

# Academic Advising: Critical Link in Student Success



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# **The potential impact**

Academic advising is the only structured activity on the campus in which all students have the opportunity for one-to-one interaction with a concerned representative of the institution.

# The potential impact

Academic advising is the *only structured* activity on the campus in which *all students* have the opportunity for *one-to-one interaction* with a *concerned representative* of the institution.

Habley, 1983

# Types of Attrition

- **Expected and Justified**
  - realized a goal other than a degree/certificate
- **Stopping Out**
  - not on our timeframe
- **Unnecessary and subject to institutional intervention**

# Definitions

- **RETENTION:** The process of holding or keeping in one's possession
- **ATTRITION:** The process or state of being gradually worn down
- **PERSISTENCE:** To continue to exist or prevail

# Expectations vs. Experience

	<u>Expect</u>	<u>Experience</u>
Be undecided	7%	20%
Change majors	12	65-85
Fail a course	1	16
Take extra time to complete a degree	8	60
Drop out	1	40
Transfer colleges	12	28
Work in college	36	60
Seek personal counseling	6	27
Need tutoring	15	20
Seek career guidance	5	25

# Academic Advising...

...provides assistance mediating the dissonance between student expectations and the realities of the educational experience.

Habley, 1983

# Themes of Attrition

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- Academic Boredom
- Academic Underpreparedness
- Lack of Certainty in major/career choice
- Transition/adjustment Difficulty
- Dissonance/Incompatibility
- Irrelevancy

# Advising and Themes of Attrition

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- Academic Boredom
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# What Works in Student Retention


















## (2009)

- Overall responses
  - Mailing: 3360 institutions
  - Usable returns: 1104 (32.9%)
- Response rates:
  - Vocational/Technical: 70 (28.2%)
  - Community Colleges: 305 (32.1%)
  - Four-Year public: 258 (43.1%)
  - Four-year private: 440 (33.3%)

# Retention Interventions

- 94 identified retention practices
- 2 wild cards
- Two sub-sections:
  - Is this intervention offered? (yes or no)
  - If it is offered, rate the contribution to retention
    - Five-point Rating Scale
      - 5 = Major Contribution to Retention
      - 4
      - 3 = Moderate Contribution to Retention
      - 2
      - 1 = Little or no contribution to Retention

# Highest Rated Interventions

Intervention	Vo-Tec	C.C.	4-pub	4-priv
Comprehensive learning assistance center/lab				
Reading center/lab				
Advising interventions with selected student populations				
Increased number of academic advisors				
Academic advising center				

# Adding retention rates

- Top quartile first to second year retention rate (high performers) v. bottom quartile first to second year retention rate (low performers)
- Included only items with a mean  $\geq 3.6$  for all community colleges
- High performer incidence rate  $\geq 10\%$  above low performer incidence rate

# High v. Low performing colleges

- Community colleges
  - Integration of advising with career/life planning
  - Integration of advising with first-year transition programs
  - Increased number of academic advisors

# High v. Low performing colleges

- Four-year public colleges
  - Increased number of advisors
  - Advising interventions with selected populations
  - Integration of advising with first-year transition programs
  - Training for non-faculty academic advisors.

# High v. Low performing colleges

- Four-year private colleges
  - Academic advising center
  - Advising interventions with selected student populations
  - Integration of advising with first-year transition programs.

# Survey Reports

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

Enter “retention” in the search engine

# **The core beliefs**

Conceptual Beliefs

Organizational Beliefs

# Conceptual beliefs

- Advising must be broadly defined

# 1960's Definition of Advising

The task of advising is concentrated in the opening days of registration and enrollment and consists of aiding students in the selection of courses.

Handbook of College and University Administration

Asa Knowles, Editor

# Advising Defined

Academic advising assists students to realize the *maximum* educational *benefits* available to them by helping them to better *understand themselves* and to learn to *use the resources* of the institution to meet *their special* educational *needs*.

David Crockett

# Advising Defined

Academic advising is a ***decision-making process*** during which students reach their maximum educational potential through communication and information exchange with an academic advisor.

Thomas J. Grites

# Advising Defined

Advising is concerned not only with a specific personal or vocational decision, but also with facilitating the student's rational processes, environmental and interpersonal interactions, behavioral awareness and problem-solving, decision-making and evaluation skills.”

Burns Crookston

# More than the 60's definition

Advising is a **relationship** based on...

- » Collaboration
- » Learning
- » Growth
- » Sharing
- » Decision-Making
- » Maximizing Higher Education

# Conceptual beliefs

- Advising must be defined broadly
- Advising is a form of teaching

# Advising: A form of teaching

Teaching is an instinctual art, mindful of potential, craving of realizations, a pausing, seamless process, where one rehearses constantly while acting, sits as a spectator at a play one directs, engages every part in order to keep the choices open and the shape alive for the student, so that the student may enter in, and begin to do what the teacher has done --- **make choices**.

A. Bartlett Giamatti, *A free and ordered space: the real world of the university*

# Advisors teach students...

- to value the learning process
- to apply decision-making strategies
- to put the college experience into perspective
- to set priorities and evaluate events
- to develop thinking and learning skills
- **to make choices**

Core Values, National Academic Advising Association

# Advising programs...

...promote learning and development in students by encouraging experiences which lead to **intellectual growth**, the ability to **communicate** effectively, appropriate **career choices, leadership** development, and the ability to **work independently and collaboratively.**

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

# The Role of Advising

Advising, rather than an extension of the educator's role is integral to it. It is teaching which stretches beyond instruction.

Robert Berdahl, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*  
(past President, University of Texas)

# Conceptual Beliefs

- Advising must be broadly defined
- Advising is a form of teaching
- There is a functional relationship between academic advising and career/life planning

# **The underlying assumption**

Traditional advising for course selection and sequencing is based on the assumption that a student has made a reasoned decision and is committed to a specific academic program.

# **The underlying assumption**

...suggests that the role of the advisor is to ensure that a student efficiently processes through a predetermined sequence of courses to earn a particular academic credential in a specified period of time.

**The underlying assumption**

**IS FALSE!**

# The underlying assumption

- students who are willing to admit they are undecided
- students who changed their minds from application to orientation
- students who will change their minds (maybe more than once)

# **O'Banion advising paradigm**

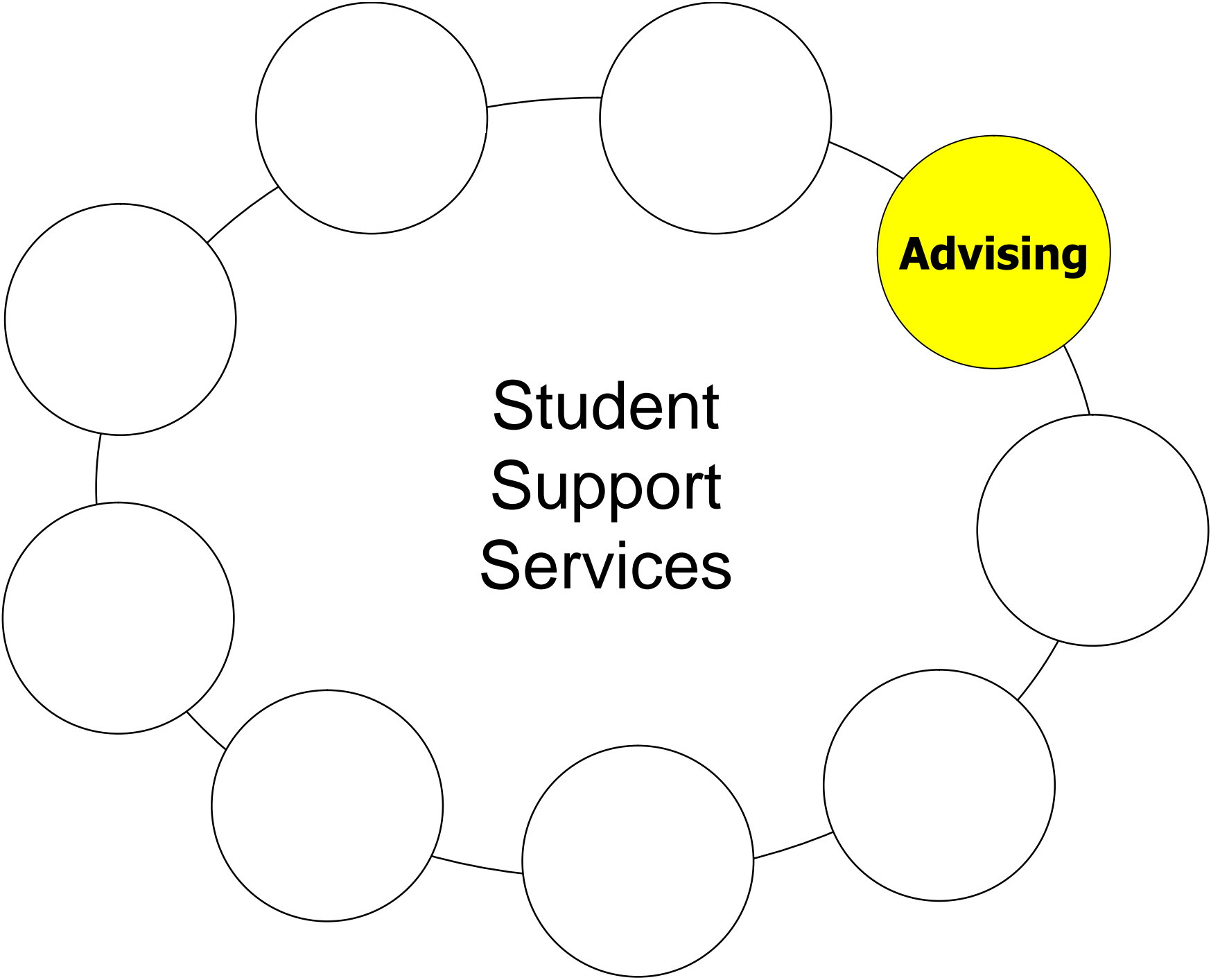
1. Exploration of Life Goals
2. Exploration of Career/Educational Goals
3. Selection of an Educational Combination
4. Selection of Classes
5. Scheduling of Classes

# Conceptual beliefs

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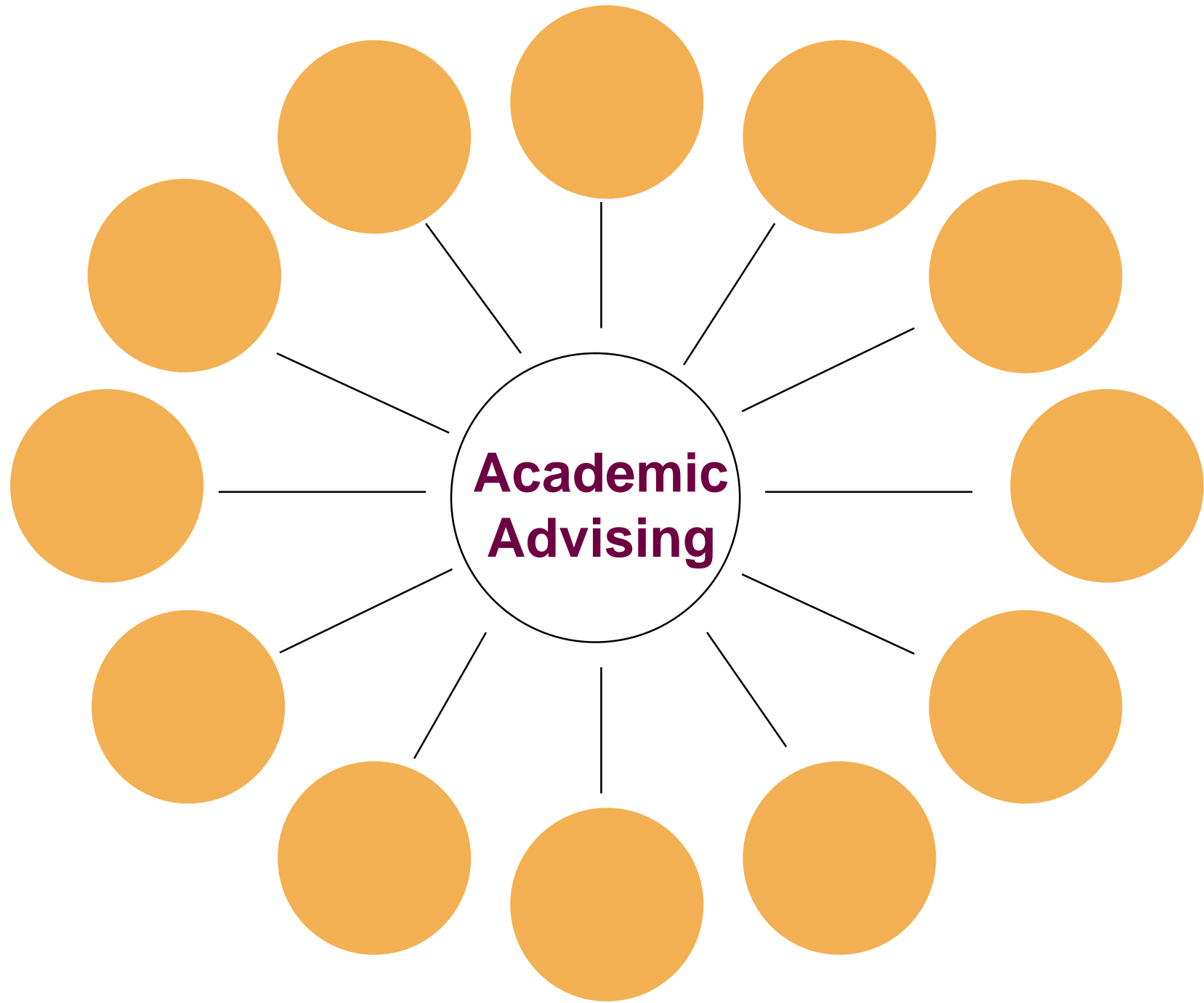
# **Beliefs about organization**

- Academic advising is central to the delivery of services for students



**Advising**

**Student  
Support  
Services**



# The role of advising...

Advising should be at the core of the institution's educational mission rather than layered on as a service.

Robert Berdahl, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*

# **Beliefs about organization**

- Academic advising is central to the delivery of services for students
- Academic advising must be a coordinated, collaborative process

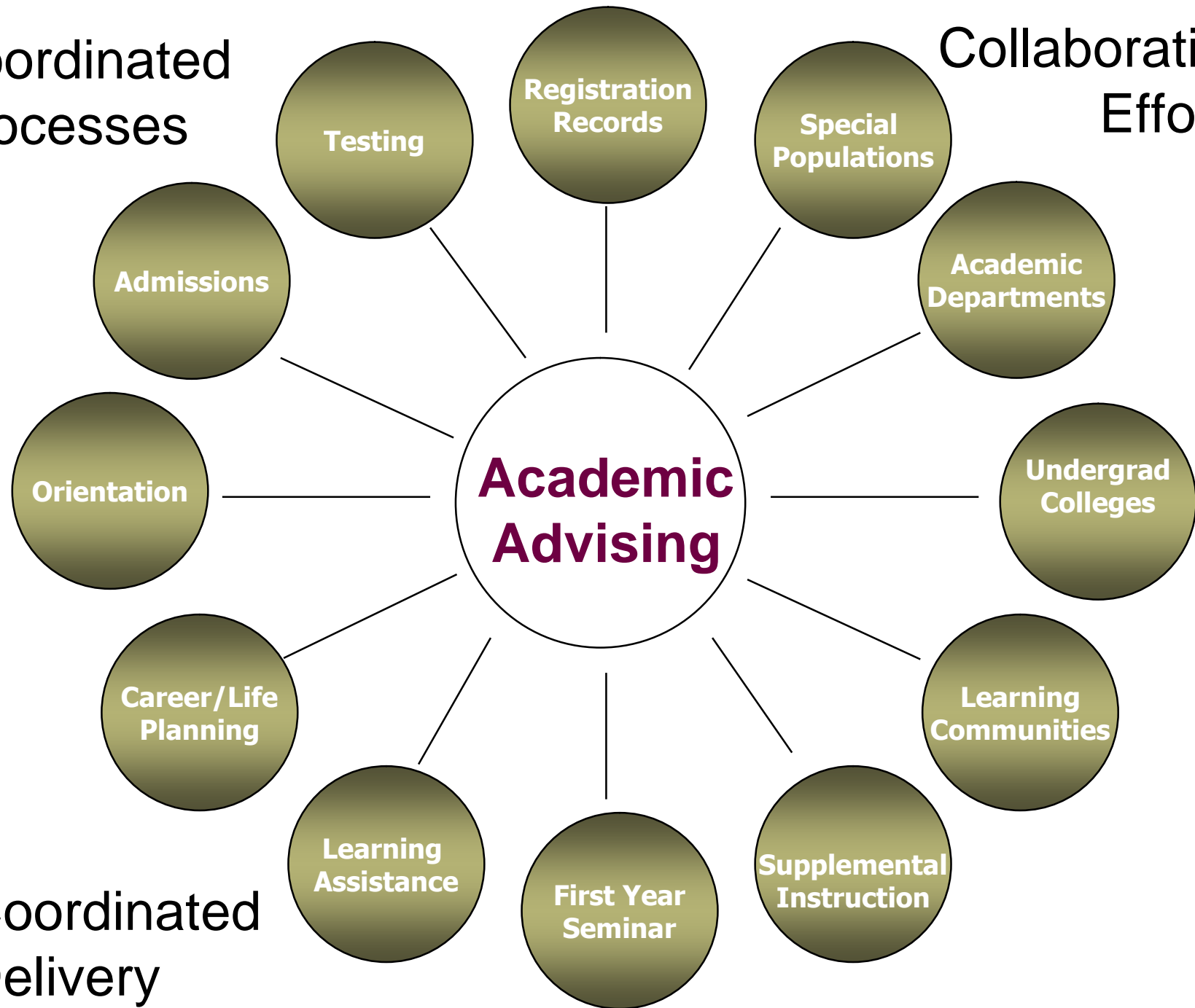
# **Effective academic advising...**

**CANNOT BE DONE IN ISOLATION.**

Advising requires coordination and collaboration among units across the campus that support and/or provide advising services

Coordinated  
Processes

Collaborative  
Efforts



Coordinated  
Delivery

# **Collaboration and Coordination**

- Efficient organization of support services
- Full spectrum of support services
- Clear definition of those services
- Articulation with academic advisors

# **Beliefs about organization**

- Academic advising is central to the delivery of services for students
- Academic advising must be a coordinated, collaborative process
- Academic advising systems must actively reach out to students

# **Active outreach to students**

Advisors should be available

at times when,

and in places where,

students make educational  
decisions

# Why reach out?

- An academic advisor is unlike any role model the new student has encountered
- Students receive advice from all sorts of people and much of that advice is inaccurate, incomplete, or inappropriately value laden

# Why reach out?

- The use of technology may supplant rather than support the advising process
- The first six weeks of transition are critical to the institution's retention efforts
- It is easier to anticipate a problem than it is to solve one

# Beliefs about organization

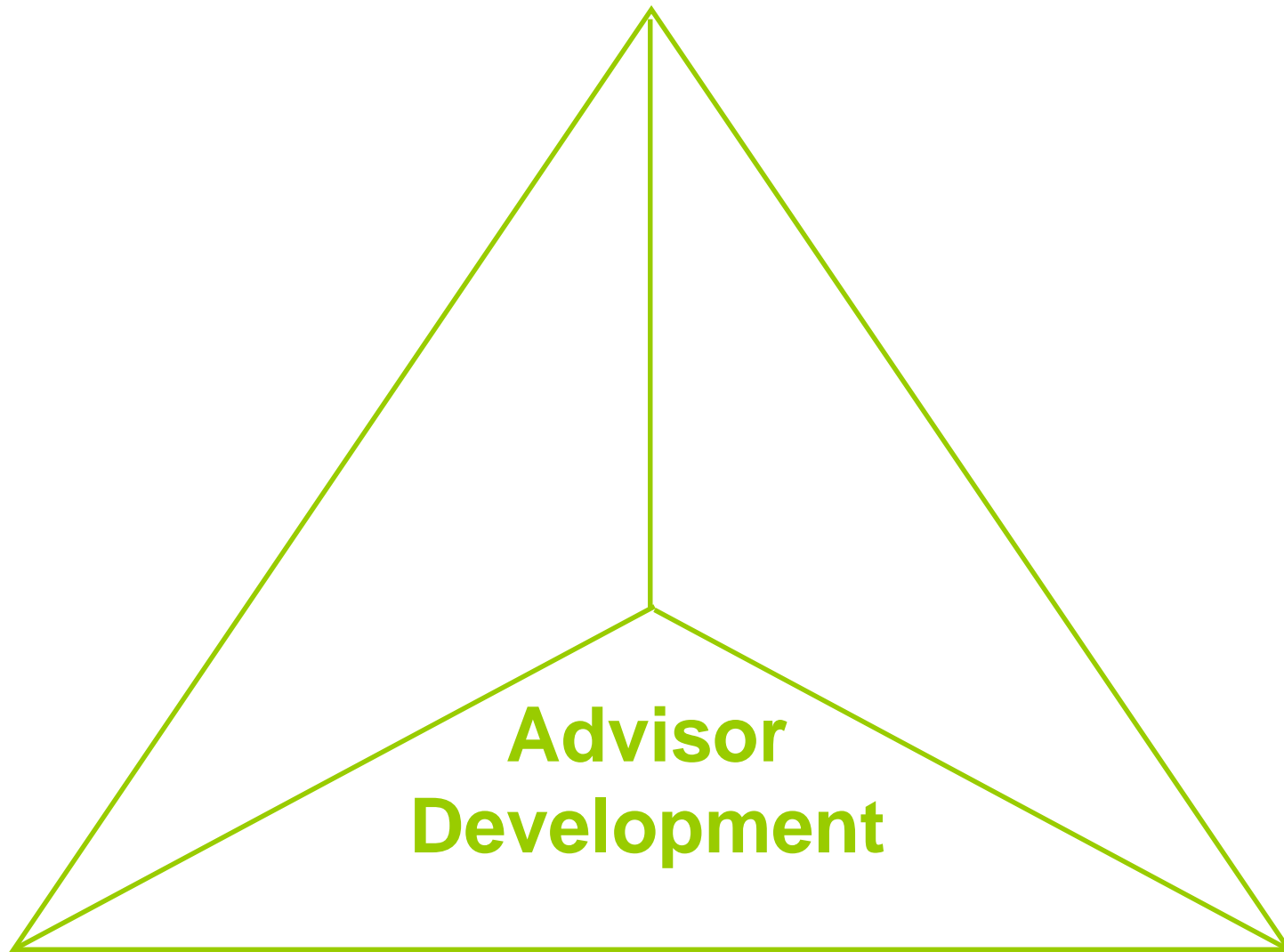
- Academic advising is central to the delivery of services for students
- Academic advising must be a coordinated, collaborative process
- Academic advising systems must actively reach out to students
- **Effective advising programs focus on training, assessment, and recognition**

# The Big Three....

It is impossible to do a job well if...

- no one sets expectations or provides you with tools or resources to do the job (Training)

# Effectiveness Triad



# Effectiveness

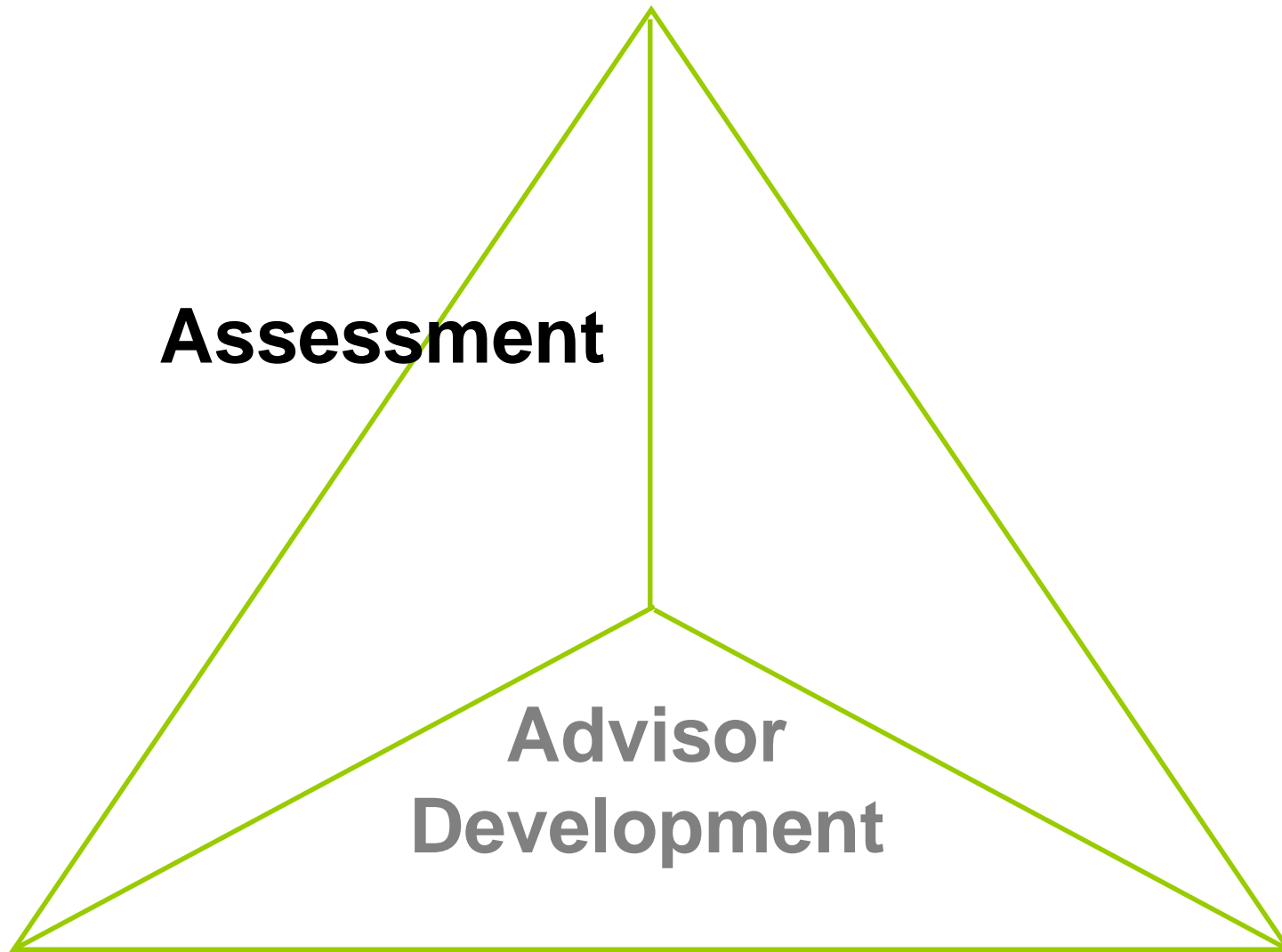
Implementing training programs	1987	2004
	2.4	3.0

# The Big Three....

It is impossible to do a job well if...

- no one sets expectations or provides you with tools or resources to do the job (Training)
- there is no feedback on effectiveness (Assessment)

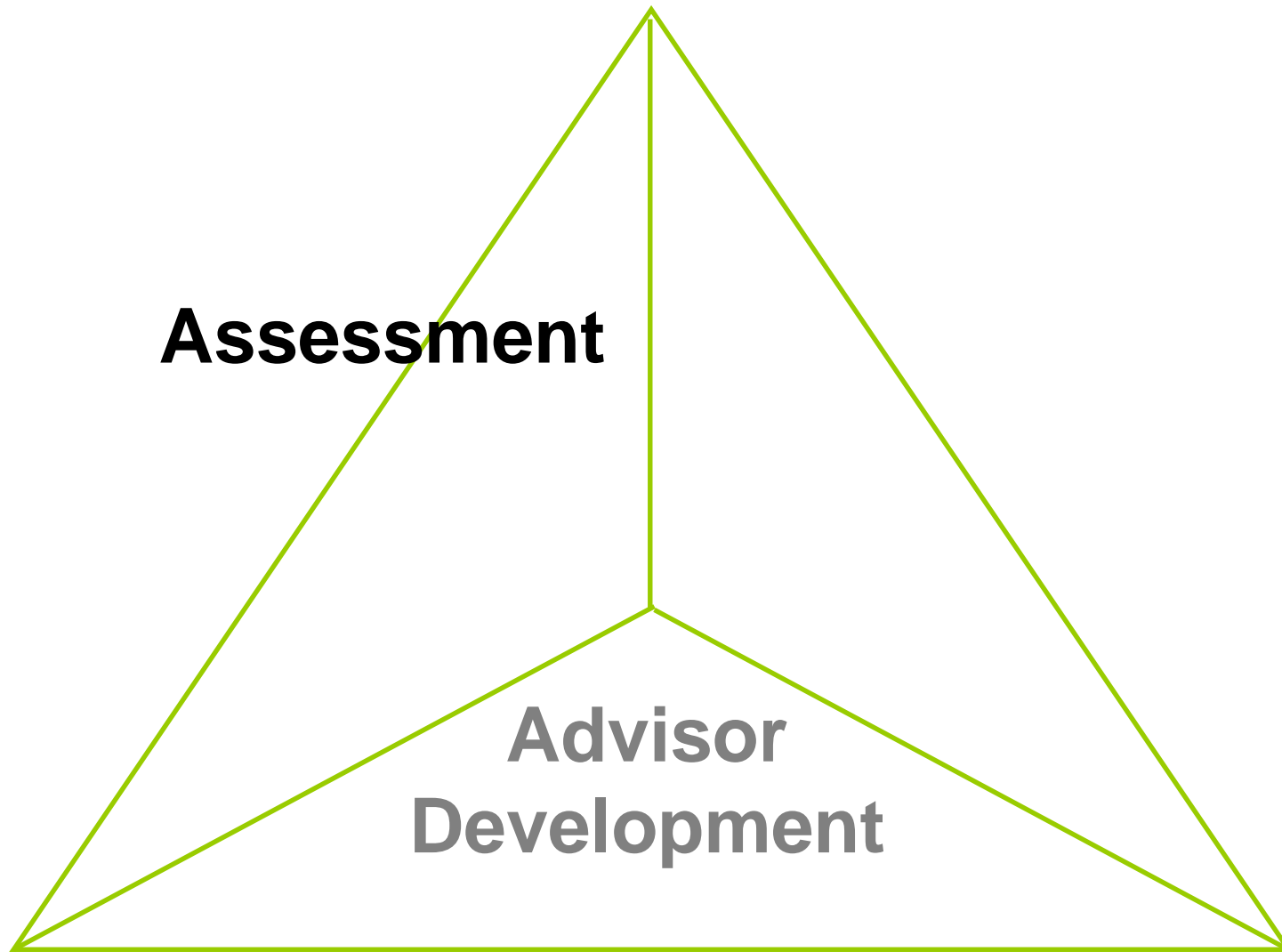
# Effectiveness Triad



# Effectiveness

	1987	2004
Implementing training programs	2.4	3.0
Program evaluation	2.3	2.8
Advisor evaluation	2.3	2.8

# Effectiveness Triad

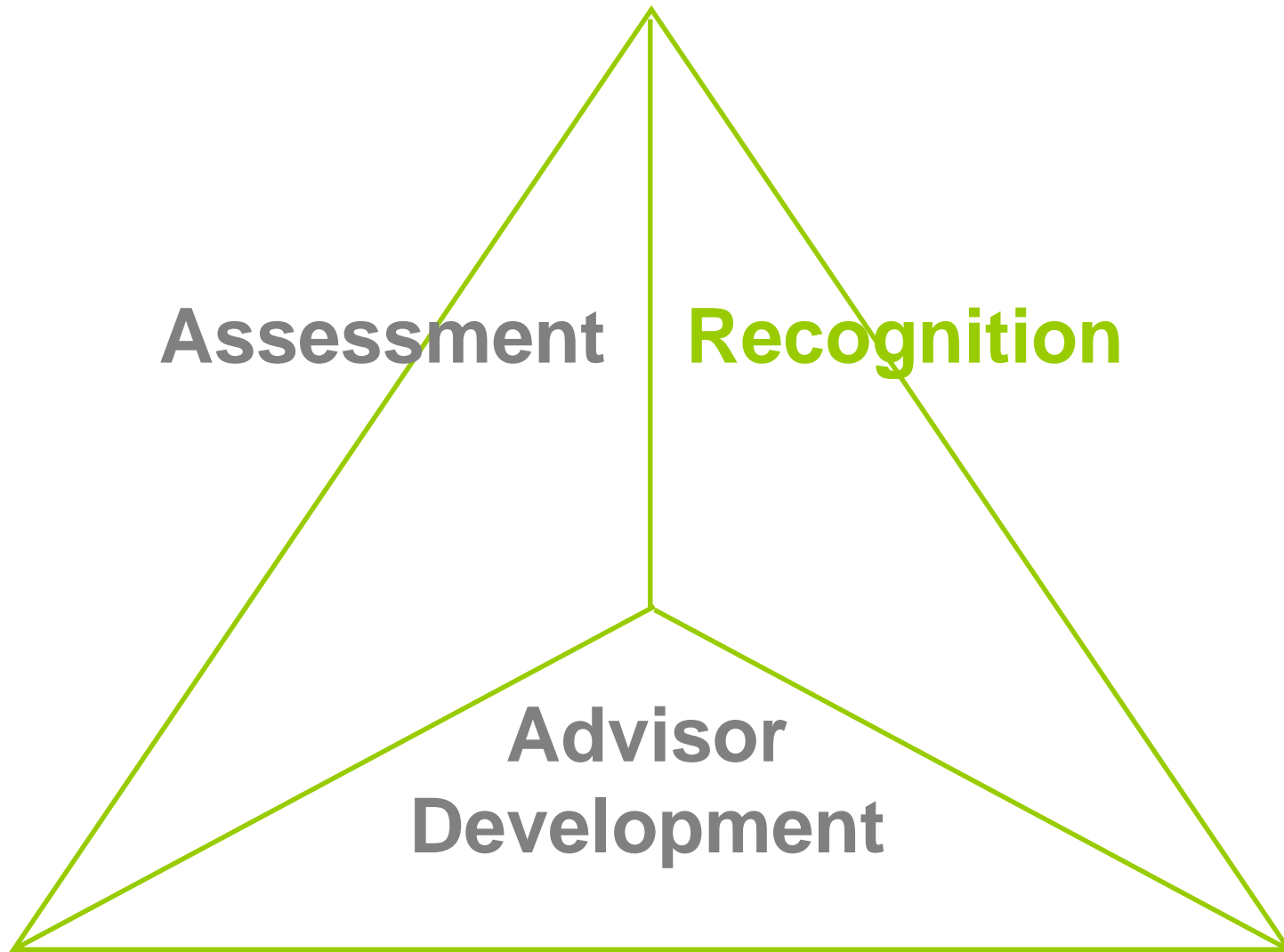


# The Big Three....

It is impossible to do a job well if...

- no one sets expectations or provides you with tools or resources to do the job (Training)
- there is no feedback on effectiveness (Assessment)
- you receive no recognition or reward for exemplary work (Recognition)

# Effectiveness Triad



# Effectiveness

	1987	2004
Implementing training programs	2.4	3.0
Program evaluation	2.3	2.8
Advisor evaluation	2.3	2.8
Advisor recognition	2.0	2.4

# **Conceptual beliefs**

- Broad definition of advising
- Advising as teaching
- Career/Life planning

# **Beliefs about organization**

- Centrality of advising
- Coordination and Collaboration
- Active Outreach
- Training, Assessment,  
Recognition

# The potential impact

Academic advising is the *only structured* activity on the campus in which *all students* have the opportunity for *one-to-one interaction* with a *concerned representative* of the institution.