Academic Advising in the Modern and Classical Languages Department program at George Mason University is an integral part of the educational process. Academic advising helps you to plan educational goals and work to achieve them throughout a liberal arts education. The elements of that education include classes, co-curricular activities, work, and personal experiences. With interests and goals in mind, academic advisors will help formulate academic plans. Advisors are dedicated to creating an atmosphere in which students can discover their potential, set and reach individual goals, explore and plan appropriate academic study, and prepare for success after graduation. The purpose of this syllabus is to show how to use the advising process at each step along the way.

- To schedule an advising appointment, please call 703-993-1220 or email language@gmu.edu.
- Advisor contact information: Colleen Klausner Sweet, csweet2@gmu.edu or 703-993-1240.
- MCL’s website: http://mcl.gmu.edu

Learning Outcomes

By participating in academic advising at GMU you will:

- Reflect on goals and motivations in order to take ownership of educational choices.
- Learn how to be a self-advocate and how to locate and utilize available resources such as the Learning Services, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Office of Disability Services (ODS), Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI), and Writing Center.
- Improve your decision-making and problem solving skills by asking questions.
- Be empowered to take responsibility for your choices and learn from those choices, actions, and outcomes.
- Develop the ability to connect learning across the curriculum and to integrate learning and experience.
- Develop a deeper sense of social responsibility and ethics by thinking about your relationship to the world and the community, both during and following college.
- Be able to identify and communicate the transferable skills gained through your educational experiences.
- Develop the skills and commitment needed to seek out opportunities for lifelong learning.

Did you know?

According to the 2003 National Survey of College Graduates, 81.5% of recent graduates who majored in foreign languages were employed (and 85.8% of them were employed full time). Moreover, employees are often paid more if they can speak another language. (Profession: MLA [2009]). Graduates with a degree in foreign languages go into a variety of fields, including education, government, international business and relations, healthcare, community and social services, and other professions (law, etc.). Current students and recent graduates have worked for the U.S. Department of State, Fairfax County Public Schools, BDO, American Action Forum, and the Confucius Institute.
Advisor and Advisee Roles and Responsibilities

**Advisor**

- Provide an encouraging and supportive environment for students to share their goals, concerns, and interests.
- Actively listen to questions and concerns and assist in development of decision-making skills, self-evaluation skills, and educational plans.
- Understand and effectively communicate George Mason University degree requirements.
- Assist students in making informed course decisions utilizing PatriotWeb and Degree Audit.
- Refer students to appropriate campus resources, organizations, and faculty/staff members as needed to facilitate academic performance and enhance your college experience.
- Maintain confidentiality of student records as outlined in the University Catalog.
- Create a safe, positive environment to freely explore ideas and interests regarding personal, academic, and career goals.
- Uphold the values, policies, and procedures of their schools, departments, and George Mason University.

**Student**

- At least once per semester, schedule regular and timely appointments with an advisor.
- Attend advising appointments as scheduled.
- Ask questions about the role institutional policies and procedures, general education requirements, academic programs, and student services play as part of the academic experience.
- Explore campus services, such as Learning Services, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Office of Disability Services (ODS), Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI), Writing Center, Math Tutoring Center,
- Explore extracurricular activities in order to facilitate your academic achievements.
- Regularly review academic progress utilizing GMU advising tools (Degree Audit) and assume responsibility for meeting academic requirements.
- Craft educational plans based on assessment of abilities, aspirations, interests, and values. Be thoughtful of your educational plan. Set short-term and long-term goals for achievements.
- Read both print and electronic university communication and respond when required.
- Assume responsibility for all decisions and actions which may impact academic and career options.
- Be aware of your rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

This is a federal law that gives protection to student educational records and provides students with certain rights. These rights include:

- Inspect and review their educational records;
- Request the amendment of inaccurate or misleading records;
- Consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their educational record;
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by an educational institution to comply with this law

See more information at the Office of the Registrar’s website: http://registrar.gmu.edu/privacy/index.html
**Walk-In Appointments**
As an advisor, my door is always open. Please be aware that I may be committed to previously scheduled appointments and/or meetings, and teaching duties. I will do my best to meet with you in a timely manner.

**Cancellations and appointment options**
Situations arise that may create a need to reschedule or cancel an appointment. Please call 703-993-1220 to cancel or reschedule an appointment at least two hours before the scheduled time. In order to be accessible to students who attend class in the evenings and weekends, or who are unable to come to campus during regular business hours, we offer phone appointments and online advising options (skype, etc.). Please email csweet2@gmu.edu to set up a phone or online appointment.

**No-Show Policy**
This policy is not meant to be disciplinary, but to be fair and equitable to all students. During peak advising periods, appointment times are premium. If you do not notify your academic advisor two hours in advance that you are unable to keep an appointment, your absence will be noted as a “no-show.” Advisors will then give priority to students who keep their appointment times.

**Prepare**
- Be prepared to discuss and explore course options, address academic problems or concerns, and make decisions about the upcoming semester.
- Make a list of potential courses for the next semester you are interested in taking.
- Explore your Degree Audit in PatriotWeb.
- Make sure you arrive for your appointment on time.
- Be prepared to take notes.

**Communication Protocol**
E-mail communication via a student’s college-issued e-mail account is the mandatory method of communication at George Mason University. Due to privacy regulations, the advisor will communicate solely through your college-issued account. While some inquiries may be resolved through e-mail correspondence, most situations benefit from scheduling a face-to-face appointment for further discussion. Advisors are available to answer some questions via e-mail. E-mails to advisors are professional communications, so please include: first name, last name, and G-number. An advisor will return your message within three business days. If you have a more immediate concern, please contact the department directly at 703-993-1220.

**Advising Goals by Year**

**Freshmen**
By the end of their first year, students will:

- See an advisor at least once every semester.
- Understand how to set effective goals for their academics, extra-curriculaires and life. They will be able to adjust goals as needed and identify when goals work against each other, maintaining a balance between all.
- Appreciate and understand the various social and academic opportunities available to them at Mason and use these opportunities to broaden their experiences and understanding.
- Be able to identify policies and procedures that impact them and seek further assistance or information when appropriate in addition to student services appropriate to their unique needs.

**Sophomores**
By the end of their sophomore year, students will:

- Determine their major and construct a full plan of study
- Discuss applicable minor options or interests with their advisor
- Start to develop relationships with faculty.
• Understand the importance of balancing school and life commitments.
• Explore opportunities to understand their chosen field outside of the classroom by looking into OSCAR, Study Abroad, Internship and leadership activities.

Juniors
By the end of their junior year, students will:

• Develop professional skills through internships, study abroad experiences, undergraduate research, submitting original works, or employment.
• Meet with their academic advisor and ensure that they are on track to meeting their personal goals.
• Explore multiple post-college plans and consider accelerated master’s programs where appropriate.
• Use Career Services and create a CV/resume to be reviewed by Career Services staff.
• Network and develop relationships and connections with their faculty, department and college.

Seniors
By the end of their senior year, students will:

• Meet with their advisor in the semester before their expected graduation date to conduct a final review of their degree audit and determine graduation eligibility.
• Get ready for life after Mason by applying for jobs and/or preparing for graduate schools and professional schools (where appropriate in satisfying personal goals).
• Be able to articulate the strong skills and competencies they have gained from their learning experiences here in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.
• Continue to participate in research, activities, community service and other extra-curricular activities to build experience.
• Prepare for graduation appropriately by filling out application for graduation, career census survey, and senior survey.

Academic scheduling recommendations:

• Certain courses are highly recommended for FRLN students to take during their first year- these include IT 103, Natural Science, and Quantitative Reasoning Courses. Students are also highly encouraged to take ENGH 100/101 and COMM 100/101 during their freshmen year at Mason.
• Be sure to cover most of your Mason Core courses in your first two years at Mason. You should plan on completing the last two requirements- English 302 and synthesis- during your junior year. Be aware that some courses “double-dip”; many of these are literature (CHIN 320, SPAN 325) or synthesis courses (FRLN 385, RUSS 353)
• Plan to take electives for your degree as part of a study abroad experience during your junior year.

MY SCHEDULE:

Fall 2014

Spring 2015