

## ACADEMIC ADVISING FAQ

Northwest prides itself on providing services and assistance to help students achieve success. In fact, our mission, focusing on “**student success - every student, every day,**” guides and informs our work each day.

Northwest has dedicated, professional advisor/success coaches who work primarily with first- and second-year students. The advisor/coaches specialize in 1 to 3 academic areas and work closely with faculty in the academic disciplines for which they advise. They will work with your student, advising them on their major and classes, but they also work with students to explore their academic and professional goals and help students connect with resources across campus. Advisor/coaches work to support and connect students.

Transfer students may work initially with a professional advisor/coach, then are generally assigned to a faculty advisor moving forward. This depends on the number of hours a student transfers in and their major. Transfer students are also supported by a professional Transfer Advisor in the Student Success Center who can assist with transfer credit, general questions and more.



### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q Will students have an opportunity to meet with their advisor today?**

- A** All students will meet individually with a professional advisor/success coach or faculty advisor from their department/school during advising today.
- Freshman:** The professional advising/coaching team will be on hand to meet with families who are the primary advisor for first-year and most second-year students, will be on hand to meet with families and answer questions throughout the afternoon, and will continue to be available via Zoom or phone throughout the summer. A member of our Student Success team developed each student’s schedule throughout the summer to set them up for success.
- Transfers:** Freshman and Sophomore transfer students are often assigned to professional advisors, similar to first-time freshman. Transfer students bringing in 60 plus hours will be assigned a faculty advisor in August as classes are set to begin. In the meantime, if questions arise, members of the professional advising/coaching team are available to assist, including an advisor that specialized in assisting transfer students.

**Q How soon do students need to choose a major, and can they change their major?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** Students may change majors at any time. We recommend discussing options with a member of our professional advising/coaching team. Students should not feel pressure to choose a major immediately. There is some time for exploration and students may consider a meta-major while they decide. Deciding students may choose from four meta-majors: Science, Education, Business and University Studies. Students should work closely with their advisor/coach to explore options.
- If you are interested in adding a minor or second major, be sure to discuss this with your advisor/coach. This can be officially be added once classes begin in August.

**Q How are students enrolled in classes for fall?**

- A Freshman:** Our professional advising/coaching team worked throughout May and early June to schedule new students. This helps create better schedules by allowing more time and thought to be devoted to each student’s schedule.
- We take a number of factors into consideration while scheduling, including:
- Department recommendations for specific majors
  - Test scores for placement
  - Dual credit, AP credit or other earned hours (Do not forget to send official transcripts.)
  - If students are planning to live in an Academic Living Community (ALC)
  - If students are athletes
  - If students are involved in band or music
  - Student preferences
- Advisor/coaches worked diligently when creating student schedules to ensure each student has an opportunity to get off to a good start on their academic journey at Northwest!
- Transfers:** Each transfer student is unique, and comes to Northwest with a variety of things to be considered as a student is scheduled. Faculty advisors and professional advisor/coaches work with transfer students to assist them in enrolling. We often pre-enroll transfer students as we do freshman to give students optimal course options and times. Schedules can always be adjusted as needed. Transfer students have more autonomy in creating and changing schedules, if they desire, however students are encouraged to use faculty, advisor/coaches, and the Student Success Center’s transfer advisor as needed to ensure timely degree completion.

**Q What is the Northwest Core?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** The Northwest Core is the 42 hours of general studies that each student completes as part of their Bachelor’s degree. A large majority of a student’s first two semesters will be focused on satisfying these requirements. Other students may find that their major requirements will start their very first semester and will work on their Northwest Core requirements throughout their full four years. Students must also complete 4 hours of institutional requirements. Transfer students and some freshman will already have a significant number of these hours complete, which increases the number of major courses they would take first semester. Transfer students who have an Associate of Arts degree from an in-state or partner institution can waive the Northwest Core.

**Q How do students know what classes to take?**

**Freshman and Transfers:** The advising/coaching team assists students with academic planning and course selection, among many other things. To create the initial course schedule, the advising/coaching team considered the optimal course schedule provided by each department/school. Students may also review online their degree audit, four-year plan, and the 2021-2022 academic catalog.

**Q Can students change classes?**

- A Freshman:** Absolutely! Any class except University Seminar may be changed, and students sometimes change one or more of their classes during advisement at SOAR. Students also have the opportunity to make schedule changes during Advantage, if needed.
- A Transfers:** Absolutely! You may make adjustments to your schedule today during advising, or you have access to make adjustments as you choose through CatPAWS. We always recommend consulting with an advisor in your department or and advisor/coach through the Students Success Center first to ensure you are making the right course selection.

**Q How is course placement determined?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** Students who do not have college credit in English or Math are placed in courses based on their ACT subscores in those areas, respectively. Students who feel their English sub-score does not reflect their writing ability may choose to take a writing challenge to place into a higher-level English course. If students have

English Subscore	Course Placement
1-17	10-110 Intro to College Writing (A developmental English course)
18-26	10-111 Composition I
27 and higher	10-115 Accelerated Composition (replaces 10-111 and 10-112 in one semester)

Math Subscore	Course Placement in common Math courses (Please note, Math courses are also typically determined by major choice.)
1-21	College level Math courses, except PreCalculus and Calculus with support course (Strategies)
22 or higher or a 3.0 High School GPA	Most college level Math courses: Math Modeling, Statistics, Concepts of Math, Fundamentals of Math
22 or higher or a passing score on the NW Algebra Review	17-118 PreCalculus Algebra

**Q How many hours should students be enrolled in?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** Northwest recommends that students consider completing 30 hours a year to stay on track and finish in four years. This may look different for each student. While one student may wish to take 15 hours each semester and work over the summer, another student may feel 12 hours in the fall, 12 hours in the spring, and 6 hours over the summer offers them a better chance for success. The minimum for full time student status is 12 hours, and the average for first time freshmen is 14 hours. This is a good discussion for students to have with their advisor/coach. Students must have a minimum of 120 hours to graduate.

**Q Is class attendance monitored?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** While students are expected to attend class, each class and professor will specify their attendance policy for each class. Many faculty consider attendance in class and use that information in some way to assign points. In addition, if students are not attending classes regularly, faculty raise alerts in NW 360, our student success tool, so that their advisor/coach can follow up when necessary. Attending class regularly is critical to academic success.

**Q Do freshman take a transition course?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** Yes! University Seminar (77-101) is a special course all first time freshman and transfer students with under 15 credit hours take in their first semester. The course is designed to enhance their academic and social integration into the Northwest community. University Seminar is a one-credit hour course designed to provide students with essential strategies and information to increase the likelihood of student success. Each section of University Seminar is team-taught by an instructor and a peer advisor. Students may also choose to opt into a themed section during SOAR advisement. The topics are Leadership, Global Perspectives, and First Generation, for students who are the first in their family to go to college. Students who feel they need additional accountability may consider taking Academic Success Coaching, a 1-credit class team taught by their advisor/success coach, a graduate assistant, and peer mentors.

**Q What is Satisfactory Academic Progress?**

- A Freshman and Transfers:** Students with under 30 hours must earn a 1.75 GPA to stay in good standing with the university. Students with 30 hours or over must earn a 2.0 GPA. Some majors may have higher GPA or course grade requirements. In addition, scholarships and financial aid may also have other criteria that students must meet. If a freshman student's GPA drops below a 1.75, they will be on academic probation and required to participate in an academic recovery program. Freshmen between a 1.76 and 1.99 will not be on academic probation, but are required to take a one-credit hour Academic Success Coaching course. If a transfer student's Northwest GPA is below a 2.0 in their first semester, they will be on academic probation and required to participate in an academic recovery program. Each semester a student is on academic probation, they must get a minimum of a 2.0 GPA or they will be suspended.

For more information on academic planning, the Complete 30 initiative, Academic Success Coaching, or other academic advisement questions, contact the Student Success Center at [studentsuccess@nwmissouri.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@nwmissouri.edu) or 660-562-1695.