

Part II, Standard 6. Student Services

During the visit, the unit should make the following documents accessible to the team:

- advising records
- other files related to student services

Executive Summary

- The Bellisario College has steadily increased the amount and number of scholarships it provides annually. The College awarded approximately \$1 million in scholarships to 483 students in 2017-2018, an increase over the approximately \$920,000 awarded to 447 students the year before. The median individual scholarship in 2017-2018 was \$1,980, an increase over the \$1,750 median scholarship the year before.
- The Bellisario College's Office of Academic Services advises students about course scheduling, as well as degree and graduation requirements through personal contact and electronic communication. Advisers are diligent about ensuring the College is in compliance with the 72-credit rule.
- The success of the Bellisario College's advising efforts is reflected in the outstanding four-year graduation rate. Nonetheless, the office is constantly evaluating its services and has taken steps to better advise students, including increasing the weekly contact hours each adviser has with students. The College has also increased its number of advisers since the last site visit although the number of majors in the College has not increased.
- A wide array of student media, student professional organizations and other extra-curricular activities are provided by the College and the University. The College and University also support ideas that students have for starting their own media organizations.
- The Bellisario College's three-member Office of Internships and Career Placement provides career counseling and employment assistance. The staff hold individual meetings and group sessions with students. The office also puts on three communications career fairs annually.
- The Bellisario College's enrollment held steady at about 2,700 students from 2014-2017. The first-year retention rate for the College's entering class of 2016 was 93.4 percent, compared to 92.7 percent for all students at University Park. The College's four-year graduation rate for students entering in 2013 was 82.1 percent – second only to the College of Nursing – compared to 68.3 percent rate for all students at University Park.

1. Complete and attach [Table 9, “Student Aid.”](#)

2. Describe how the unit informs students of the requirements of the degree and the major, advises them on effective and timely ways to meet the requirements, and monitors their compliance with the requirements, including the 72-hour rule. Provide digital files of advising guides, manuals, newsletters or other internal communication with students. Provide a print copy in the workroom. Describe availability and accessibility of faculty to students.

Students are informed about degree and graduation requirements, including the 72-hour rule, through personal contact and electronic communication by the College’s Office of Academic Services. The office, which includes six academic advisers (one of whom is an assistant dean) and two staff assistants, help students with choosing a major, course selection and scheduling, and meeting graduation requirements. Students can schedule an appointment with an adviser or meet with one during drop-in hours. The office also regularly communicates with students through the [“Comm Advisor”](#) electronic listserv. Students receive notices several times a month about advising, scheduling, graduation requirements, and other important information.

Faculty members are available to students during office hours, by telephone, and through e-mail. Full-time faculty members are required to provide their contact information on course syllabi and be available during office hours at least four hours a week. Part-time faculty and graduate students have designated office space in which to meet with students.

The University has the following online resources for students:

- [Undergraduate Bulletin](#): The Bulletin includes general education requirements, Bachelor of Arts requirements, major requirements, minor requirements and course descriptions.
- [LionPATH](#): The University’s online enrollment, scheduling, academic records and degree progress system.
- [Starfish](#): The University’s online system for advising notes, early progress reports and academic summaries.

Additional student resources

[University Registrar Website](#)

[Undergraduate Advising Handbook](#)

[University Senate Student Petitions](#)

[Bellisario Website student resources](#)

3. Describe the unit’s process for evaluating its advising and counseling services. Include measurements of the accuracy of academic advising, student and faculty opinion of the quality of advising, or other indices of the effectiveness of advising. Discuss the results of these assessments.

The College places great importance on advising its students. The Office of Academic Services relies on student feedback, compliance with the 72-hour rule, as well as graduation and retention rates, to measure the success of its academic advising efforts.

The College is diligent in ensuring student understanding of, and compliance with, the 72-credit rule. Of the College’s 1,752 graduates the past two years, only 24 did not comply with the 72-credit rule. These students either transferred into the College with a large number of communications credits or added the new Digital Media Trends and Analytics minor late in their program.

The College’s four-year graduation rate of 82.1 percent is the second highest of all academic colleges at the University and its retention rate of 93.4 percent is the fourth highest. Both rates are exceptionally high for a four-year public institution.

The Office of Academic Services receives regular feedback from students through face-to-face meetings, email and telephone calls, and from annual student focus groups for assessment. Concerns are addressed as they are received. The advisers use this information to discuss and implement improvements. In the past six years the office has:

- Hired a part-time adviser to assist with advising.
- Increased contact hours per academic adviser. The College’s advisers average 32 student contact hours per week, the most of any college at the University.
- Held group sessions to help students understand the University’s new student scheduling and advising platforms (LionPATH and Starfish).
- Improved student access, through controls in the scheduling system, to assure that students have appropriate course availability for scheduling purposes based on their major and semester standing.

4. Describe student media, student professional organizations or other extra-curricular activities and opportunities provided by the unit or the institution that are relevant to the curriculum and develop students’ professional and intellectual abilities and interests.

An array of student media, student professional organizations, and extra-curricular opportunities are available for students in the College. Several have been added in the past six

years, including AWSM, CommAgency, The Underground, and *Valley Magazine*. The Underground and *Valley Magazine* were founded by students in the College.

46Live: Student organization that provides livecasting of Penn State's annual 46-hour dance marathon, the world's largest student-run philanthropy.

Ad/PR Club: Student chapter of the American Advertising Federation.

AWSM: Student chapter of the Association for Women in Sports Media.

Centre County Report: Student newscast that airs weekly on public television and campus cable.

CommAgency: Student media production agency overseen by full-time faculty member.

CommRadio: Student-run Internet radio station overseen by part-time faculty member.

Daily Collegian: University's independent student newspaper published twice a week in print and daily online.

Happy Valley Communications: Student-run communications agency that takes on local clients each semester.

HerCampus Penn State: A student-produced contribution to a national blog collective.

In the Game: Student-produced sports magazine television show that airs twice a semester. Course taught by part-time faculty member.

LaVie: University's student yearbook.

Onward State: Online news site for Penn State students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Panorama: Student-run online publication providing coverage of world news.

Peer Mentors Program: Student organization that pairs advanced students in the majors with incoming and transfer students for mentoring and support.

Phroth: University's humor magazine.

PSNtv (Penn State Network Television): Student-run television airing variety of shows.

Public Relations Student Society of American (PRSSA): Public relations student organization.

Society of Professional Journalists (Sigma Delta Chi): Student chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

Sovereign: Student-produced magazine focused on students of color at Penn State.

Spoon University: Student-produced contribution to national online collective focusing on food.

Student Council: Leadership organization that works with dean and advising office to support student life in the College and to promote the Honor Code.

Student Film Organization (SFO): Student-run film organization.

The Underground: Student-run online publication providing multicultural news.

Valley Magazine: Student-run lifestyle magazine published twice a year.

WKPS-FM (The Lion 90.7): University's student radio station.

5. Describe the unit's career counseling and placement strategy for assistance in students' searches for employment. List placement statistics for the three most recent years before the self-study year for which accurate information is available.

Career Counseling and Employment Assistance

The College places importance on career counseling and other career-related services. The Office of Internships and Career Placement provides services to students one-on-one as well as in small-group meetings and large-group sessions.

Career advising meetings are held with students individually in 60- to 90-minute sessions. A search strategy is provided to each student, including specific contacts within their industry of interest, and specifically in the geographic location that the student prefers. In these individual meetings, students are taught how to take an active approach with their job search strategy. Students are taught how to schedule and execute targeted meetings with professionals within the industry.

The office also offers small- and large-group sessions with students. These include tips on creating resumes and writing cover letters; behavior-based interviewing; and professional development opportunities such as "mock interviews" and business etiquette dining.

In addition to offering career consultations throughout the year, the Office of Internships and Career Placement holds three communications-specific career/networking fairs for students in the College each spring semester.

- **JobExpo.Comm** is held on campus in the HUB's Alumni Hall. This internship/career event is focused on regional companies from Pennsylvania and surrounding states. The 2018

event attracted more than 150 recruiters from 73 different communications organizations. Nearly 500 students and recent graduates attended. (See [JobExpo.Comm 2018 program](#)).

- **“Success in the City”** is held in New York City. The 2018 event included more than 200 recruiters from 78 different communications organizations based in and around New York City. More than 420 students and recent graduates attended (See [“Success in the City” program](#)).
- **“Films & Friends”** is held in New York City after “Success in the City.” This networking event brings together alumni and professionals from the New York film/television industry to meet film-video students. The 2018 event brought together 43 alumni and 55 students for the opportunity to network and also screen some of their best work. (See [“Films & Friends XI” program](#)).

When a job opening is sent to the office by media companies, alumni, or friends of the College, it is immediately posted to students using the career services e-mail system. This is the most effective means to promptly get opportunities into the hands of soon-to-be graduates and recent graduates (graduates stay in the system for six months after commencement). The office has the ability to send a particular job lead to specific majors and to the specific student class. Only seniors and recent graduates receive full-time job leads. The office then archives all job postings in the [Nittany Lion Careers website](#), accessible to all students in the College.

The Office of Internships and Career Placement also offers individual companies the opportunity to set up their own on-campus recruitment of students visits outside of the career fairs. Companies such as General Electric, MLB.com, Dow Chemical, NBC Universal and Scripps Networks take advantage of this because it fits their own recruitment schedule and efforts.

The office uses social media outlets such as LinkedIn and Twitter to provide students and recent graduates with contact information on professionals within the industry who are willing to provide advice on effectively transitioning to the communications industry. The staff also uses social media to effectively disseminate important information regarding career trends and helpful tips. Students consult the internship database as an exceptional resource for contact information on companies. With more than 3,900 internship locations and descriptions, the database can assist students in getting connected to future opportunities at a variety of organizations.

Placement Statistics

The Bank of America Career Services Center at Penn State previously produced an annual report called “Post-Graduation Activities of Penn State”. This report was primarily for Penn State Division of Undergraduate Studies advisers, career counselors, admissions advisers and faculty and staff members who regularly interact with students and parents. The Post-Graduate Activities Report ceased to be produced after 2013 and was replaced by a digital “First Destination Post-Graduate Survey.” The most recent three years of this report include the following classes:

- [Class of Summer 2017-Spring 2018](#)
- [Class of Summer 2016-Spring 2017](#)
- [Class of Summer 2015-Spring 2016](#)

Each of the three yearly reports includes information on post-graduation activities, specifically career outcomes, based on information compiled from students three to five months after graduation ([see survey](#)). Career outcomes includes students who reported full-time employment, pursuing further education/graduate school, military service, public service commitment, fellowship, entrepreneurship endeavor, post-graduation internship/residency, other. Note: Part-time employment figures are taken into account only for the most recent year, Summer 2017-Spring 2018, since the question on part-time employment status was not requested of survey respondents and, therefore, was not part of the surveys during the first two years (Summer 2015-Spring 2016 and Summer 2016-Spring 2017).

6. Discuss the processes in place to collect, maintain and analyze enrollment, retention and graduation rates within the major and in comparison with university rates. Discuss the findings of the analysis. Provide the URL where the unit shares its most recent retention and graduation data with the public.

Retention and graduation rates are collected and analyzed by Enrollment Management in the University’s Office of Undergraduate Education and are updated annually. Official enrollment data is provided by the University’s Office of Planning and Assessment. [College enrollment, graduation and retention rates](#) are updated annually on our website.

The College’s enrollment held steady at about 2,700 students from 2012-2017. The number of Advertising/Public Relations and Media Studies majors each grew by 21 percent,

while Film-Video majors grew by 12 percent. Enrollment dropped by 13 percent for Journalism majors, four percent for Telecommunications majors and eight percent for Communications pre-majors.

The College's retention rate for the entering class of 2016 was 93.4 percent, compared to 92.7 percent for all colleges at University Park.

The College's four-year graduation rate for students entering in 2013 was 82.1 percent, compared to 68.3 percent rate for all colleges at University Park. The College's five-year graduation rate for students entering in 2012 was 89.5 percent, compared to 83.5 percent for all colleges at University Park.