circumstances and challenges. If students can express specific major options they would like to pursue, connecting them with a program directly or faculty member in that area is a positive first step.
- Students unsure of their career thoughts or a direction can be connected with the Learning & Student Development Center. LSDC staff can discuss student preferences and desires within to help establish career path/major options and connect students with appropriate faculty.
- Ultimately, students will work to decide a career path/major and complete the [Data Change Request Form](#) to declare a new major/select an Advisor.

### *Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)*

If you have additional questions on SAP as it pertains to a student, contact Financial Aid.

- Federal Regulations require that students must be making measurable academic progress towards completion of an eligible degree or certification. This requires evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative academic progress as well as completion of degree objective within 150% of the normal timeframe.
- ***Quantitative Standard*** – Students must successfully complete 70% of all attempted credit hours. The calculation is made as follows: earned credit hours/attempted credit hours = completion rate.
- ***Qualitative Standards*** - Students must meet a qualitative standard of academic progress measured through grade point average. The required G.P.A. is based upon the total number of credit hours earned. Freshman students who have earned between 0 and 29 hours must have an accumulative G.P.A. of 1.6. Students who have earned between 30 and 59 hours must have an accumulative G.P.A. of 1.8. Students who have earned 60 or more hours must have an accumulative G.P.A. of 2.0. Graduate students must have an accumulative G.P.A. of 2.5.
- Any deficit can be made up during the summer.



### **Academic Probation/Suspension**

- Any student whose cumulative scholastic record shows a grade point average below a 2.00 will automatically acquire probationary status. While on probation, a maximum course load of 15-16 hours per semester is permissible.
- Students will be placed on academic suspension only if they have been placed on academic probation or were admitted on probationary status. Students who have been on probation or admitted on probation at least once, must meet a minimum grade point average as listed below in order to avoid academic suspension:
  - 0-29 credit hours earned requires a minimum 1.60 GPA
  - 30-59 credit hours earned requires a minimum 1.80 GPA
  - 60 credit hours earned or more required a 2.0 GPA
- Student records are reviewed for probation and suspension at the conclusion of each semester. Students placed on academic probation or suspension are notified in writing. Students wishing to appeal a first or second academic suspension must follow procedures outlined in their suspension letter. A student may have no more than two (2) suspensions and readmission. The third suspension is final, the students cannot re-enroll at WLU.

### **Scholarship/Grant Renewal**

With various scholarships/grants available to students, it is difficult to have ALL the right answers and communicate this effectively to your students. If you are unsure or you/a student have questions, contact Financial Aid. Below are common financial aid opportunities to be aware.

- WV Higher Education Grant/PHEAA Grant Renewal Requirements
  - Meet Satisfactory Academic Progress
  - Pass at least 24 credit hours total during the fall/spring semesters
  - Have at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA
  - Deficit CANNOT be made up during the Summer
  - Additional information on Grants can be found [HERE](#)
- [WV PROMISE](#)
  - Pass at least 30 credit hours total during the fall/spring semesters
  - Have at least a 2.75 cumulative GPA
  - College coursework completed during high school or prior to college enrollment is NOT considered
  - After first year, 3.0 GPA required and at least 30 completed credit hours

- Academic Scholarships
  - Renewal requirements are listed on a student's scholarship agreement. This is typically a 3.25 cumulative GPA and completing 30 hours during an academic year. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

### **Course Repeat Policy**

Understanding this policy can be crucial to students improving their GPA by repeating courses and earning better grades.

- Students can repeat up to 21 credit hours of courses with grades of D or F under the Higher Education Policy Commission's Course Repeat Policy. Students repeating courses prior to the fall of 2018 will not have those courses count towards the 21-credit hour limit. The original grade of D or F will be removed from the grade point average once repeated, but will remain on the transcript.
- Up to 8 credit hours of C grades can be repeated as part of the 21-credit hour limit. However, a request form, available in the Enrollment Services Center, must be signed and approved by the Department Chairperson/Program Director for the student's respective major.
- A student may repeat courses beyond the 21-credit hour cap. However, after the cap has been reached, all repeated courses will count in the grade point average. Courses passed and repeated after the 21 credit hour cap has been reached will only have the course counted once towards graduation requirements.

### ***Which Math/English Course?***

The correct Math/English course for General Education requirements can be difficult to confirm. This is, basically, decided by a student's ACT/SAT scores. These scores can be found within the WINS Advisor screen options. Here is additional breakdown for MATH and ENG 101/103. The following information was collected from the 2020-2021 Undergraduate Catalog; as an advisor, you should always refer to the appropriate Course Catalog based on the catalog that is guiding your student's degree completion:

- **MATH** – Different major options and career paths require specific MATH courses. Of these MATH course options, each course has a listed requirement to be eligible for the basic offering of the course that is either three (3), four (4), or five (5) credit hours. Students not meeting these minimum requirements have to take a course that requires additional credit hours of weekly recitation.
  - [MATH 160](#) has a minimum requirement of ACT Math 19 or SAT Math 500 to be eligible for the three (3) credit course offering. Students not meeting this must complete the five (5) credit option.
  - [MATH 130](#) has a minimum requirement of ACT MATH 21 or SAT Math 500 to be eligible for the four (4) credit course offering. Students not meeting this must complete the five (5) credit option.

- [ENG 103](#) – Students are eligible for ENG 103 if they have achieved an English ACT score of at least 25, SAT Verbal score of at least 570, or Advanced Placement Score of at least three (3) in English Literature and Composition. Students not meeting these minimum requirements must take ENG 101.
- [ENG 101](#) – Students not qualified to take ENG 103 must take ENG 101 and ENG 102 to meet this General Education requirement. Students that have at least an English ACT score of 18 or SAT Verbal 450 are eligible to register for the three (3) credit ENG 101 option. Students not meeting these minimum requirements or not having ACT/SAT scores on record must register for the four (4) credit ENG 101 option. After completing ENG 101, students are able to register for a three (3) credit ENG 102 course to complete this General Education requirement.

### ***Graduation Requirements – Undergraduate Students***

- Students must complete a minimum of 120 credit hours, of which at least 40 must be upper-level courses.
- Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0. For different major offerings, this may be a higher standard.
- Minimum grade of “C” in COM 101, ENG 101/ENG 102 or ENG 103.
- Minimum of 36 hours must be from West Liberty University and a minimum of 48 hours must be from a four-year college/university.
- 16 of a student’s last 32 credit hours completed must be earned at West Liberty University
- Minimum of 15 hours in a particular major must be earned at West Liberty University

## **Closing**

Assuming the role as an Academic Advisor is one that can provide great reward for your students as well as satisfaction with a job well done on your end. This Handbook provides relevant resources, information, and strategies to assist in this journey. You will be challenged and have questions you will not be sure how to respond or who the best person is to direct a student. When you find yourself in the unknown, please do not hesitate to reach out to staff within the Learning & Student Development Center, Registrar's Office, or Financial Aid. These are most often the areas that questions may specifically pertain to OR that can help connect you to the best person or office that those questions.

Thank you for assuming this role at West Liberty University and guiding our students towards degree completion, career readiness, and satisfaction with the University!