

## Narrative Report and Summary

**Date:** August 29, 2024

**Contractor Name:** Christina Castorena

**Contract Purpose:** Design Consulting Services

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### Project Overview

The scope of work for the services contract with Green River College (GRC) was to facilitate interactive, engaging, and equity-centered sessions aimed at assisting the Advising Redesign Workgroup in:

- Developing a clear vision for advising.
  - Creating an ideal student advising experience from start to finish.
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### Contract Activities

1. **Meetings with Allison Warner, Director of Advising:**

Meetings in May, June and July were held to plan the workshop agendas, schedule dates, and confirm logistics. An additional meeting in August was held to debrief the workshops and discuss next steps.

- May 31, 2024: 10:00 - 11:00 AM
- June 18, 2024: 9:00 - 10:00 AM
- July 3, 2024: 2:00 - 3:00 PM
- August 22, 2024: 3:00 - 3:30 PM

2. **Facilitated Workshops:**

Two full-day workshops were conducted to guide the workgroup through the advising redesign process.

- July 22, 2024: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  - August 14, 2024: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
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## Workshop Summaries

### Workshop 1: Developing an Equity-Centered Vision for Student Advising

**Date:** July 22, 2024

**Theme:** Visioning

This workshop focused on articulating the future goals for student advising at GRC. A clear vision is essential for guiding the development of an ideal advising framework. The workshop emphasized:

- **Understanding the Current State:** Participants explored the existing advising system, informed by data on its effectiveness in supporting student success.
- **Exploring Promising Practices:** Participants reviewed successful advising practices and models from other institutions.
- **Developing a Shared Vision:** The group collaboratively drafted an equity-centered vision statement for advising at GRC.

### **Objectives Achieved:**

Using brainstorming sessions and collaborative tools (e.g., Padlet), participants:

- Identified the strengths, challenges, and opportunities within the current advising system.
- Developed components of an equity-centered advising redesign.
- Created a preliminary vision statement for advising.
- Established an action plan to prepare for Workshop 2.

### **Homework Assignment:**

- Finalize the vision statement.
- Gather student input and additional data as needed.

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## **Workshop 2: From Vision to Action – Developing an Equity-Centered Advising Framework**

**Date:** August 14, 2024

**Theme:** Action

Building on the first workshop, this session focused on translating the shared vision into a practical, equity-centered advising framework.

### **Objectives Achieved:**

Using brainstorming sessions and collaborative tools (e.g., Padlet), participants:

- Summarized and reviewed outcomes of Workshop 1.
- Analyzed the strengths, challenges, and opportunities within the current advising system.
- Developed a shared framework for an inclusive and equitable advising design from start to finish.
- Initiated the creation of a project plan with key activities and timelines aimed at a Fall 2025 implementation.

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## **Overall Summary**

The workshop agendas were strategically designed to provide relevant information and interactive activities to engage participants in a thoughtful and productive process.

The Advising Redesign Workgroup successfully developed a shared vision and framework for an equity-centered advising redesign at GRC. The group is now focused on finalizing the vision statement and developing a detailed project plan that will prepare the college for implementation of the redesigned advising system in Fall 2025.

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## Next Steps

Over the next few months, Allison Warner, Advising Design Workgroup lead, will work with the members and staff in the Career & Advising Center to create a detailed project plan, including short-term and long-term priorities that will drive timelines for key activities to be completed.

A final facilitated session will be scheduled in late-October to check-in on progress and provide any additional guidance as needed.

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## Recommendations for Continued Success

As the college and workgroup moves forward with the redesigned advising system, I offer the following considerations to assist in a successful implementation:

1. **Increase Staffing and Funding:**
  - **Hire More Advisors:** Reduce caseloads and improve personalized advising by hiring additional staff.
  - **Secure Additional Funding:** Support new hires, program development, and advanced advising tools.
2. **Standardized Training Programs:**
  - **Comprehensive Onboarding:** Implement standardized training for new advisors.
  - **Continuous Professional Development:** Offer workshops on the latest advising practices and educational technologies.
3. **Unified Advising Protocols:**
  - **Develop Clear Guidelines:** Ensure consistency across departments with institution-wide protocols.
  - **Regular Audits and Reviews:** Maintain adherence to guidelines through periodic evaluations.
4. **Enhanced Technology Integration:**
  - **Utilize Advising Systems:** Invest in and/or fully utilize existing technology tools for efficient management and communication.
  - **Training on Technological Tools:** Provide training on new technologies, including data analytics.
5. **Improved Student Awareness and Engagement:**
  - **Outreach Programs:** Inform students about advising services through targeted campaigns.
  - **Engagement Strategies:** Implement peer advising and/or interactive workshops.
6. **Enhanced Administrative Support:**
  - **Streamlined Processes:** Simplify administrative tasks with online forms and automated workflows.

- **Dedicated Support Staff:** Employ administrative support to allow advisors more time with students.
  - 7. **Robust Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms:**
    - **Regular Surveys and Focus Groups:** Gather continuous feedback from students.
    - **Data-Driven Improvements:** Use feedback to improve advising practices and policies.
  - 8. **Promote Inclusivity and Diversity:**
    - **Cultural Competence Training:** Equip advisors with the skills to support a diverse student body.
    - **Equity Programs:** Ensure equitable access to advising for all students.
  - 9. **Improved Communication Channels:**
    - **Integrated Communication Platforms:** Utilize platforms that offer multiple communication channels.
    - **Regular Updates and Check-ins:** Establish consistent and regular communication with students.
  - 10. **Collaborative Advising Model:**
    - **Team-Based Approach:** Implement a model where advisors, faculty, and staff collaborate.
    - **Interdepartmental Communication:** Strengthen communication across departments.
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## Additional Considerations

- **Peer Mentoring Programs:** Train successful students to support their peers.
- **Enhanced Data Analytics:** Utilize predictive analytics to identify students “at-promise” and proactively tailor support to eliminate risk of nonsuccess.
- **Specialized Advising Tracks:** Develop career-specific and interest-based advising programs.
- **Strengthen Career Assessments:** Integrate career advising with academic planning.
- **Virtual Advising Options:** Expand online advising services and virtual drop-in hours.
- **Expansion of Support Services:** Include mental health and wellness support in advising.
- **Development of Comprehensive Resources:** Create handbooks and online resource libraries.
- **Promotion of Experiential Learning:** Encourage participation in service learning and study abroad.
- **Continuous Improvement Loop:** Collect feedback regularly and assess advising quality.
- **Integration of Equity Practices:** Implement policies that prioritize inclusivity and support historically underserved communities.

The above recommendations and considerations aim to address the key challenges identified during Workshop 1 and enhance the overall effectiveness and equity of the advising services, ensuring that all students receive the support they need to succeed academically and personally between different departments to provide a holistic support system for students.

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## Reflections and Closing Remarks

The collaboration with Allison Warner and the Advising Redesign Workgroup was a rewarding experience. They kept the students, the student experience, and equity at the center of their work. The group's dedication to student success and equity was evident throughout the process. As leaders on campus and in advising, they are an inspiration to both students and staff and will serve as trusted change agents and advocates moving forward.

At the close of the second workshop, participants were invited to share their reflections. Below are a few comments from participants:

- “We have accomplished a lot in thinking about all of the moving parts that go into these decisions and have learned a lot about what different programs are doing and the considerations we need to make when making decisions.”
- “Excited to see conversations become action.”
- “Excited to see what this becomes.”

Participants concluded the workshops feeling “insightful”, “hopeful”, “optimistic”, and “intentional about the work ahead.”

### Special Thanks:

- **Dr. Cathy (Kit) Alston, Dr. Eric Greer, and David Larson** for their inspiring opening remarks and support.
- **Allison Warner** for her leadership, thoughtful planning, and commitment to this critical work.

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### Attachments:

**Workshop 1 Agenda**

**Workshop 1 Slides**

**Padlet Responses Workshop 1**

**Workshop 2 Agenda**

**Workshop 2 Slides**

**Padlet Responses Workshop 2**

**Advising Meeting July Themes**