UC Santa Cruz Student Suggestions for Improving Advising

UCUES 2022
Brief Summary by IRAPS, October 2023

The 2022 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) was open from April 6, 2022 to July 1, 2022. Students enrolled in Winter 2022 were invited to participate.

As part of the survey, students provided more than 1,700 suggestions in response to a survey question about the single most important thing that advisors could realistically do to create a better undergraduate advising experience. This report contains both common themes in student suggestions and quotations to illustrate student feedback for each topic and division.

Executive Summary

1. **Accessibility** was the most frequently mentioned area by students across all divisions and colleges as the one thing that can be done to improve student experience. Students asked for the timely availability of appointments, either in-person or via zoom.
2. **Hiring more advisors.** Many students called for hiring more advisors, especially major advisors.
3. **Interpersonal approach.** Students appreciated the interpersonal approach of advisors, although some mentioned that advisors could be more patient and empathetic.
4. **Academic planning.** The second most common set of suggestions focused on help with academic planning: suggestions included giving more graphics and flowcharts, and holding major pathway workshops.
5. **Use of technology**. Students' comments mentioned improving websites: updating information on major course requirement pages, advising home pages, and overall navigation.

Method of Classifying Suggestions

Students provided suggestions in response to the question, "What is the SINGLE, MOST IMPORTANT thing that your advisor could realistically do to create a better undergraduate advising experience for students like you?"

More than 1,700 students provided substantive comments in response to this question. We developed an algorithm that seeks and finds words, or a combination of words, and assigns comments to specific categories about advising. Each comment could be counted in one or more categories, based on the words involved. For details about the method for determining the categories for students' comments, please refer to the Details on Method of Classifying Suggestions, in the Appendix.

Overall, 49% of comments contained suggestions in one area. About 37% of comments were classified under two or more categories.

In addition, 14% of student comments did not fall under any specific categories, primarily because they were unique to a student, relatively less common, or unspecific comments to keep doing what advisors are doing.

Common Themes

The analysis revealed that some topics were relatively more important to students than others. For example, accessibility of advisors was the most common category: 41% of students provided suggestions. The second common suggestion was academic planning, where 33% of students provided suggestions in this area. See Table 1.

Table 1. Common themes in student suggestions about advising

Topic of comments	Number of comments	Percentage of comments	
	2022	2022	2020
Accessibility of advisors	706	41%	30%
Academic planning	566	33%	42%
Interpersonal approach of advisors	221	13%	14%
Proactive approach of advisors	198	11%	6%
Advice on research and other opportunities	185	11%	8%
Accuracy and clarity of information	169	10%	12%
Career support	165	9%	6%
Responsiveness of advisors	108	6%	2%
Use of technology (websites, online, zoom, etc.)	93	5%	-

Note: The 2022 algorithm included an improved set of keywords and phrases customized to the year's specific responses, so percentages are not directly comparable. Comments could be classified under multiple categories.

In 2022, how frequently students mentioned topics depended on their major. For example, improving accessibility of advisors was mentioned by 46% of students in the Arts Division, compared with only 29% of Humanities students. Career support was relatively more frequently mentioned by students in Humanities, PBSci, and Social Sciences than by students in other divisions. See Table 2.

Please note that the N and % refer to the number of students in each division who provided comments in response to the question: for example, 46% of 92 Arts Division respondents provided a comment about the accessibility of advisors.

Table 2. Common themes in student suggestions about advising, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared (lower-division)
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Accessibility of advisors	46%	29%	36%	49%	43%	40%
Academic planning	27%	39%	31%	30%	35%	34%
Interpersonal approach of advisors	12%	21%	15%	12%	14%	11%
Proactive approach of advisors	16%	12%	11%	10%	7%	12%
Advice on research and other opportunities	7%	7%	12%	11%	11%	10%
Accuracy and clarity of information	10%	6%	12%	10%	12%	8%
Career support	8%	13%	12%	13%	7%	7%
Responsiveness of advisors	12%	7%	3%	8%	6%	6%
Use of technology	5%	4%	5%	4%	8%	5%

Accessibility of Advisors and Responsiveness of Advisors

Many students' suggestions highlighted the **key importance of having more advisors**. Students' comments frequently mentioned benefiting from advisors' meetings, as well as not being able to meet with advisors. See detailed comments below.

There were also some comments about the **responsiveness of advisors. For example, many suggested using chat or other faster communication tools as opposed to email**.
- Get back to students faster with time sensitive information, such as counting courses toward a major.
- Be quick to email. I never know what type of information I will need, so it is useful having a good line of communication.
- [Advisors need] a faster way of handling quick questions. Email responses take too long. Maybe a chat feature would help, I used this with STARS and it was great.
- I have never met my advisors and it would be nice if I had the chance. In terms of timely emails, since advising relies on emails only or Google messaging it's frustrating if it takes up to weeks in time.

Table 3. Comments about accessibility of advisors and responsiveness of advisors, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Accessibility of advisors	46%	29%	36%	49%	43%	40%
Responsiveness of advisors	12%	7%	3%	8%	6%	6%

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- I think it's super helpful when major advisors are readily available to discuss major-related stuff as well as being open about discussing broadly academic-related stress and how to navigate that in the major.
- Major advisors being available both remotely and in person for one on one meetings.

Humanities students' comments included:
- Personally, I feel that they should always try to be available in some ways whether it would be replying to emails as soon as possible or having more flexibility with their office hours. They should be more engaging and present.
- This is a hard response because there are not a lot of advisors for a big campus. So the 15 minutes I usually have with an advisor, I come with prepared questions and they help me. I'd say have setting appointments more easily accessible on the UCSC portal and not on an entirely different website because I've booked appointments with the wrong departments before because there was no specificity on where to find the [name of department] advisors.

PBSci students' comments included:
- Academic advisors need to be much more available -- I can not tell you on how many occasions I really needed to talk to an advisor about future plans and I was unable to schedule an appointment with them or get in contact with them in any way. Their job is to help us navigate undergrad and post-undergrad plans, but I never felt like I would easily be able to get in contact with one and get advice.
- As a transfer student coming from a junior college with ample advising availability, I was troubled by what I would consider a lack of availability being advisors booked 2 weeks out. More advising outreach and availability specifically for transfer students would have been helpful when I first started. Maybe certain weekdays could be reserved for this to guarantee transfer students can better engage academically.
- Have any availability at all. The major advisors for [name of department] are impossible to get an appointment with. One time I had an appointment and they emailed me and asked me to cancel it because my reason was not important enough.
- Having drop in office hours would be of great help. My college advisor, and minor advisor both had drop in office hours and were incredibly helpful. The physics major advisor has no appointments avaliable and also does not have drop in hours. Additionally, whether they respond to emails is hit or miss. When I am able to meet with the physics major advisor, they are incredibly helpful, but the problem is that it isn't consistent.
- Major advisors need to be more accessible to talk with rather than just peer advisors.

Baskin Engineering students' comments included:
- I have rarely been able to contact BSOE advisors. The limited communication I have had with them was through email, and I feel that having a face-to-face/in-person/phone/Zoom appointment could greatly benefit a variety of students. Having an accessible major advisor is something which I consider to be quite important, particularly when students are struggling to pick and choose from the variety of CSE courses.
- Advisors should regularly meet with students to see how they are doing along their path. There was a complete lack of access to meetings with counselors.
- I think Major advisors are the best. I think one way to make it easier for students is make all major advisors available, and also be able to have more walk in hours. Sometimes I make an appointment and other things come up and I forget about it.
- Specifically major advising should be more accessible, I tried getting meetings with advisors and peer advisors would be the only people that would help even when I would ask to get a meeting with an advisor.

Social Sciences students' comments included:

- Have better availability to talk to students. Some responses would be immediate and have an available appointment time while others would take a few days to respond to emails and have limited availability.
- It's challenging, but it would be great if advisors were more accessible for urgent meetings
- Be more available, and not just peer advisors who are going through the motions, but the actual staff advisors.

Among undeclared students, or students with double majors, comments about accessibility of advisors included:

- Communicate between departments for students that are double majoring and make it accessible to talk to an advisor. Also actually giving double major students information about specific policies and just overall having a better understanding of double major processes. Maybe having an advisor(s) that's specific for double majors so that this person can talk all across departments and actually is well versed in the double major process.
- The advisors I met with were really kind and helpful but I think they could be more accessible or have alternative speakers because closer to enrollment I struggled to find available times to meet with an advisor.

Comments about college advising included:

- I have found that all of my advisors, both college and major, have been easily accessible either through zoom or in person, and are prepared to discuss the issue that brought me to that meeting.
- Accessibility to students is what I consider the most important thing. [Name of college] Advisors are quite accessible and I feel a lot more comfortable just knowing that if needed, I can schedule an appointment and speak with a [name of college] Advisor one-on-one.
- For college advisors, I believe the best thing would be making meetings more easily accessible. It can sometimes be hard finding the right website and the right advisor to schedule a meeting, so teaching undergrads how to do it the smoothest way possible would help greatly. Also most of us have no idea how grad school even works, so maybe talking about that by third year so we feel more prepared going into senior year.

Academic Planning

Table 4. Comments about academic planning, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Academic planning	27%	39%	31%	30%	35%	34%

The selected comments below include those that provide more insight and constructive suggestions.

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- I like what the AGPM faculty/advisors do by putting together a neat little graphic showcasing what classes we could take this quarter when enrolling and what our best bets are.

Humanities students' comments included:
- Explain major requirements in more detail and help students find out if they have to complete any GE's.
- Some advisors seem to have little or no understanding about the topic they are advising for, which is not necessarily their fault, but maybe if the department and the advisors talked and communicated a bit more about course plans, schedules, and offerings for each year, things would go more smoothly

PBSci students' comments included:
- Academic advisors could do more major path workshops. The spreadsheets with all of the courses and choices on them were very helpful and allowed me to correctly choose my next classes.
- It would be most helpful if advisors were on the same page with their knowledge. There have been countless times where I ask multiple advisors a question, and they all give me different answers. It is confusing and makes me reluctant to trust their knowledge. I don't like consulting them because it often makes the situation more confusing than before.
- Major advisors--there is a big list of electives I can take, but a lot of them aren't offered. A list of applicable offerings for each quarter would be helpful.
- Understanding the difficulty and the workload of each course so that developing a schedule will set a student up for success.

Engineering students' comments included:
- Figuring out an optimal plan for which courses to take first. Was recommended certain courses my first quarter that I was not prepared for. More one on one support regarding major courses for incoming students, especially transfer.
- I think helping students create a college plan early would have helped a lot, I wish I had taken some classes in different order and that would have helped me succeed more. Such as order of math classes in particular, I understand that the university might not want to say which are the easy math classes and which are harder, but knowing what order to take them is very important to me.
- I would like more course recommendations from my advisors. I feel that there are so many classes to take, and sometimes I regret taking certain classes over others based on my personal interests and working style. I have asked for help from advisors about choosing classes before, but none have been super receptive to helping me on an interest-based basis rather than a requirement/graduation plan basis.
- Keep updating the Degree flow Charts so that students can constantly refer back to them if need be.

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Social Sciences students' comments included:
- Advisors are the most helpful when giving options and plans for students to take when one option might not work.
- Advisors who do a whole walk through of your academic advisory report are so important. Planning out classes by yourself can be hard and having help with programs as well in your major gives more guidance.
- It would be nice if we could work together to create a more detailed academic plan so I feel prepared to select the right classes during enrollment.

Among students with double majors in more than one academic division, comments included:
- Provide a general graduation guide and make it flexible for all students so they can make their own academic planner from it.

First- and second-year (undeclared) students' comments included:
- I wish that we had one guaranteed meeting with an advisor during our freshman year so we could be familiarized with the advisors in our college or major. I know that my parents and I were super confused throughout my freshman year, on everything from figuring out what an enrollment period was to just trying to figure out who my advisor was and how to contact them.
- I think providing a guide on how to use Navigate/Slug Success will be incredibly helpful.
- Have academic advising for class selection: but host the zoom calls or in person meetings on this *before* the class selection period [...] Hosting them sooner could help out students much more.
- Best to just have one advisor, rather than having to talk to a major and a college advisor. Also peer advisors have given incorrect advice several times or not known the answer to questions. Student would be best served to have one advisor assigned to them throughout their time at UCSC to help guide them through their educational requirements.

Interpersonal Approach of Advisors

Table 5. Comments about interpersonal approach of advisors, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Interpersonal approach of advisors	12%	21%	15%	12%	14%	11%

Students' comments included both constructive suggestions as well as positive comments.

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- Being friendly and gregarious. Making the student comfortable is the best way to keep them returning for your help and advice.
- I think being supportive and optimistic are two crucial characteristics for advisors that can [go] a long way for students, who often don't believe in themselves and may feel lost or confused.
- Open, honest, and willing communication. Many advisors do this already which has been a great way for students to build confidence and understanding in themselves as they continue traversing through university.

Humanities students' comments included:
- I think that trying to be understanding and empathetic to students' needs goes a long way. Luckily, most of my experiences with UCSC advisors reflect this.
- Being available and able to talk to students about their specific educational plans. Of course no one expects advisors to spontaneously remember students' plans, but it really helps if they have some brief notes about the students' plans and some of their educational and career goals.

PBSci students' comments included:
- All advisors should try to tailor their interactions to each student individually. The sense of being supported as an individual is very important when reaching out for help.
- I like how all the people I have met so far have been really nice. I think it's important to make a calm happy environment when having these talks because I know that when I have to talk about these things I get extremely stressed out so knowing that the person I'm going to talk to is nice and welcoming is really important to making me less nervous and scared.

Engineering students' comments included:
- I feel like one of the most important things advisors do which I find helpful is being nice and caring. Makes whatever process a student is dealing with much easier.
- Be kinder and more understanding. I had a bad experience with an advisor and I haven't gone since.

Social Sciences students' comments included:
- I think [name of department] advising could try being a bit more personal when addressing students. Because the major is so big, I don't bother to contact advising because I feel like I would just be annoying. Maybe we need more advisors so students can have more one-on-one, personal experiences with them.
- Be more sympathetic and understanding of my experiences by finding creative solutions to my problems.
- Create a comfortable, patient and welcoming environment for students to confide in them.

Among students with double majors in more than one academic division, comments about the interpersonal approach of advisors included:
- Be kind and listen to what I actually need support with rather than interrupting me, being passive aggressive, or not really helping at all. This is in reference to [name of major].

Comments about college advising included:
- I appreciated my college advisors always being there for me, being caring and understanding, communicating, etc. Very grateful
- I have had very negative experiences with college advising. I had been having the same problem for multiple years, which was specific to my college and its requirements, but my college's advisors reacted in a way that was nowhere near helpful. They implied that maybe I'm just dumb, before ignoring the problem completely by claiming there was nothing anyone could do, and finally giving me "solutions" of misinformation that ended up hindering my academic progress and adding unnecessary stress.
- In my experience the one time I met with a [name of college] advisor, I was made to feel inadequate and like I didn't know what I was doing. Keeping a warm and inviting attitude when meeting with students can go a long way. I should not be made to feel dumb because I have a question.
- Keep up the amazing work! I had a great experience speaking with my college advisor. They helped me out with deciding classes and were reassuring through the process.

Proactive Approach of Advisors

Table 6. Comments about proactive approach of advisors, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Proactivity of advisors	16%	12%	11%	10%	7%	12%

Overall comments about the proactivity of advisors included:
- Having a major/academic advisor do check-ups on students at least once a year to make sure they're on track to graduate and if not, email/contact them to see what's up instead of potentially getting alerted senior year you won't be graduating would be nice.
- Checking in with students. It's really meaningful at least to me when my advisors send an email saying "hope the quarter is well, reaching out to see how things are etc etc" and makes me feel valued.
- Check-in with us if they notice us struggling in terms of our grades. If we scored a lower grade on one class in comparison to the rest of the classes we've taken, it'd be nice for them to check in.

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- Having a major/academic advisor do check-ups on students at least once a year to make sure they're on track to graduate and if not, email/contact them to see what's up instead of potentially getting alerted senior year you won't be graduating would be nice.

Humanities students' comments included:
- Checking in with students. It's really meaningful at least to me when my advisors send an email saying "hope the quarter is well, reaching out to see how things are etc etc" and makes me feel valued
- My major advisor [Name of advisor] has been great. She always forwards us emails about events and opportunities going on. Is always available to help. Has provided resources like excel sheets to help manage my major requirements and is easy to get in contact with. She always made sure to keep communication open and I hear daily from her. Whether it's an email about an opportunity or something else I like that I know she's there.

PBSci students' comments included:
- Being persistent in communication, more timid people are less likely to seek advisors because they have likely been left to do everything alone. Being inviting and friendly goes a long way.
- I think major advisors need to conduct a check during the students' fourth year and say what still needs to be completed. I know students should be responsible for this information, but for the students who have a hard time or may not want to reach out to the advisors, they would not know that they have not completed a requirement until applying to graduate.

Engineering students' comments included:
- I don't know how logistically possible this is, but reach out to students/email them occasionally because I feel like sometimes we, as students, forget that there are resources/people out there who want to help us. I feel like any type of advisor reaching out/checking in and emailing would help people like me be more likely to reach out because personally, I dislike reaching out because especially if it's about my grades, I get embarrassed/ashamed/scared, but if any of my advisors reached out to me and said "Hey, how are you doing? I noticed your grades dropping. Is everything okay? It's okay if everything is not okay. Let me know if you want to schedule a meeting with me, and I can help you get back on track because I am here to help you without judgment!", I would've reached out a lot sooner than I actually did (was late reaching out...).
- I think Advisor may send an email to their student to show their concern every half of the quarter, which may be helpful for students.
- I think the major advisors should send an email to seniors to check on their progress towards graduation and encourage them to make an advising appointment similar to how college advising does
- They should email our own Academic Advising Reports to each student, every quarter, to remind us of what we still need to complete.

Social Sciences students' comments included:
- Actually check in ahead of time to let students know if they're on track or behind. Required meetings once a year or once a quarter would be good.
- Communicating via email, doing a large "hey I'm a resource" email once in a while because you forget there's someone who paid to assist on these questions and their contact info isn't as clear

Among students with double majors in more than one academic division, comments included:
- Major advisors could reach out to each student about their plans after college.
- Personally checking in with students that reach out to advisement.

Comments about proactivity of advising in general included:
- Reaching out to transfer students early on, making sure my transfer credits are used to their maximum ability ... more community for older/non-traditional students or more connection to those existing resources/communities.
- [Reach] out instead of relying on students to search for advising as the first in my family to go to college it is very confusing and disheartening not knowing where to start
- I mainly just need help deciding what classes I take each quarter, being able to map out when I take my required courses in order to graduate. My college advisors have helped just fine, but sometimes they aren't sure. I guess that's because I need to reach out to my MAJOR advisors, not college advisors. The major advisors would be more helpful with that info.
- College advising being more aware of circumstances first-generation students face and being able to find resources and guidance to help them succeed.

Advice on Research and Other Opportunities

Table 7. Comments about research and other opportunities, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Advice on research and other opportunities	7%	7%	12%	11%	11%	10%

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- Give me more information pertaining to my major, also related opportunities. I did join a Discord for this but I wish it also went to my email. The same with experiences they think I would like.

Humanities students' comments included:
- My major advisor could be more beneficial in providing me unique opportunities to get started after completing my degree.

PBSci students' comments included:
- Advise how to apply for internships/research/field studies to gain experience.
- At least for physics, advisors (and the department) should be clearer on how to join undergrad research. All of the work is put on students on how to work with professors on research projects.
- Hold more meetings for research opportunities in the Chemistry department.

Engineering students' comments included:
- Connecting the real-world experience to the college experience by helping explore different opportunities best fitted to each major.
- For computer science specifically offering more support to get involved in Research would be great it is really hard to get involved in it as an undergrad in UCSC.

Social Sciences students' comments included:
- Advisors could send resources to their students such as relevant internships, scholarships, and most importantly help them connect with alumni.
- Could use [name of department] advisors that can help me find more internships/jobs/research opportunities because there have been very little opportunities this year, and [name of subject] is quite competitive.
- I personally think major advisors are more useful than college advisors. I wished they gave more resources for research opportunities overall throughout my years at UCSC. The [name of department] advising has done a great job recently towards my last year at UCSC, but I wished they provided more resources earlier on in my academic career at UCSC. Having research and internship opportunities help with class engagement.
- I think major advisors could help by providing more information on research opportunities and job opportunities during undergrad and post-grad.

Among double majors, comments included:
- Major advisors could give out more information on internships and how to get experience.
- To keep a list of resources of jobs or internships/ opportunities that students would be interested in.
- For students like me who are double majoring, the single most important thing is to have a way for my major advisors to work together and to also advise me in internships that I can start NOW. And how to apply to them.

Comments from first and second year (undeclared) students included:
- I wish there was more information about how to get involved with research here on campus and getting internships. I feel like a lot of it is having connections with the professor but with so much being virtual it is hard to make those connections presently.
- One thing that would be more helpful is more advice on how to connect with faculty, conduct research at the school and find internships, jobs and other opportunities.

Accuracy and Clarity of Information

Table 8. Comments about accuracy and clarify of information, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Accuracy and clarity of information	10%	6%	12%	10%	12%	8%

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- All advisors should have their information clear and correct.

Humanities students' comments included:
- I was very fortunate to have a major advisor that was very well organized and direct with what she needed from me. Additionally, having a chart, served as a visual aid to help me project and keep track of my coursework and items to fulfill my major coursework.
- Some advisors seem to have little or no understanding about the topic they are advising for, which is not necessarily their fault, but maybe if the department and the advisors talked and communicated a bit more about course plans, schedules, and offerings for each year, things would go more smoothly.

PBSci students' comments included:
- Be more specific about major and minor planning. I'm trying to do a minor in [name of subject] and no one has been able to help me out with it. (I've reached out to 3 different advisors and none could help)
- For college advisors, make sure that they're conveying the correct information to the correct body of students. As a transfer, I was sent an email that had misinformation and it made me feel pressured since the consequence of not doing something would be a hold on my account. For major advisors, continue reaching out and checking in. It feels more personal and I feel as if my major advisor is truly here for me.

Engineering students' comments included:

- Update the academic advising report to be more accurate for major requirements
- I would say that creating a clearer guidelines for graduation
- Major advisors need to update information on MyUCSC and the main UCSC website to clearly reflect current requirements for students with and without catalog rights. There is tons of conflicting information across UCSC's websites.
- Clearly outline the academic and career path of the average student in a given major.

Social Sciences students' comments included:

- Be more clear about what classes are going to be available in the future. It's hard to plan out you're school plans when sometimes the classes your advisor helps you pick out are not available that semester.
- Be specific about what quarters certain class requirements are offered. Many times peer advisors don't know what quarter classes are offered in the future and end up giving out inaccurate information for future years to students.

Comments about college advising included:

- Personally, my college advisor was extremely friendly and professional which I think should stay that way since at times there is a lot of information to process which would help students when navigating through the system for the first time.
- The college advisors were unhelpful and rather confusing, they would always send me to someone else and offer no actual helpful advice. I had many issues when transferring here with my credits, course, GEs and much more and the only helpful person was [name of advisor], my [name of major] counselor. The college advisor I worked with was not empathetic or sympathetic and did not fight for or support what I was trying to accomplish.
- [College advisors should continue to be] willing to steer the conversations[: for example,] when I first went to advising I was very lost on what to ask/say to get the information I needed but my college advisor was able to help me out significantly.

Career Support

Table 9. Comments about career support, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Career support	8%	13%	12%	13%	7%	7%

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- In the AGPM program specifically, advisors should give students an idea of the skillsets they would need for specific careers in the game design industry.
- Major advisors could help more in how to find and apply to internships within fields of interest.

Humanities students' comments included:
- Have a list of options for the career field of your major. Give resources to see and view those options in your career field and explore them.
- Provide workshops to talk careers or even just events to broaden connections within a major

PBSci students' comments included:
- For people unsure about what they want to do following graduation having an advisor specifically designated for post-college career paths would be nice
- Major advisors can communicate more with their students and give possible career advice and plans for careers that may be of interest to the students.

Engineering students' comments included:
- Keep providing useful info on events and career development opportunities.

Social Sciences students' comments included:
- Help prepare for a career, many don't know what to pursue with their degree and don't know who to ask.
- I wish my major advisor had more information on career advising and possible pathways when it came to my major and concentration in specific. I also wish they could make it more known what I could come to them to - like if they had more information on research experiences and jobs.
- Major advisors can ask students questions about what they're most interested in, both in terms of areas of study and future career plans. Then they could put them in touch with a faculty member who aligns with those interests.
- Make meetings with students to discuss options for careers after college and how we can better pursue them now with internships and such.

Among students with double majors in more than one academic division, comments included:
- Please keep sending us opportunities for career building, internships, field studies, etc. Try to push this information as much as you can--flyers, emails, announcements, events, on the website, etc. The earlier you get students to think about their next steps, the better. I didn't know how to properly prepare myself for the years ahead, especially as an underclassman, and now it's harder to find opportunities.
- I think sharing ways students can apply their degree in the real world. For example, in Anthropology there are many career paths available that don't include grad school. Also help with grad school applications would be nice too.

Comments from first- or second-year (undeclared) students included:
- For more broad majors (e.g social sciences like Sociology or majors like english) discussing career pathways would be great guidance.
- I think discussing actual job opportunities for after bachelors school, or what the difference in potential careers would be if you went to graduate school or not. Everything is still very unclear. Also more scholarship opportunities and maybe discussion of jobs on campus.
- I think it would be great if advisors could help students more with linking them to potential careers after graduation. I worry a lot about what my future looks like, and it would help to see how the things I'm learning about now would connect to getting jobs and such.

Use of Technology (e.g., websites, online, zoom, and related topics)

Table 10. Comments about technology, by division

	Arts Division	Humanities	Social Sciences	PBSci	Baskin Engineering	Undeclared
	N = 92	N = 82	N = 390	N = 269	N = 190	N = 658
Technology (websites, online, zoom, etc.)	5%	4%	5%	4%	8%	5%

Across academic divisions, students' comments focused on improving websites: updating information on major course requirement pages, advising home pages, and overall navigation.

Comments by students in the Arts Division included:
- Offer **more in person meetings**, [because] zoom meetings just feel so disconnected and stressful that I (and I'm sure many other people) avoid them at all costs.
- Give me more information pertaining to my major, also related opportunities. I did join a Discord for this but I wish it also went to my email. The same with experiences they think I would like.
- Continue to provide information that they think is readily available online. Human contact is essential to learning.

Humanities students' comments included:
- Information on the website is often hard to find or unclear, It could use some clarity editing/updating/reorganizing.

PBSci students' comments included:
- Keep the major course requirements and course availability updated on the major website.
- Keep up the zoom meeting availability. It was really great to meet over zoom when my schedule for my last quarter was all messed up and have my advisors help me fix it!
- Make students aware of the google sheets feature you have for the major.

Engineering students' comments included:
- PLEASE fix/update the school website so that it shows up to date course information and what's required of a major. It sucks to be looking for what classes I need to take and have 3 different school sources tell me entirely different things. Sometimes displaying old course titles that have since been changed like CMPE to CSE or CSE to TIM. Or different class requirements all together.
- Have an actual useful website for STEM.
- Having a Q&A with the most asked question and answer for it on the website, so if students have a very general question they wanted to get clarified on, they can go on the website and get their question answered quickly.

Social Sciences students' comments included:
- Make it easier to find information on the websites. There are too many places to look that are similar and don't serve separate purposes other than to be bureaucratic and confusing. Consolidate information onto one page with links to what we need, rather than us spending hours scouring UCSC's official sites, which also happen to be outdated sometimes too. I want to be clear though that this isn't necessarily the fault of advising, but more administration for not having a cohesive website with the ability to find everything you need across all disciplines for the school. It's too difficult to find the information you're looking for, and it's annoying to keep coming across dead ends.
- Make the website more clearer in terms of direction and assistance.
- The only critique I'm qualified to make is that it can be difficult to navigate the appointment-making system, and ensure you have a scheduled date and time. I seem to remember it wasn't very centralized.
- I have no idea who my advisors are or how to contact them or if I even have one specifically assigned to me. Making that more clear in the MyUcsc portal would help immensely.

Among students with double majors in more than one academic division, comments included:
- Have CLEAR links to zoom meetings.
- Update your website more. Not all of us like to show up to an advising session, and those websites have super outdated information.
- Update the [...] academic advising report tool so that it actually works.

Comments from first- or second-year (undeclared) students included:
- I think that we need more information about finding advisors. Personally I think that the advisors website is a bit outdated and none of them are really available during enrollment.

Other Topics

Many responses fell outside of the above categories. Including the over 200 remaining comments, many suggestions covered topics such as navigating advising, connecting to mental health resources, having the same advisor throughout one's college career, and having more staff advisors in specific majors. These comments included:

Having more staff advisors in specific majors (mentioned by students)
- I interacted with my major advisor at least once every quarter and was actually very satisfied with everything. The only suggestion I might make is to have another major advisor for the Environmental Science major, since it is a fast-growing major at UCSC.
- Single most important thing would be to actually have Psych major advisors available. I don't know if you were understaffed or what but I was never able to make an appointment with a legit Psych Major Advisor, only ever Peer Advisors, who can only do so much so this was very frustrating.
- Engineering Advisors: Get more BME Advisors. Engineering only has CS, CE, and ECE advisors, get some BME advisors.
- Hiring more major advisors. Currently we only have one, and the timeline for meeting with them is simply unacceptable.

Navigating the advising system at UCSC
- The flow to understand how many and the flow chart for whom and what advisors do what and what you need. The hierarchy would help to understand. Also connecting with DRC and complementing advising. There not enough staff to meet students in a timely manner. The gap of communication between programs is very large and they don't communicate with each well. I often feel I need to really rock the boat to get the help I need and even then it is expected that I know what to do automatically. There is no understanding of the transition as a transfer student coming from a semester system or community college. Also costs and order of things is hard to figure out yourself and you have to be a year ahead of things just to be on time.
- Tell us how to easily navigate university systems, reach out to other departments and help tell us where to go for help. My college advisors have always been very unhelpful, and this school doesn't hire enough major advisors for their departments. More major advising staff is needed.

Connecting to mental health resources
- Finding a better way to seek mental health help off campus
- Help kids recently diagnosed with adhd. Women are usually diagnosed much later in life than men. Women also are more likely to have the non hyperactive type, which is harder to see/diagnose. We need more help.
- Sometimes students may not reach out to advisors for a variety of reasons. It would help perhaps, at least once a year, advisors reached out to students to check progress. For example, I experienced severe seasonal depression. When I was ill I was not in a place to do much of anything. Perhaps a once a year meeting would've helped. Instead I didn't have enough energy to seek out advising

Having the same advisor throughout one's college career
- Combine into one body so my one question about my academics isn't split into 10 pieces and scattered to 10 different offices for an answer.
- Having a single advisor who I know well that I can get a deeper response from about my concerns and questions!
- It was very helpful to meet consistently with a single advisor so they already knew who I was and were up to date with my story. Having advisors know me at that level is very important to me.
- Stop switching people every year.

Perspective: Positive Comments on Advising

In addition, some students also offered very positive, encouraging feedback on advising. A small sample of positive comments mentioned in the 2022 survey included:

- Advising is doing amazing because of the care they have for students and the interdepartmental communication that goes on during advising! For example, my [Name of college] advisers always give me a list of exactly what I need to do to stay on track or what forms to submit, they make it easy for my saturated mind to deal with administrative stuff. They and financial affairs have directly communicated with other school departments to clear up discrepancies and other general tasks to keep my college journey going smoothly. I don't feel rushed, and I feel taken care of. Sometimes it is the only human interaction I have all day, so these little things are extremely important, they make me feel truly supported in this school, thank you!!! Y'all keep serving students so well, it makes being a student here so much nicer to have all this guidance!

- Keep being receptive to students who ask the same questions in meetings with Major advisors. Sometimes we just need confirmation multiple times, advisors have been great about this with me and I appreciated it immensely.

- Major advisors have been very timely with responses, and should absolutely keep that up.

- It was very helpful to meet consistently with a single advisor so they already knew who I was and were up to date with my story. Having advisors know me at that level is very important to me.

- All of my advisors, two majors and 1 academic, have all reached out to me before I even started in September 2021. I even met with my one of my major advisors during summer 2021 and emails (resources) were continually sent that include information about different advisors and how to reach them. Also, I was informed of my partial IGETC. Thus, I believe advisors at UCSC need to keep doing this because most students don't seek out advisors until it's too late; at least if the resources are available, the responsible students can reach them ASAP.

- My advisor was very helpful. She would be clear in her answers to my questions. Being very clear to students is very important.

Details on Method of Classifying Suggestions

As part of our analysis, we developed an algorithm that seeks and finds words or short phrases in context, and assigns comments to specific categories about advising. In addition to the phrases mentioned below, we also accounted for some differences in spelling and capitalization. Comments could be counted in one or more categories. See Table 11.

Table 11. Key words and phrases used in determining categories for comments

Accessibility of advisors	able to meet, access, accessibility, accessible, advertised more, appointment slots, appointments, as soon as possible, asynchronous, availability, available, better hours, booked, busy, consistent, consistent hours, contact method, drop in hours, drop in, easier to find, easier to meet, easier to reach, email, enough advisors, force, forced, get an appointment, have meetings with advisers, have meetings with advisors, have lots of open spots, hire more, in a rush, influxes of students, in person, longer appointment, longer office hours, make appointments, mandatory, meet with advisors, meet with me when I try, meet with us in person, meeting students often, meeting time, meeting with them easier, more advisors, more attentive, more avail, more open hours, more staff, non peer, number of advisors, office hours, one on one, peer adviser, peer advisor, real advisor, scheduling an appointment, scheduling, second advisers, second advisors, switching advisors, switching people, text, time, too many students, understaff, understaffed, wait hours, without an appointment, Zoom
Academic planning	4 year plan, academic path, academic plan, alternate, alternative, assist student, backup major, being offered, choices of class, choose, choosing, class paths, classes I need, classes I want, connect with their students, connect with us, course choice, course select, course menu, course offerings, courses, deadline, decide my major, declaration, degree flow charts, detailed path, enrolling, expectations, explain what to do, figure out what to do, figure out, get into, getting into, give good advice, give good advise, goals, graduate status, graduation, have to do, help with classes, help find, impacted, in 4 years, in four years, kinds of course, kind of course, know what to do, lay out, major required, manage my classes, map out, navigate, need to graduate, need to take, next steps, neutral help, on track, on what to do, options, order to take classes, pathway, pick classes, pick my classes, pick out my classes, plan, point me, possible majors, prepare for, prerequisite, progress, recommend classes, recommend course, recommended classes, recommended course, required classes, requirement path, requirements, right track, road map, roadmap, schedule, suggest clases, timeline, to graduate, to satisfy, transition, undeclared, understand what to do, upper-div, what clases, what classes, what courses, what I want, what major, what path, what to do, where exactly they should start, which classes
Interpersonal approach (delivery of advice)	accommodating, actually care, approachable, be kind, be patient, care [whole word only], caring, communicative, compassion, connect more, considerate, creating meaningful connection, disabilities, empathetic, empathize, empathy, encouraging, feel more seen, find inspiration, friendly, full attention, get to know, hostile, honesty, how to complete, human being, individual, inclusive, irritable, kindness, lenient, like an equal, listen, mindful, mental status, motivat, nicer tone, of color, patient, patient with me, personable, personal, professional, reassurance, respect, rude, safe space, sensitive, supportive, understanding, understanding/open, understood, unique, welcoming
Proactivity of advisors	check in, check up, checking in, communication, consistent advice, consistent reminder, follow up, force meetings, frequent updates, in touch, keep in contact, keeping in contact, make us all meet, more announcements, more prominent announcements, once a year, once every quarter, quarterly checkups, quarterly meeting, reach out, reaching out, require meetings, requiring that we meet, stay in contact
Advice on research and other opportunities	after opportunities, all resources, all the opportunities, different opportunities, different resources, financial aid, financial information, financial issue, find experience, get involved, global learning, intern opportunity, internship, interships, job prospects, life outside of school, more opportunities, networking opportunities, opportunities on campus, opportunities outside, other opportunities, outside opportunities, outside school opportunities, production opportunities, projects, provide resources, research, scholarships, study abroad, to campus resources, to opportunities, to professionals, to resources, volunteer, with alumni

Accuracy and clarity of information	accurate, advice that is true, be more educated about, better advice, clarity, clear, correct, FAQ, google everything, googled, honest [whole word only], inaccurate, just google, knowledgable, knowledge of, knowledgeable, more knowledge, more informative, not google, old information, realistic, reliable with sources, truth, where they need to go if you aren't able to help, wrong
Career support	after graduating, career, find a job, get a job, getting a job, grad school, graduate program [whole phrase only], graduate school [whole phrase only], graduate studies [whole phrase only], insight about jobs, job market, job opportunities, med school, medical school, occupation, opportunities after college, past college, post-college, post graduation, post-grad, premed, pre-med, resume, with their degrees, work opportunities, workforce
Responsiveness of advisors	attentive with replying, faster response, fast, quicker, reply faster, reply to, replying back, respond, response time, responsive, slow at replying, timely, too slow
Technology	academic advising report tool, appointment system, appointment-making system, Canvas, computer, degree audit, digital, enrollment system, google chat, google document, google drive, google sheet, internet, internet connection, laptop, myucsc, online, portal, slug success, software, tech , technical, technology, ticket, webpage, website, wifi, zoom meeting

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