

Research & Analysis

A service of the offices of Strategic Planning, Institutional Research, Management Information Systems
Hillsborough Community College, January 2007-01

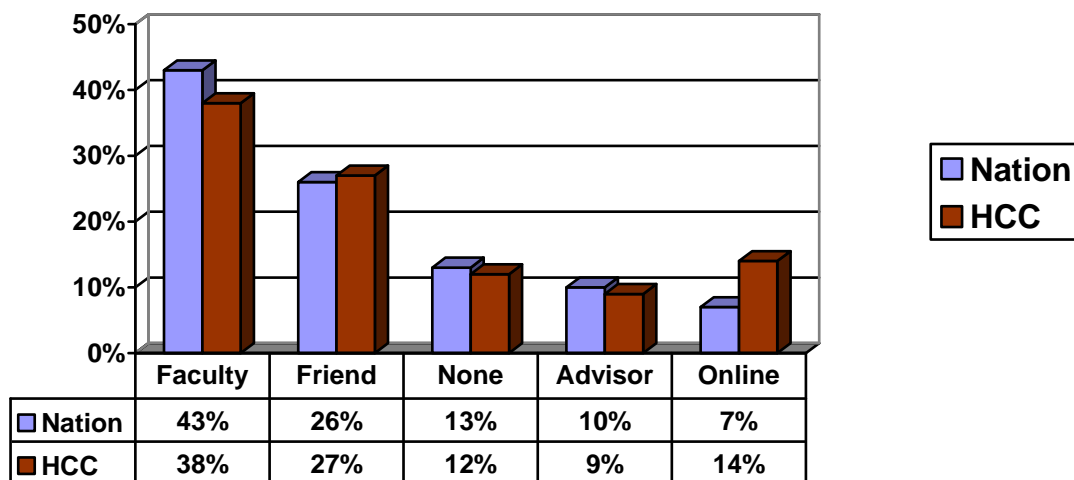
A FOCUS ON FACULTY ADVISING: RESULTS OF THE 2006 CCSSE SURVEY

The 2006 administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) included five one-time survey items focusing on academic advising of students. It is reported that “every year, CCSSE respondents place more value on academic advising than on any other student service, and consistently, there is a gap between the number of students who value advising and those who use it (*Act on Fact: Using Data to Improve Student Services*, CCSSE, 2006).” Specifically, 89% of respondents report that advising is important, yet only 55% report using it sometimes or often.

The role of academic advising to student success is well researched. Having a clear educational goal and a delineated path toward its achievement is integral to academic success – more so with students whose lives are further complicated by work, dependent care, etc.

Students Most Value Faculty Advising

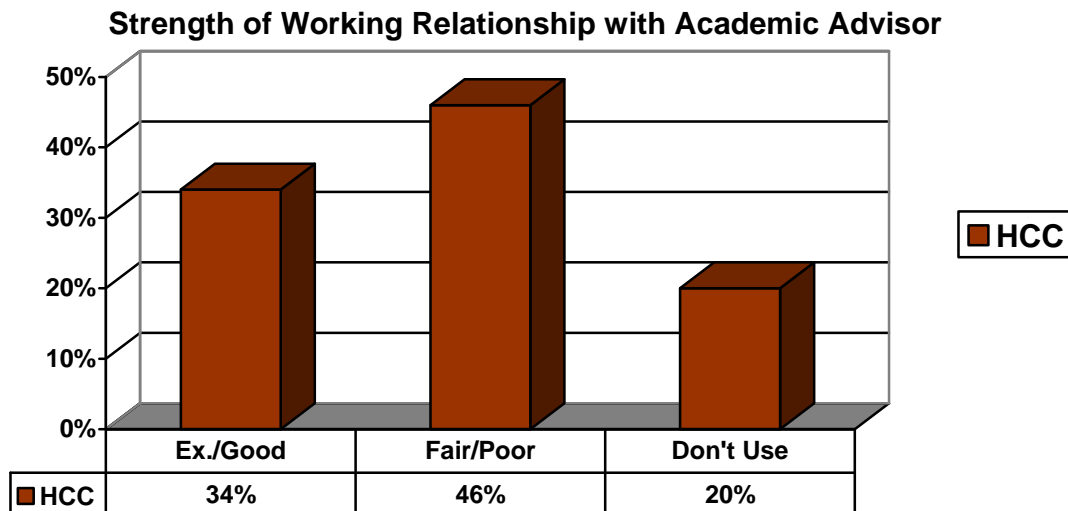
Best Source of Academic Advising



The chart above compares national results of the CCSSE administration to those of Hillsborough Community College (n = 1,296 of enrolled students in college credit courses, spring 2006). When asked to identify “your best source of academic advising,” 38% of HCC students reported *Faculty*. More than a quarter of students (27%) report *Friends, family, or other students* as their best source of advice, indicating that these sources are used more than those provided by the college. Twelve percent (12%) respond *I have not received any academic advising* and nine percent (9%) report an *Academic Advisor (not faculty)* as the best source for advising. Notably, 14% indicated their best advising source to be *online registration and/or computerized degree advising*. The

latter is twice the rate of that reported by the nation; however, in other instances the responses of HCC students roughly mimic the national results.

As shown in the graph below, when asked to rate the “strength of your working relationship with your current academic advisor,” 66% of HCC students reported *Fair*, *Poor*, or they *Do not use advising services*. Thirty-four percent (34%) rated the relationship as *Excellent* or *Good*.



When these data are disaggregated by full-time/part-time status, a quarter (25%) of part-time students, versus 18% of full-time students, say they do not use advising services. This is significant given that 83% of students enrolled at HCC are part-time (HCC Fact Book, *Trendline 2005*).

Act on Fact

CCSSE reports that several community colleges are using the results of the survey to initiate improvements in their advising services. For instance, Brevard Community College now “includes mandatory advising, educational planning, and career guidance; advising workshops with small groups as well as individual sessions; and a clear goal of identifying a major.”

Here at HCC, the President appointed a task force to make recommendations to improve the accuracy of the assignment of program codes to students throughout their tenure at the college. The task force found that improvements needed to the advising process are sufficiently numerous to warrant that another ad hoc committee be established to look solely at this matter (*Report to the President of the Program Coding Task Force*, November 2006). It was recommended that additional emphasis be placed on faculty advising; mandatory advising at key juncture points; pool advising; express advising; as well as other suggestions.

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