

**New Brunswick Faculty Council
Resolution on Academic Advising
February 2017**

Background

The change in the academic work force from majority tenure-track faculty to majority contingent faculty has led to a number of other changes in higher education beyond simply by whom and how students are being taught. The NBFC and other shared governance bodies have already begun to address the impact of some of the changes in areas such as the evaluation of teaching, the professionalization of contingent faculty, academic freedom, and budgeting.

Another area that has undergone profound changes, at least in part because of the change in the academic work force, is academic advising. When the vast majority of the faculty was tenured or on the tenure track, most academic advising was done by the faculty. The increase in contingent faculty, who are unfortunately generally not expected to do or be compensated for academic advising, has coincided with a decrease in the overall role of the faculty in this area. To a considerable extent, faculty members have been replaced by “professional advisers” who are trained in general advising, but rarely in discipline specific advising.

These changes, as well as changes in the ways in which many of our students are taught, can have a major impact on opportunities that faculty have to interact with and to establish mentoring relationships with students. There is a significant body of work indicating that high quality academic advising and faculty mentoring are perhaps the most important factors in determining student success. In addition, the cost of shifting academic advising from faculty to a separate corps of nonfaculty professional advisers may be substantial.

RESOLUTION

The New Brunswick Faculty Council calls upon the New Brunswick Chancellor to constitute an Academic Advising Task Force whose members should include some representatives of the NBFC; representatives from the advising offices of schools such as SAS, COE, SEBS, and Mason Gross; some undergraduate chairs of large departments, and students from different schools. This Task Force should be charged with proposing ways to improve academic advising for undergraduates in New Brunswick that may include encouraging, training, and rewarding faculty members as academic advisors.