

Time-To-Degree

DHC Third-Year Seminar

21 March 2005

Mario La Marche

James Sirard

Alex Sung

Trina Thongsinthusak

Lauren World

Table of Contents

Introduction	by Lauren World	3
Background	by Lauren World	4-5
Survey Analysis	by Alex Sung	5-16
Focus Group	by Mario La Marche	16-17
Advising for Current Students	by Mario La Marche	17-18
MyAdvisor	by James Sirard	18-23
Summer Advising	by Trina Thongsinthusak	23-24
References		25

Introduction

In collaboration with the Davis Honors Challenge, Vice Provost Fred Wood sponsored a group which allowed DHC third-year students to assess student culture about why a four-year graduation rate at UC Davis was not the norm. The official prompt for our project is as follows:

Graduation rates and ‘time-to-degree’ are two of the most common national measures of the efficiency of an institution of higher education. These two issues are receiving increased attention and scrutiny from both state and federal governments. Also, both students and parents are becoming increasingly concerned about the ability of students to graduate in four years. In California, the recent Higher Education Compact between Governor Schwarzenegger, UC, and California State University, highlights the need for ‘efficiency in graduating students’, and mandates that UC will increase the number of students that graduate within four years. Students who take more than four years to graduate create a series of financial pressures for both the campus and themselves, which include (1) decreased ability to accept new undergraduate and graduate students and transfer students, (2) greater financial burden in terms of the cost of education, and (3) diminished financial aid grants. Furthermore, these financial pressures increase as the number of students in this category grows. The severity of this issue is particularly significant for UC Davis, given that UCD ranks consistently last among all UC campuses of 4-year graduation rates.

Given this background information, our group began the task of investigating the normative nature of the five-year-time-to-degree. Our primary goal was to determine, based on student perceptions, the causes for the low four-year graduation rate. Through various mediums, including a survey and an online focus group, we were able to successfully achieve our objectives.

Background Information

In 1960, the University of California established the Master Plan for Higher Education, which guaranteed the top 12.5% of graduating California high school seniors a place at one of the UC campuses. However, in fall of 2004, the University was unable to keep its promise to California; qualified students were turned away and encouraged to spend their first two years at a community college. This failing was caused in part by decreased funding, which allowed for fewer students in the UC system. Additionally, this was the first time in which the UCs were unable to fulfill the promise outlined in their Master Plan; the campuses were filled to maximum capacity with students often taking time beyond the four years necessary to graduate. In 2004, Governor Schwarzenegger, along with the UC and California State University campuses set up the Compact for Higher Education. In return for increased funding, the governor stipulated that the universities must improve their four-year graduation rate. Due to the deficit in California putting financial pressures on the UC system, the UCs had a strong incentive to make marked improvements on this issue.

To counter this problem, the UCs instituted the excess unit fee which will go into effect for the incoming freshman class of 2006. The excess unit fee states that students who exceed 110% of the units required for graduation in relation to their majors will have to pay tuition equal to that of an out-of-state student. The UCs hope the excess fee will serve as a financial motivation for students to graduate within the allotted four-year time.

At UC Davis, an Undergraduate Time-To-Degree Task Force has been established to study the issue. There are three primary objectives of this task force: (1) to better understand the factors the other UC campuses identify as leading to a shorter time-to-degree, (2) to determine the factors that may contribute to a longer than desirable time-to-degree at UCD, and (3) to make

recommendations for changes that address this issue. Some suggestions the task force has made thus far include removing PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program), changing the number of pass one units for which students can register, and extending drop deadlines.

With all this background information regarding the time-to-degree issue, our group decided to ask undergraduate students what they thought, by surveying a random sampling of students. With the help of Steve Chatman and Bborie Park at Student Affairs Research and Information (SARI), we received 422 responses that yielded constructive results and feedback.

Survey Analysis

Objectives

The purpose of the survey was to identify and assess how students perceived four-year graduation rates. We did this by breaking down the survey into three main categories. First and foremost, we collected background information about each of the respondents so we could investigate any existing correlations between similar responses. Next, we wanted to know how students felt about the education system here at UC Davis; this primarily includes scheduling and advising issues. Finally, we wanted to gain a sense of what the incentives were to graduate and what difficulties prevent some students from graduating within the standard four-year time period.

Procedures

We broke our survey into two main parts: a multiple choice section and a free response section. The multiple choice section primarily focused on obtaining statistical data on

background and data that we specifically wanted feedback on. This included topics on units per pass, drop deadlines, advisors, etc. We also asked questions regarding the perception of fifth years, incentives to graduate, and difficulties preventing graduation, but these responses were further elaborated upon in our free response section. The purpose of having the latter section was to learn what students thought about the four-year graduation issue without forcing them to select only from a specific set of answers.

There were a total of five drafts of our survey: one preliminary draft, one draft with feedback from Vice Provost Fred Wood, one draft with feedback from peers, one with feedback from Steve Chatman of SARI, and one final draft. The survey was then sent to a random sampling of two thousand UC Davis undergraduates in four time frames. We received a total of 422 responses, but our analysis of data only includes up to the point of the three hundred response mark. However, we have verified that the trends remained constant throughout the duration of the survey time period.

Data

Our data is organized into four sections: three multiple choice sections and one free response section. The multiple choice sections covered background correlations, incentives to graduate in four years, and difficulties with graduating. The free response section was solely for students' thoughts and perceptions that may not have been accounted for in the survey.

Multiple Choice - Background Correlation

Q. Do you think there is a negative perception toward students who stay in college for more than four years? Total # of Responses: 295

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
Yes	138	46.78
No	157	53.22

There is almost an equal amount of people who believe there is a negative *perception* of fifth years and those who do not (Refer to Free Response). Note that of the respondents who believe there is a negative perception of fifth years, 33% are actually fifth years. In addition, those who believe there is no negative perception also expect to graduate in four years. This possibly shows that those who have not yet become fourth years believe they will be able to graduate on time, and thus do not really consider themselves becoming fifth year students. Those who are already fifth years may have thought the same way. Upon becoming a fifth year student, they then cast a negative light on themselves because they are now in a status they thought they did not have to worry about.

Q. What point along the following continuums best represents your academic agenda?

Topic	Tot.	1 (Not Very Applic able)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (Very Applic able)
I will stay in college as long as I need to complete my undergraduate degree.	286	9 3.15%	2 0.70 %	7 2.45 %	5 1.75 %	21 7.34 %	5 1.75 %	24 8.39 %	28 9.79 %	25 8.74 %	160 55.94 %
I want to complete my education in 4 years or less.	289	20 6.92%	3 1.04 %	6 2.08 %	6 2.08 %	12 4.15 %	16 5.54 %	17 5.88 %	32 11.0 7%)	23 7.96 %	154 53.29 %

There is an even split between those who wish to graduate as early as possible and those who do not care when they graduate. The only relevant trend is that those who wish to graduate sooner also plan to attend graduate or professional school, while those who do not seem to care as much do not plan to continue their education (Data Not Shown).

Multiple Choice - Incentive to Graduate in Four Years

Q. What do you think is the number one reason UCD students stay longer than 4 years?

Total # of Responses: 296

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
Change/addition of major(s)	119	40.20
Financial issues	15	5.07
Employment-related issues	3	1.01
Concern with finding a job after graduating	2	0.68
Academic workload	72	24.32
Poor academic advising	15	5.07
They enjoy the atmosphere of Davis	5	1.69
Difficulty with enrolling in courses required for major	46	15.54
Other (please specify):	19	6.42

Most students feel that a change/addition of majors is the primary cause of delayed graduation.

This confirms a result concluded from a prior survey by the UC Davis Office of Resource Management and Planning, “Graduation Rates” in Marsh 2004.

Q. In how many years total do you want to graduate? Total # of Responses: 296

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
3	9	3.04
4	229	77.36
5	57	19.26
6+	1	0.34

Q. How many years do you expect it will take you to graduate? Total # of Responses: 294

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
3	8	2.72
4	195	66.33
5	86	29.25
6+	5	1.70

We can see that most students both desire and expect to graduate in four years. However, we were more interested in how single majors and double majors responded toward these questions.

Major to Expected Graduation Rate Comparison

Type	% Answered Can Graduate in Four Years	# of Responses	% of Total
Single Major	75.8%	119	86.23
Double Major	78%	19	13.77

It turns out that both single and double majors have similar perceptions on graduation rates. However, note that there are significantly more respondents who were single majors than there were respondents who were double majors.

Multiple Choice - Difficulties Graduating in Four Years

Q. What do you think is the number one incentive for students to graduate in 4 years?
Total # of Responses: 295

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
Cost of tuition	148	50.17
Desire to begin graduate or professional	36	12.20

school		
Housing costs	2	0.68
Most/all of their friends are graduating	8	2.71
Want to get a job and earn money	49	16.61
Minimizing debt (i.e. from student loans)	45	15.25
Other (please specify):	7	2.37

Financial issues tend to be the largest incentive to graduate. This may imply that the new Excess Unit Fee plan may push students to graduate faster. However, although the survey provided no significant findings on part-time jobs, our data lacked respondents who worked for a significant amount of time each week.

Q. Approximately how many hours do you work per week? Total # of Responses: 296

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
I do not work	135	45.61
1-5 hours	16	5.41
6-10 hours	49	16.55
11-15 hours	36	12.16
16-20 hours	32	10.81
21-25 hours	19	6.42
26-30 hours	7	2.36
31+ hours	2	0.68

In fact, many students are working; so, putting more stress on financial issues may further hinder their graduation plan. (Refer to Focus Group).

Q. What are the biggest problems you face with scheduling and registering for classes?

Total # of Responses: 294

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
Pass one limit (13.5 units) is too low	145	49.32
Pass two limit (19.0 units) is too low	11	3.74
Class(es) not offered when needed	152	51.70
Heavy academic workload	77	26.19
GE requirements	49	16.67
Class(es) full	190	64.63
Drop deadlines (10 days and 20 days) are too early	48	16.33
Drop deadlines (10 days and 20 days) are too late	3	1.02
Other:	23	7.82

Most students agree that class scheduling is the largest problem; this includes a low pass one unit limit, the organization of classes offered each quarter, and class enrollment/waitlist problems.

Note that most students did not choose ‘Other’ as a significant problem, although we later found that part-time jobs delay graduation (Refer to Focus Group). This may be because the question was directed towards flaws within the UC Davis system rather than other personal issues.

Q. Rate the amount of pressure you receive from the following groups to graduate in 4 years.

		Answer Choices			
Topic	Total	None	Very little	Some	A lot
Yourself	294	25 (8.50%)	18 (6.12%)	94 (31.97%)	157 (53.40%)
Family	295	38 (12.88%)	57 (19.32%)	106 (35.93%)	94 (31.86%)
Friends	295	112 (37.97%)	102 (34.58%)	68 (23.05%)	13 (4.41%)

Advisors (faculty and staff)	294	124 (42.18%)	61 (20.75%)	78 (26.53%)	31 (10.54%)
-------------------------------------	-----	-------------------------------	----------------	----------------	----------------

Of those who put ‘A lot’ of pressure on themselves or receive a lot of pressure from family also answered they expected to graduate in four years. Those who answered having less pressure on themselves and/or family were expected to graduate in five years. 45.5% of those who got ‘A lot’ of pressure from advisors expect to graduate in four years while 42.4% expect to graduate in five years. There is a tendency showing that pressure from self or family, rather than advisors, drives the students to want to graduate in four years, while many of those who got pressure from advisors felt they had to graduate in five years.

Q. Please evaluate the following programs based on their usefulness to you.

		Answer Choices				
Topic	Total	Haven't used	Not useful	Slightly useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Finish in Four!	292	243 (83.22%)	11 (3.77%)	13 (4.45%)	16 (5.48%)	9 (3.08%)
Degree Navigator	295	142 (48.14%)	34 (11.53%)	46 (15.59%)	55 (18.64%)	18 (6.10%)

It is obvious that these tools provided by the campus are either unknown or unused by the majority of the student population.

Free Response – Student Perspectives

The free response contained a very diverse range of opinions. We have consolidated the responses into the most popular categories.

Q. Why do you think there is (NOT) a negative perception toward students who stay in college for more than four years? Total # of Responses: 100

Answer Choice	# of Responses	% of Total
Slackers / Laziness	30	30
Part-time	8	8
Boost GPA	11	11
Enjoyment	6	6
Double Major	7	7
Difficulty Obtaining Courses	11	11
Poor Planning	21	21
Poor Advising	3	3
Other:	3	3

50% of the respondents felt fifth years had a negative perception. Most students feel that fifth years are perceived as “slackers” for not working hard enough during their first four years. These students also did not plan out their schedule and thus wasted time on unnecessary activities. However, among the 50% who said there is a negative perception, half of those respondents also stated that the perception was there, but it was untrue. In fact, the other 50% whom responded there is no negative perception also believes fifth years are the norm. Other common trends state only engineers and science related majors are fifth years, and most students only need to complete a single quarter during their fifth year.

Conclusions

Our findings differed slightly between our multiple choice section and our free response section. In the multiple choice section, most students felt the first pass unit limit was too low, classes were offered at inconvenient times, or classes are too full. The free response section, on

the other hand, stated the biggest problem was the students themselves; either they were being lazy or they did not plan out their college career well enough. We believe this disparity is due to how we presented the questions. In the multiple choice section, we focused primarily on possible flaws within the University's system rather than personal issues. Thus, so students may have been directed to narrow their answers down to that category. In the free response section, we moved away from targeting the school system and simply asked why there are fifth year students. Respondents were no longer limited to our choice of answers and were more inclined to reply with a more personal answer.

Our background correlation did match the free response answers. Both showed a split between whether there is a negative perception or not. The free response gave us more input though because half of those who responded negative also stated that perception is untrue. In addition, 50% of the total respondents stated fifth years should be the norm. This tells us that most people are acceptable of fifth years and thus may be unmoved if they themselves become fifth years. At the same time, our multiple choice section showed that fifth years cast themselves negatively more than any others. So, it may be possible that most students feel fifth years are acceptable because they do not believe they themselves will become fifth years.

Finally, our data also shows that the University's resources are not being used or are unknown. Both Finish-in-Four and Degree Navigator are mostly unknown, with Degree Navigator doing slightly better. Most respondents believe advisors are not one of the main reasons for hindered graduation mainly because most students do not use the advising services. In fact, those who put more pressure on themselves than they receive from advisors feel they have a better chance of graduating in four years.

Overall, our survey summarizes three reoccurring trends: fifth year perception, academic workload, and financial issues. Most students feel fifth years are now becoming the standard. This may urge students to plan their college career within five years rather than four. Many already feel bad planning is the cause of fifth years and this may increase that problem. Respondents believe that academics does play a role in delaying graduation, but only for engineers and science students. Instead, the University's course offerings system is flawed with a low first pass unit limit, difficulty to schedule classes throughout the year, and classes becoming full too quickly. On the other hand, students are trying to graduate quickly due to the rising cost of tuition. Although the survey data does not show any significant job related problems, the majority of the respondents who took the survey have little or no non-academic work.

Errors

Although we believe our survey accurately reflects the UC Davis undergraduate population in general, we believe flaws may exist due to our limited time to create and distribute the survey, and due to our survey's random sampling process.

Within a quarter we went through five complete survey drafts. However, if given more time, we may have been able to conduct a pilot test, narrow our questions down to better correlations, or remove questions we could have gained information on through research or other means.

Our survey was sent to a random sampling of undergraduate students in hopes of gathering a diverse response. However, possibly due to the random selection, our data was not perfectly spread. Of our respondents, 66.89% were female, while the actual campus percentage

is approximately 58%. The largest major that responded were the biological sciences or related with 24.24%. The next largest major was sociology with 8.71%.

Focus Group

In addition to the survey, we also conducted an online focus group in order to gain detailed knowledge regarding students' views towards the four-year graduation rate. While the original intent was to hold this focus group in person, we found that students would much rather send an email than attend to a meeting. However, conducting more focus groups with larger varieties of students is definitely likely for next year's project. This online focus group was conducted over three email listservs: Pre-med AMSA at UC Davis, the Davis Honors Challenge, and the Cal Aggie Marching Band. The vast majority of the responses came from the members of the marching band, which is partly because their email list allows for real discussion. The members would email everyone on the list their thoughts, then, other people would comment. While this does introduce the obvious sampling bias, it also allows feedback from students of varying year in school as well as varying major.

The main point that continued to surface throughout the discussion was that students take fewer classes because they need to work. Even if students do not need to pay for all of their educational expenses, they still feel that working is a necessity. Even though graduating in four years would save more money in the long run, students feel they have no choice but to work and take classes. This is a topic that can be explored in much greater depth in next year's project. It would be interesting to compare this result to other UCs to find out if it is a differentiating characteristic.

Students also brought up a variety of other points. For example, some felt that Davis students are generally highly involved in extracurricular activities. While it is important to keep the sampling bias in mind, this is also an idea that can be explored further. Students also mentioned scheduling issues; more specifically, classes are not being offered when needed. Failing a class in a series, and the difficulty of the science and engineering majors are were also common areas of concern among our fellow students.

Advising for Current Students

A key strategy for increasing the four-year graduation rate is better advising, which can be broken down into three groups: help choosing a major, mandatory advising, and advising for student employees. Many students stay longer than four years because they change majors or just cannot choose one. This problem can be helped by increasing the amount of information and resources available for students. One possibility is to have an interactive internet program that suggests a major after students enter which classes they liked or are interested in taking. This could even be integrated with a new Degree Navigator site. In addition to online resources, people from the various departments on campus should help students decide which field of study is right for them. A department representative could provide students with detailed information and help them make a prompt and well thought out decision. In addition to these optional resources, we also recommend that if a student is undeclared by a specific time in their educational career, a hold should be placed on there registration until they see an advisor.

Once the student chooses a major, the next step is to monitor them to make sure they are taking the right courses; the College of Engineering does this with mandatory advising. Even if students are mostly on track, this mandatory advising encourages them to ask questions and plan

their next few quarters ahead of time. If students are not on track, this would help them catch up before they fall too far behind.

The last advising recommendation is more help for students who are also employees. Obviously, it is difficult for students who need to work while in school. Since so many students are working, it may be beneficial to have a program to help them. Advisors can help them schedule classes that fit with their work schedule; this program could also provide academic tutoring for student employees.

Even though many of these services already exist, it is essential to make them easily accessible for students. Instead of waiting for the students to ask for help, we recommend bringing the help to the students. This can be in the form of representatives from a variety of departments going to the dorms to talk to the freshman about choosing a major, mandatory advising, or easy to access online information. It is also important to consolidate the advising resources. Currently the advisors are spread all over the campus and finding the right one is not always easy. This is why we recommend a MyAdvisor tab on the MyUCDavis website which will bring many advising services directly to the student in one easy to find location.

MyAdvisor

Of the 422 individuals who responded to the Finish-in-Four survey, 67% had seen an advisor in the past academic year. This statistic indicates that the students who do not utilize advising services are not significant causes of the low four-year graduation rate. However, the survey's free responses and the focus group feedback often stated that poor undergraduate advising had led students astray from their four-year plans. In fact, most survey respondents had received little or no pressure from their advisors to graduate in four years. Furthermore, many

students reported that the general advisors were often unknowledgeable about the details concerning specific colleges and majors. Although advisors will naturally be either good or poor, helping students find advisors and see the many different advising options on campus will allow them to find the advice they are looking for. MyAdvisor is an interactive, online resource that will provide undergraduates with the tools to do just that. As an addition to MyUCDavis, it consists of three sections—Advisors, Services, and Degree Navigator—accessible by tabs at the top of the page.

The Advisors section is a colorful grid that allows students to see when their advisors are available; it would also allow students to schedule appointments. The columns consist of the days of the week, Monday thru Friday, and possibly the weekend, should advising services be open. The rows contain advising services and/or individual advisors. By default, this would contain the advising services for the college and major(s) of the student, and Academic Peer Advising (APA). For example, an Economics major would see Letters & Science, Economics, and APA. Suppose this student consistently visited the Economics Advising and found an advisor he/she liked named Jane Doe. The button on the bottom of the page allows the student to add a row for Jane to the grid. Jane and the many other advisors would be listed in a database containing their name and usual weekly schedule. The cells contain the daily schedules for the advising service (row) on the given day (column). However, this is just the underlying scheme that will allow students to see when they can get advising. To give the Advisors section complete functionality, there are scheduling options in the last column for each row. If the service has online scheduling, a link will let students schedule an appointment for advising with that service. Likewise, if the service has drop-in advising or only appointments via email, that

information will be in the cell. Finally, the cells change color to indicate that the student has an appointment on that day with that service.

MyAdvisor						
Advisors Services Degree Navigator						
Advising Service	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Schedule
Letters And Science	8am - 3pm	8am - 3pm	8am - 3pm 1:30 PM	8am - 3pm	CLOSED	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
Economics	8am - 12pm 10:00 AM	10am - 2pm	8am - 12pm	10am - 2pm	CLOSED	<input type="button" value="ADD"/>
Academic Peer Advising	10am - 2pm	CLOSED	10am - 2pm	10am - 2pm	CLOSED	Drop-In
Jane Doe		1am - 2pm		12pm - 2pm 12:00 PM		Email at jdoe@advice.ucdavis.edu
<input type="button" value="Add Advisor"/>			Color Key <input type="button" value="Appointment Scheduled"/>			
			<input type="button" value="User Added Advisor"/>			

The Services section is a simple list of links to the websites of the many advising services on campus. The list should be comprehensive, leaving nothing out. This section will allow students to see what options are available and may help them find advising that they may be unaware of. A brief description of each service might also be useful so that students could learn about the services without having to click on every link.

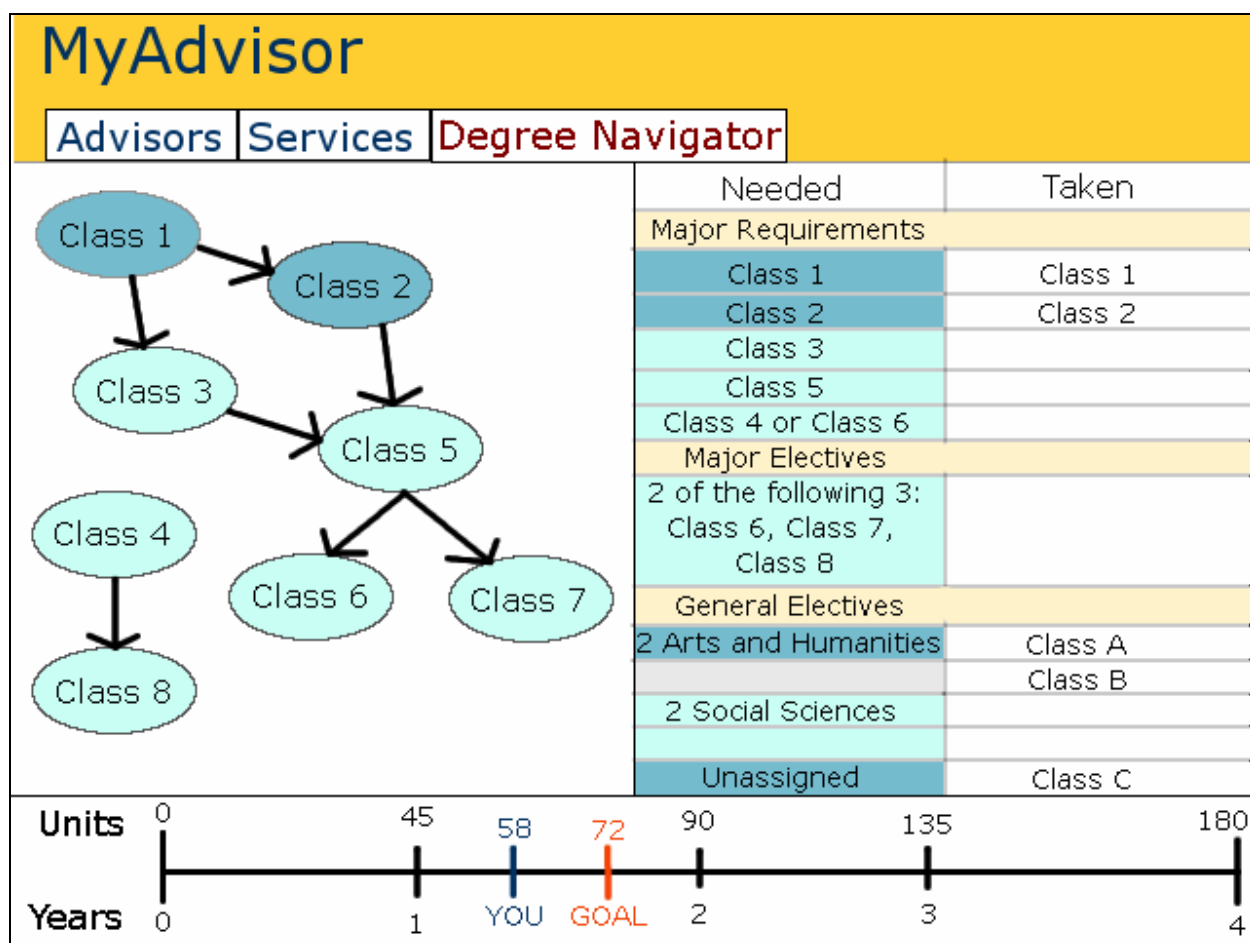
MyAdvisor

Advisors **Services** Degree Navigator

- Undergraduate Education and Advising
- Academic Peer Advising
- Orientation and Summer Advising
- The First Resort

The Degree Navigator section revamps the current version of Degree Navigator and gives students a better sense of what they need to accomplish to graduate in four years. The left side of the page shows the courses required for a given major represented in an easy to understand state diagram. The bubbles contain courses within the major and the arrows show what courses are prerequisites for other courses. The bubbles are colored to show whether or not the student has completed the course. The right side of the page lists the major requirements, major electives, and general electives that the student needs to complete in order to graduate. The left column lists the requirements and the right column contains slots for completed courses. As a student completes courses, they are added into the correct slots. As some classes may satisfy multiple

requirements, there is a list of unassigned courses that may be moved into an open slot to unofficially fulfill the requirement. Finally, on the bottom of the page is a four year timeline that includes the unit requirement for the student and where he should stand at the end of each year. The timeline will also show exactly how many units he has completed and how many he needs to complete to stay on track for a graduation in four years.



These three sections will make MyAdvisor a valuable resource for undergraduate students. After checking email or paying bills on MyUCDavis, students will be able to check their academic status and scheduling advising with just a few clicks. With Degree Navigator,

students will know how well they are progressing to graduating in four. With Services, they will know what advising services exist, should they fall behind schedule. With Advisors, they can schedule appointments with advisors of their choice to try to get back on course. MyAdvisor will be an integral part of the solution to increase the four-year graduation rate at UC Davis.

Summer Advising

One of the primary goals of summer advising is to assist students with their transition to college life here at UC Davis. Summer advisors consist of current undergraduate students who advise incoming freshman with their class schedules. It is evident, based on students' thoughts and perceptions, that not enough emphasis is placed on the scheduling of classes during summer advising. While this is a hectic time for incoming students and class scheduling may not necessarily be high on their priority list, it is crucial that students start off their academic careers at UC Davis well and have an idea of the classes they need to take for the major, if they have already declared one. If not, the summer advising staff should further emphasize the importance of declaring a major as soon as possible, in hopes that students would be more likely to complete the classes required for their degree sooner, and thus, be able to graduate within four years.

To assist with this issue, it is recommended that incoming freshman meet with academic advisors under their major or department during summer advising. Of course, one-on-one academic advising is not feasible, due to the vast number of incoming freshman and the few academic advisors on campus. However, a more likely alternative would be to have advisors from various academic departments on campus hold workshops throughout the several days students are here at UC Davis for summer advising. This would include giving handouts to students that recommend when they should take certain classes, depending on their major, in

addition to the lists of classes required to complete a certain degree that are found in the General Catalog. Sample schedules should also be given to students, as some classes would be more useful to students if taken after other classes, even if they are not listed as prerequisites.

During summer advising, it would also be beneficial for students to attend a workshop that helps familiarize them with MyUCDavis; more specifically, with MyAdvisor. This workshop session would introduce students to MyAdvisor and guide them through navigating the resources it contains. A time for students to ask questions should also be allowed, so that they immediately get answers to their questions. Instead of seeking academic advising resources on campus only when they need them, students, upon starting their first quarter at UC Davis, should have an overall sense of services that exist on campus, what these services can provide, and where they are located. There seems to be a lack of emphasis about how essential academic advising is, and we feel that if students are armed with such resources and information upon beginning their careers at UC Davis, they will be more likely to get help when they need it because they will already know where assistance is available.

References

Finish in Four Survey. UC Davis Office of Resource Management and Planning, “Graduation Rates” March 2004.

Wood, Fred. “Background Information on Time-to-Degree” 21 January 2005.