

Strengthening Faculty, Staff and Student Success: Decreasing Administrative Overhead Associated with Advising



SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

Gayle Brazeau, Tiffany Davis, Nandini Manne, Tommy Pile, Brittany Riley, Megan Russell, Melinda Varney

Background and Objective

- Advising is a crucial service for all students in higher education and covers many aspects of student success including academic achievement, personal wellbeing, and career planning.
- Advising can place an administrative burden on faculty and staff, potentially leading to faculty/staff burnout and ineffective advising.
- Our objective is to highlight how the implementation of an electronic system for advising decreases the faculty/staff administrative burden associated with the advising process at Marshall University School of Pharmacy.

Advising at MUSOP

- Every Doctor of Pharmacy Student is assigned a faculty advisor at the beginning of the program. The Director of Progressions is assigned as a secondary advisor for all students in the program.
- At a minimum, students must meet with their advisors at least once per semester, typically around the midpoint.
- Advisors are also involved in early warning system (GradeWatch) interventions.

Original Process

- Around the midpoint of the semester, the Director of Student Progressions notified faculty via email to schedule advising sessions with their advisees.
- Each faculty member would use individually preferred methods to coordinate the scheduling of these meetings.
- After meeting with each student, the advisor would complete the necessary documentation, scan it, and send it to the Director of Student Progressions.
- The Director of Student Progressions would review the documents for any concerns or necessary follow-up actions and mark students as having met the advising requirements.

Initial Results

Things that went well:

- Decreased administrative burden of scheduling mid-semester check ins for faculty members who transitioned to the new system
- Ability to quickly see which students had met with their advisors
- Enhanced capability to estimate the time spent with students on advising, grade monitoring, and other related activities for faculty who fully utilized the system.

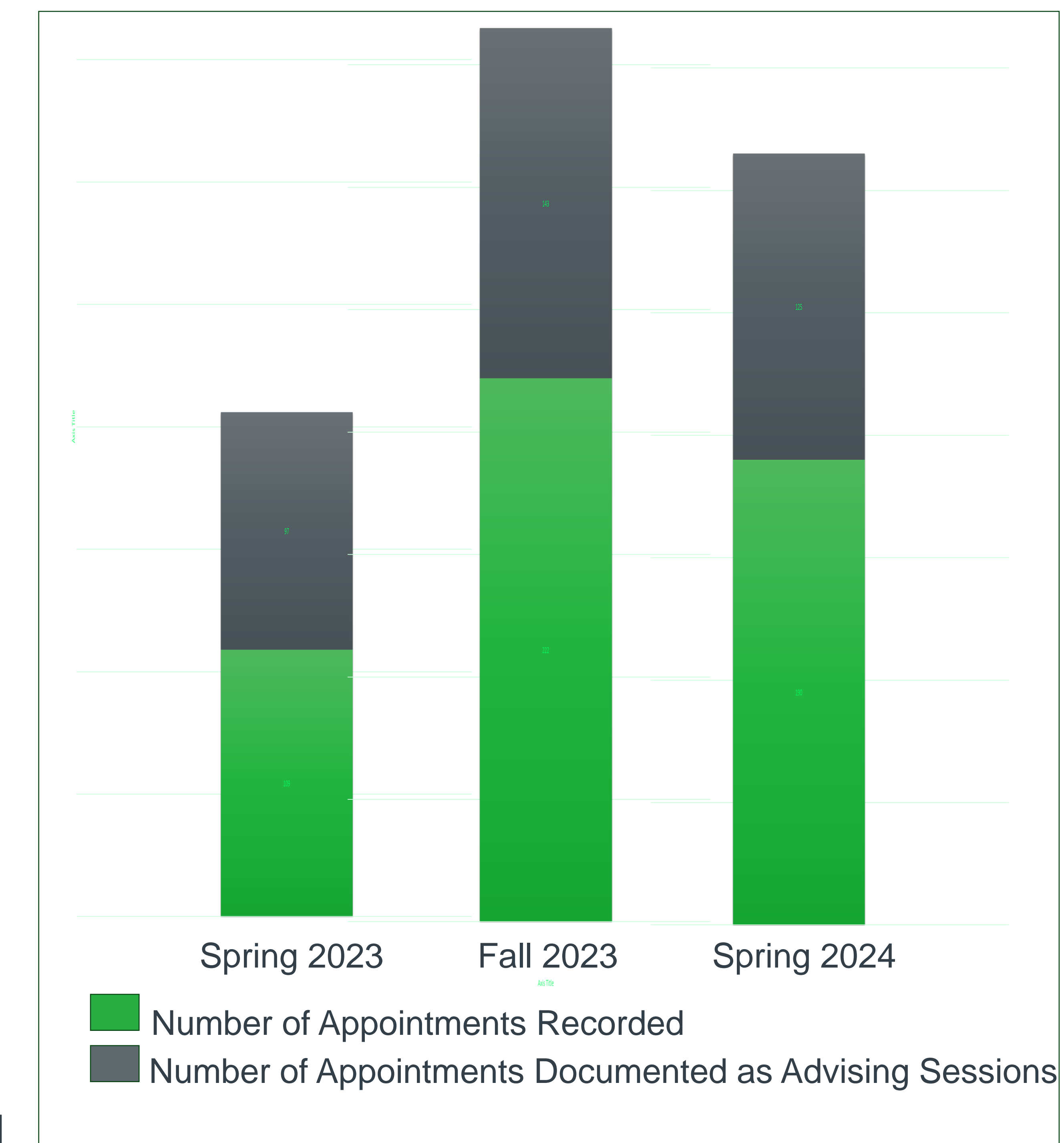
Areas for improvement:

- The scheduling tool for appointments outside of appointment campaigns is not functioning as intended to achieve the desired goals.
- Not all faculty fully embraced the complete use of the new system.
- During the transition, a hybrid system was used for early alerts, leading to potential duplication of efforts.
- Need to ensure consistent use of terminology and categories by faculty and staff for better data reporting.

Updated Process

- Beginning in academic year 2023-2024 Navigate® software was made available to faculty and staff.
- Features within Navigate®:
 - **Appointment Campaigns:** Ability to create an appointment campaign where advisors can email advisees to schedule meetings at specified time points (i.e. midpoint of semester).
 - **Integrated Scheduling:** Ability to share a scheduling link that is integrated with the students' course schedule and the faculty/staff members' electronic calendars.
 - **Shared Documentation:** Ability to document visits in a manner such that all faculty/staff assigned to that student can see the documented information.
 - **Automated Alerts:** Ability to issue alerts of concern on a student that would send an automatic email to assigned persons based on the alert type.
 - **Communication Logs:** Ability to document email communications with the student.
 - **Batch Reporting:** Ability to pull reports on meetings and meeting times as a batch report to share with others.
- Faculty were required to use Navigate for a minimum of advising appointments but were free to use it for any other function that they found helpful (early alert system, reporting, etc).

Number of Appointments Recorded in Navigate By Semester



Next Steps

- Transition early alert system to incorporate into Navigate
- Further promotion of full use of system
- Additional Faculty Training