Best Practices in Academic Advising
Summary of Findings

Librarians utilized education databases, Web search engines, and print resources to identify best practices in academic advising in higher education. Within this literature review, the following common trends emerged:

- **A shift in philosophy from prescriptive advising to developmental or appreciative advising.** Instead of having the advisor state what the student should do, in developmental advising the advisor and student enter into a conversation and work together to achieve the student's goals (O'Banion, 1972; Sullivan-Vance, 2008). In appreciative advising, "the intentional collaborative practice of asking positive, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials" (Bloom, Hutson, & He, 2009).

- **The creation of an advising syllabus.** The advising syllabus is used to communicate the responsibilities of both student and advisor and to outline the learning outcomes that should be achieved through the advising process (Sullivan-Vance, 2008; McKamey, 2007).

- **The assignment of faculty advisors to students with specific majors or courses of study**. Faculty can utilize their understanding of specific curriculum and program needs to provide more targeted advising services to students (Kiker, 2008; Lords, 2000; Smith, 2007; Wiseman & Messitt, 2010; Colton, Colton & Shultz, 2001; Kelleher & Laidlaw, 2009; Pedescleaux, Baxter & Sidbury, 2008). Some institutions also have peer advisors or mentors, employing students to connect with other students (Rosenthal & Shinebarger, 2010). More examples of peer advising found at http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/peeradvising.htm.

- **The creation of online advisement portals.** An advisement portal offers a single online location for students, faculty, and advisors to communicate and access information. These portals often allow faculty members to send alerts to advising centers for students in trouble (Fischman, 2011; Sugart & Romano, 2006; Sloan, Jefferson, Search & Cox, 2005; Feghali, Zbib & Hallal, 2011). One institution has even created an online recommendation system that suggests courses to students, akin to Netflix (Young, 2011).

- **The use of emerging technologies to communicate with students.** Example technologies include blogs, Facebook, and Skype. These technologies are particularly useful for reaching distance learners (Lucca & Arcario, 2006; Lichtenstein, 2010; Woods, 2004; Carter, 2007; French, 2010; Wou, 2010).

- **The formation of special programs for at-risk students.** Many programs focus on first-time-in college students. In these cases, some colleges use intrusive advising techniques to keep students on track (Smith, 2007; Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds & Klyce, 2008).