

# Advantages and Challenges in Academic Advising Approaches Utilized by Various Size Agricultural Universities

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DISCOVER

THE UNIVERSITY of  
TENNESSEE **UT**  
MARTIN

University of Arkansas  
at Monticello

**UAM**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT MONTICELLO  
MONTICELLO · CROCKETT · MCGEE



MISSISSIPPI STATE  
UNIVERSITY

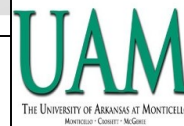
- ✓ **Student satisfaction with their Academic Advisor will decrease as the size of the university/academic unit enrollment and the complexity of course offerings increases.**

## **HYPOTHESIS**



- 1. What academic advising approaches are being used at different institutions?**
- 2. What are agribusiness student perceptions and attitudes about the academic advising received?**
- 3. Do student perceptions and attitudes differ between institutions of different sizes?**
- 4. What are the future implications for agribusiness student academic advising?**

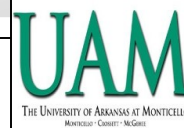
## **KEY QUESTIONS**





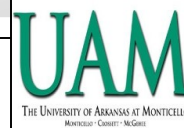
- Three universities offering an agribusiness major at the undergraduate level (B.S.) were planned to participate in the study. The institutions were chosen to represent different institutional sizes and had the following total student enrollments in Fall Semester 2015:
    - 3,854 - University of Arkansas at Monticello
    - 6,791 - University of Tennessee at Martin
    - 20,873 – Mississippi State University
- (#'s taken from respective state higher education publications)

## DATA SOURCES



- Faculty advisors at 3 institutions were interviewed to outline their advising process.
- A student survey instrument was developed consisting of 36 major questions plus additional subsections of the major questions.
- The overall survey database listed 66 possible separate responses per agribusiness student.
- Univ. of Arkansas at Monticello - 54 participants
- Univ. of Tennessee at Martin - 74 participants
- MS State Univ. - Insufficient # of participants

## DATA SOURCES



- Adapt a survey instrument that had been previously used in a 2012 study of student satisfaction with the Academic Advising system by a mid-size, U.S. agricultural university.
- Use the instrument to survey agribusiness students at 3 institutions of different sizes in Spring 2016 to generate data sets by institution with the potential participants identified by faculty, i.e. all agribusiness students at the respective institution.
- Compile the three data sets into one set for frequency and cross-tabulation analyses.

## METHODOLOGY



# Advising Procedures



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# Mississippi State University

## NEW COLLEGE STUDENT:

- Orientation Event w/ Department of Agricultural Economics Undergraduate Coordinator – Choose program of study and assigned faculty advisor

## CURRENT STUDENT CHANGING MAJOR:

- Initially advised by Undergraduate Coordinator – Assigned a faculty advisor

## ADVISING PROCESSES



# Mississippi State University

## UNDERGRADUATE SEMINAR I:

- Taken: Fall Semester-Sophomore Year  
1<sup>st</sup> Semester-Transfer Students
- 1. Required informal “Get to Know Your Advisor” interview.
- 2. Complete a “Plan of Attack” semester-by-semester plan to complete all undergraduate degree requirements

## ADVISING PROCESSES



# University of Tennessee at Martin

## **NEW STUDENT:**

- When Accepted - Student is assigned an Advisor based on major (i.e. AgriBusiness).
- Initial Advising – Done prior to Fall Semester through SOAR dates (Student Orientation and Registration). Students meet with advisor to select courses. Also given a CAPP form that shows all courses needed for a degree in major.

## ADVISING PROCESSES



# University of Tennessee at Martin

## **CONTINUING STUDENT:**

- Each Subsequent Semester - Meet w/Advisor to plan courses (required by HOLD) and review CAPP for that student major.
- Semester Before Graduation - Meet w/Advisor and complete Graduation Check Sheet that is signed by both student and Advisor before being sent to Academic Records for review.

## ADVISING PROCESSES





# University of Arkansas at Monticello

## **1<sup>st</sup> SEMESTER FRESHMAN STUDENT:**

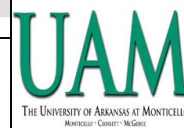
- June or July Preregistration – School of Agriculture Advisors help develop course schedule and share an 8-Semester Plan.

## **TRANSFERRING or CHANGING MAJOR:**

- Register with aid of School of Agriculture Advisor following 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Freshmen.

All students meet with their Advisor during first two weeks of Fall Semester.

## **ADVISING PROCESSES**



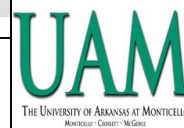
# University of Arkansas at Monticello

## **CONTINUING STUDENT:**

- Each Subsequent Semester - Meet with Regular Advisor during November or April Preregistration to plan courses and enter schedule.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester of Junior Year – Student and Advisor jointly develop a “Closing Plan” with all remaining required courses and schedule of when to take them.

After grades are posted each semester, Advisor sends personal letters of “Congrats” and “Regrets” to his/her advisees.

## **ADVISING PROCESSES**



# Student Academic Classification

<b>UAM</b>		<b><u>Total Earned Credit Hours</u></b>		<b>UTM</b>
<b>16.67%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>&lt; 30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>25.93%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>&lt; 60</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14.86%</b>
<b>31.48%</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>&lt; 120</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>56.76%</b>
<b>20.37%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>&gt; 120</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24.32%</b>
<b>5.56%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.05%</b>
<b>100.00%</b>	<b>54</b>		<b>74</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

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# Advisee Characteristics

**UAM**

**UTM**

**Only 1 student among the whole 127 did not know the name of their Academic Advisor.**

**Almost 100% in each university considered their Academic Advisor to be “accessible.”**

**Just over 90% in each university contacted their Academic Advisor to register.**

# Advisee Characteristics

UAM	<u>Frequency to Meet with Academic Advisor</u>	UTM
<p>Meets with Academic Advisor at least 2 times and mostly 3 times per semester.</p>		<p>Meets with Academic Advisor 2 or fewer times per semester.</p>
<p>This result supports the hypothesis that students in larger universities have less interaction with their Academic Advisors.</p>		

# Advisee Satisfactions

## Prompt response to requests

UAM		UTM
9.43%	Satisfied	21.92%
90.50%	Very Satisfied	68.49%



# Advisee Satisfactions

	<u><b>Availability</b></u>	
<b>UAM</b>		<b>UTM</b>
	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>25.68%</b>
<b>90.74%</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>60.81%</b>

# Advisee Satisfactions

	<u>Respectfulness</u>	
<b>UAM</b>		<b>UTM</b>
	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>21.62%</b>
<b>96.30%</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>74.32%</b>

# Advisee Satisfactions

	<u>Willing to Listen</u>	
<b>UAM</b>		<b>UTM</b>
	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>17.57%</b>
<b>96.30%</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>74.32%</b>

# Advisee Satisfactions

	<u>Knowledgable</u> <u>in Major</u>	
<b>UAM</b>		<b>UTM</b>
	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>18.92%</b>
<b>96.30%</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>72.97%</b>

# Primary Satisfaction

**Feel that you are making positive progress toward your degree**

**UAM**

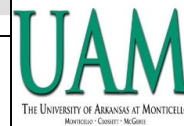
**UTM**

**96.30%**

**98.63%**

- ✓ Students in all size universities may consider their Academic Advisor “accessible.”
- ✓ A small university with fewer total agribusiness students may lead students to have slightly more frequent meetings with advisors per semester.
- ✓ Lower student academic classification may increase the expressed satisfaction that students have with Academic Advisors.
- ✓ Comparisons should definitely be made with one or more large, land grant universities perhaps including historically black colleges/universities.

## CONCLUSIONS





- Dr. Jason Cater – Assistant Professor of Animal Science - UAM School of Agriculture & UA-SEREC
- Dr. Paul Francis – Professor of Plant & Soil Science – UAM School of Agriculture & UA-SEREC
- Dr. Kelley Bryant – Dean UAM School of Agriculture & Director UA-SEREC

## APPRECIATION & SUPPORT



University of Arkansas  
at Monticello



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# QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?



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