

# **ACADEMIC ADVISING: QUICK TIPS FOR FRESHMEN**

## **FACULTY ADVISORS: Big Picture**

Your faculty advisor is an important resource for questions about electives within the major, research opportunities, graduate study, and 'big picture' topics. You must meet with them during each Advanced Registration period.

### **General Topics of Discussions between Freshmen and their Advisors**

- Expectations of the College Experience
- Career Aspirations and Academic Interests
- Undergraduate Research Options
- Summer Opportunities for Freshmen
- Ways to get involved in the department and in SEAS

## **DEPARTMENTAL OFFICE ADVISORS: In-Major Specifics**

Present in each department, the Undergraduate Coordinator is the person to talk to for Course Planning Worksheet clarification and other curricular issues that are related to your major. The Undergraduate Chair is also available by appointment.

## **PROFESSIONAL STAFF ADVISORS: General Knowledge**

Professional Staff Advisors answer questions about requirements and electives outside of Engineering, studying abroad, dual degree programs, minors, and submatriculation. If you are having academic difficulties, a Staff Advisor can help to point you in the right direction. These advisors are located inside the Academic Programming Office(APO) in Towne.

## **PENN CAREER SERVICES: Professional Development**

Located in the basement of McNeil (across from Huntsman), Career Services have both Engineering Advisors and Pre-professional advisors (graduate, medical, law).

## **PEER ADVISORS : Students' View**

Orientation Peer Advisors (OPAs) are Engineering upperclassmen who guide students from the summer before their freshmen year. Peer Advisors are also available throughout the year from your major's professional organization. Ask them anything to hear the opinion of someone who has been through the same decisions. Both peer advising options are organized through APO.

\*All Advisors (except for the OPA) are available by appointment. Most are also available during weekly office hours.

\*Before consulting any advisors, students should first check the Undergraduate Handbook, easily accessible on the Penn Engineering website. The Course and Requirements category should be especially helpful for course planning.

Created by the **Engineering Deans' Advisory Board (EDAB)**, who seeks to enhance the Penn Engineering undergraduate experience through project work and initiatives targeting both academic and social aspects of the school.

# **QUESTIONS FOR FRESHMEN TO ASK THEIR ADVISORS**

## **QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY ADVISORS:**

- 1) When are your office hours this semester?
- 2) What do most freshmen students do for their first summer?
- 3) Can you tell me about undergraduate research opportunities in our department?
- 4) How can I become more involved in the school or in my major?
- 5) What resources at Penn/SEAS do you think I should take most advantage of?
- 6) Is it normal for students to be undecided between more than one major? At what point do I need to decide?
- 7) How did you choose your field?

## **QUESTIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE COORDINATORS:**

- 1) If I am planning on going abroad, what are some specific in-major considerations I have to be aware of?
- 2) How can I complete my pre-professional classes in addition to my engineering requirements?
- 3) Should I strictly follow the sample course curriculum? To what extent can I plan my own schedule?
- 4) How do I switch faculty advisors?
- 5) How can I become more involved in the school or in my major?

## **QUESTIONS FOR APO:**

- 1) How difficult is it to switch majors?
- 2) How easy is it to go abroad as a junior? Should I already be thinking about it now?
- 3) I am thinking about dual degree/minor. What preparations should I make?
- 4) How should I decide my non-SEAS and non-major SEAS electives? Can you suggest some popular classes?
- 5) Does this course count as a humanities/social science/technical elective?
- 6) What do most freshmen students do for their first summer?

## **QUESTIONS FOR OPAS:**

- 1) What are some things that you wish you had known prior to arriving on campus?
- 2) To what extent do I need to follow the sample curriculum on my department's website?
- 3) What elective courses do you recommend?
- 4) Can you offer some tips about balancing extracurricular activities with work?
- 5) What extracurricular activities are you involved in, and how should I go about finding the ones that interest me?
- 6) How do I prepare for studying on a college level?

## **QUESTIONS FOR PEER ADVISORS:**

- 1) What did you do the summer after your freshman year?
- 2) How can I be more prepared for the next round of midterms?
- 3) How do I become aware of job opportunities on campus?